Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
71 UN GA First Committee, Thematic Debate on Conventional Arms
(New York, 20 October 2016)

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine fully shares concerns of the international community that the illicit trade, spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons poses serious threat for security and stability in the world. Therefore, we continue considering the UN Programme of Action as one of the most important and universal tool in global efforts to combat this threat. We support proper implementation of the PoA as well as the International Tracing Instrument by all States.

Taking this into account, Ukraine supports and cosponsors the draft resolution on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. We also thank the Delegation of France for its initiative to deliver the political declaration on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons which we fully support.

Ukraine attaches particular importance to ensuring effective export control procedures in the sphere of conventional arms that meet all standing international requirements. It also concerns the issue of brokering activity. Ukraine strictly adheres to the respective decisions taken by the UN Security Council, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the international export control regime Wassenaar Arrangement. The UN Security Council resolutions which impose sanctions regimes, including the arms embargo, are guidelines for the adoption of the relevant legislation and regulations in Ukraine and are strictly implemented by the national authorities.

Ukraine also fully supports the draft resolution on preventing and combating the illicit brokering activities as well as the draft resolution “Transparency in Armaments”.

Mr. Chair,

We welcomed the entry into force and support proper implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty as a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field. As in previous years, Ukraine supports the draft resolution on the ATT and co-sponsors it.

Mr. Chair,

Addressing the enormous destructive power of conventional armaments continues to be of the utmost importance for the international community especially in the context of regional security. Today we must tackle the issue of illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of conventional arms with highest level of responsibility.
We have to stress again that the Russian military aggression against Ukraine with the use of regular military forces armed with modern types of conventional armaments and ammunition has significantly damaged the existing system of conventional arms control.

The Russian Federation continues its massive transfers of military goods on our territory, both to Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, thus deliberately destabilizing not only sub-regional but the entire European security and totally ignoring persistent calls of the international community to establish the effective border control. Among other things, such illegal transfers are a great challenge for proper implementation of the PoA which serves as the only universal international tool to address the illicit trade in SALW.

We have no right to ignore such illicit supplies of conventional weapons from the Russian Federation to the Russia-guided illegal armed groups operating in the certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine recognizes the important role of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in addressing post-conflict remedial measures in order to minimize the occurrence, risk and effects of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Being a State Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction (Mine ban treaty) for over 10 years Ukraine acknowledges its fundamental character in minimizing the occurrence, risk and effects of landmines.

Despite current significant challenges in the security field related to the "hybrid" war waged against our country, Ukraine fully complies with its obligations under these treaties.

As a result of the armed aggression of Russia and offensive actions carried out by the Russia-guided illegal armed groups operating in the certain areas of Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine, nowadays our country has to deal with a drastically increased number of dangerous ERW, causing severe casualties among civilians, including children.

These ERW as well as antipersonnel mines which have indiscriminate effect are planted by illegal armed groups in residential areas and routes of communication between inhabited areas thus violating the Convention. In fact they pose more threat to the civil population than to the military personnel.

Ukraine believes it is vitally important for the international community to make every effort to ensure proper implementation of CCW and MBT. Ukraine attaches great importance to further deepening cooperation with international partners in this field.

Thank you.