Statement on behalf of the
Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Delivered by
Mr. Nawin Chirapant,
First Secretary, Permanent Mission of
the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations

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Please check against delivery
Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), comprising Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my own country, Thailand.

2. Allow me, at the outset to align the following statement with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM).

3. ASEAN recognizes the serious consequences from the historical use of indiscriminate conventional weapons. We recognize further, growing challenges presented by illicit conventional weapons and emerging technologies.

4. ASEAN affirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for self-defense and the maintenance of security. Nonetheless, it is clear that the use, manufacturing, transfer and circulation of conventional weapons impact people’s collective security and prosperity. The international community must effectively address this.

Mr. Chair,

5. Each year, there are more than 200,000 civilian casualties caused by small arms in conflict situations. It has been said that such a large number of casualties render these weapons, the ‘real weapons of mass destruction’.

6. ASEAN supports States’ implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapon (UNPoA) and looks forward to the Third Review Conference in 2018 of the UNPoA under the French Presidency. ASEAN is of the view that the full and effective implementation of the UNPoA requires greater international assistance and cooperation among States.

7. Regionally, ASEAN Ministers continue to address the issue of arms smuggling through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime and the ASEAN Regional Forum. In addition to the annual meeting of ASEAN police chiefs or ASEANAPOL, the ASEAN Forensic Science Institute also supports the promotion of law enforcement cooperation and information exchange on conducting forensic investigations related to illicit arms.
Mr. Chair,

8. ASEAN is also committed to adhering to international humanitarian law. We continue to deplore the use of any explosive devices aimed at killing and terrorizing innocent civilians.

9. The people of ASEAN continue to be adversely affected by indiscriminate weapons including the remaining presence of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and other unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive remnants of war.

10. This is why in 2012 the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) was established to address the challenges presented by explosive remnants of war. In this regard, we welcome the Third Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ARMAC.

11. ARMAC continues to uphold ASEAN’s strong commitment to regional mine action as well as enhanced cooperation with relevant institutions including the United Nations Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

12. ASEAN calls upon all States, particularly developed countries, to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance and cooperation towards the clearance of these weapons and the reintegration and rehabilitation of victims.

Mr. Chair,

13. ASEAN supports multilateral transparency and confidence-building measures in addressing the global control of conventional weapons.

14. We take note also of other developments to address the issue of conventional weapons. These include the Third Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and lastly the 16th Meeting of the State Parties to the Mine Ban Convention to be held in Vienna from 18 to 21 December 2017.

15. Lastly, we recognize the unique impact of conventional weapons on women and children, and urge all States to include gender and victims’ perspectives in their work on disarmament.