Statement by Turkey

Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons
First Committee
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Mr. Chairman,

Turkey aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union under this cluster. The following are our national remarks:

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is an indispensable part of the international law on “conventional weapons with indiscriminate effects”. Turkey fully implements the Convention and its annexed Protocols to which it is a party and encourages adherence to this fundamental international regime.

We welcome the successful outcome of the Fifth Review Conference of CCW. Issues such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) continue to be important. Turkey is concerned by the increasing global impact of IED attacks worldwide, in particular through the perpetration of terrorist acts, and supported the adoption of the political declaration on IEDs. We believe that the UN has an important role to play in addressing the problem of IED and have supported General Assembly resolutions 70/46 and 71/72 on “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”.

As we mark the 20th anniversary of its opening for signature, Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention continues its significance in putting an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. Turkey, as a party to and a strong supporter of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, is committed to its obligations under this Convention. Turkey has completed its commitment relating to Article 4, destroying a total of approximately 3 million anti-personnel mines and is in the process of fulfilling its Article 5 obligations. Turkey has made voluntary contributions to the ISU and the sponsorship programme, as well as to clearance efforts in third countries.

The increasing proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Turkey welcomes the advancement of the universalization of the Code of Conduct and continues its support to the biennial General Assembly resolution on HCoC against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.
As we stated in our general remarks, the threat posed by the proliferation of illicit conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, is no less important than that of WMDs. More than 500 thousand people are killed with small arms and light weapons every year. Also, there is a well-documented relationship between illicit trade of SALW on the one hand, and conflict, terrorism and organized crime on the other. Hence, the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons must be eradicated.

Turkey remains committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the UN PoA and the ITI. We welcome the successful conclusion of the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS6) last year and hope that its 3rd Review Conference next year will provide us the opportunity to strengthen the PoA and to come up with improved mechanisms for countering the threat from new weapons-related technologies, with an eye to developing them into concrete elements for a tailored work programme for the six-year cycle.

Since its outset, Turkey actively participated in the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) process, thereafter signing the Treaty. By establishing the framework for responsible trade in small arms and light weapons, ATT also supports the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 Target 4 (to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime). Pending approval of the Turkish Parliament for ratification, we would like to reaffirm our keenness to accede to the Treaty in the near future.

In the meanwhile, being a member of all four export control regimes, Turkey already has in place a robust export control mechanism and implements the related principles meticulously.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the Second Conference of States-Parties to the ATT last year. Together with Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) on SALW, ATT will complement and reinforce the PoA.

Before I conclude, Mr. Chairman, let me reiterate my country’s commitment to international cooperation in all the issues we will be addressing under this cluster.

Thank you.