Thank you Mr. Chair.

On 9 August, a laser-guided bomb was dropped on a school bus in Yemen by a Saudi-led coalition warplane. The attack killed 40 children on a school trip, aged under 15 years old, and wounded 56 more. Eleven adults also died. It is hard to imagine a more egregious violation of humanitarian law.

All parties to the continuing armed conflict in Yemen have committed possible war crimes and other serious violations of international law.

The school bus attack occurred just weeks before the fourth Conference of States Parties to the ATT, held in August in Tokyo. But neither its devastating consequences, nor the ways in which implementation of the Treaty could prevent the flow of weapons fuelling these attacks, was raised by States.

Control Arms welcomes the actions of those governments who have stopped transfers to the Saudi-led coalition. But there are governments, including ATT States Parties, who are still supplying weapons, causing immeasurable suffering, and violating the Treaty.

Yemen is just one tragic example of where arms transfers are directly fueling human suffering.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my country of origin, the effects of the poorly regulated and illicit trade of arms and ammunition do not allow the people to breathe the air of peace. These effects of armed conflict and displacement are avoidable. To stop the illicit trade, we encourage all countries including the DRC, to ratify the Treaty. Life is priceless.
We call on governments to rigorously adhere to their legal obligations under the Treaty. In particular the core Articles 6 and 7 on prohibitions and risk assessment must be applied. States must deny weapons transfers whenever there is a serious risk of them being used to commit abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law.

Mr President.

Armed violence and armed conflict, has a gendered impact. During this First Committee, many States have recognised this. Now we need action to follow. All States should take advantage of the opportunity the ATT presents to contribute to global efforts to reduce arms-related GBV linked to weapons in situations of armed violence and or armed conflict.

Transparency and information sharing can help stop illegal sales, reduce the risk of diversion of arms, and stop the flood of weapons to human rights abusers. Vital to transparency is comprehensive, accurate, and timely reporting of arms imports, exports, and national practices and measures taken to implement the Treaty.

We will keep campaigning to stop arms transfers that fuel human suffering. We will keep campaigning for the ATT to be effectively implemented. We call on you as governments to make the right decisions. Choose to bring the arms trade out of the shadows, and choose to act to stop the arms transfers that are fueling the daily suffering of millions.

Thank you
Ends