Mr. Chair,

I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction with the manner you are steering the work of this Committee.

While my delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group by the distinguished representatives of Indonesia and Morocco respectively, I would like to briefly stress on the following:

Mr. Chair,

Conventional Weapons have been the major instruments of destruction during the past decade, particularly in the third world. The improvement in production technology, the sophistication of proliferation, transfer and circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons have enormous impact in undermining peace and security as well as destabilizing effects across several countries and regions.

The strategic, political, commercial and security interests of States and the lack of faithful implementation of the existing international, regional commitments and obligations have hindered progress towards meaningful regulation.

The unauthorized use of these weapons by non-state actors and their wide spread and uncontrolled access to them indeed also remain to be a source of threat. It is with serious concern; that we continue to note that the major impact of the proliferation and transfer of illicit small arms and light weapons is felt in the developing countries, particularly in countries where state control is weak or non-existent. These security gaps enable terrorist groups and other
criminal networks to take advantage by advancing chaos and insecurity in fragile states. In this connection the international community must stand against steps or actions that undermine the security and stability of countries. Eritrea reiterates its firm position that our actions must be guided by the respect for the sovereign right of states to acquire, manufacture, export, import and possesses conventional arms, their parts and components for self-defense and security needs in accordance with the UN Charter.

Mr. Chair,

The proliferation and misuse of small arms is complex and multifaceted phenomenon that transcends political boundaries and requires regional and international solutions. Eritrea expresses its unwavering commitment that it is always ready to continue with regional states and international community to control and put an end to the illegal trade and transfer of these weapons. Eritrea looks forward to the full implementation of the UN Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), as a vital element in promoting security and sustainable development.

Mr. Chair,

Eritrea as a nation that has recently emerged from thirty years of war for independence as well as for the respect of its sovereign national territory is among several countries that had experienced the horrors of war and the human suffering resulting from the indiscriminate use of landmines. In this regard, it attaches great importance to the Mine Ban Treat and its full implementation.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, let me seize this opportunity to stress that weapons only fuel insecurity. A conflict free world can only be achieved by strong political commitment and determined shared responsibility to multilateralism.