Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation and illicit trafficking of conventional weapons, with their serious impact on regional stability causing perennial humanitarian problems, have become the focus of attention for the international community. In this context, the issue of conventional weapons features ever more prominently on the international agenda for arms control. It has been referred to as “disarmament that saves lives” by the UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres in his Agenda for Disarmament. This is a proper reflection of the significance for further strengthening conventional arms control within the UN framework.

The Chinese Government has always been firmly supporting, actively participating in the conventional arms control process and committed to addressing humanitarian problems in this area. China stands for constantly strengthening and improving the international legal mechanism in conventional arms control with a balanced approach to addressing the legitimate security needs and humanitarian concerns of each state to maintain lasting international peace and security for all. In this connection, China has taken an active part in all the agenda items on conventional weapons within the UN framework, and made positive contributions to the promotion of multilateral arms control process.

Mr. Chairman,

As one of its significant and positive actions in the field of arms control, China is striving to take forward the process of accession to the Arms Trade Treaty. Earlier, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi officially announced at the UNGA that China had initiated its domestic legal procedures for accession to the Treaty. This fully embodies China’s subscription to the
purposes and principles of the Treaty. It is a positive measure taken by China towards building a Community of Shared Future for Humankind in the field of international security, underpinning its strong support for multilateralism. We stand ready to enhance cooperation with all State Parties to the Treaty in combating illicit trade of conventional arms, safeguarding international and regional peace and security and addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by the abuse and illicit trafficking of conventional weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

China takes transparency in conventional armaments seriously and stays committed to enhancing military and security mutual trust with other countries. China attaches great importance to the work of UN Register of Conventional Arms. Over the years, China has consistently submitted its annual report to the UN Register of Conventional Arms, actively participated in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts of the Register, and floated several useful proposals for the operation and development of the Register. China is pleased to note that the GGE adopted its report by consensus again this year and reached agreement on enhancing the Register's universality and effectiveness. The GGE's Chairperson Ms. MARIELA FONGANTE has played an active role in this regard and its members also showed constructive cooperation and professionalism. China highly appreciates and commends these efforts.

As another important UN transparency mechanism, the work of UN Report on Military Expenditures also plays an active role in enhancing mutual trust among countries. China has submitted its annual report on military spending for many years consecutively, and actively participated in the relevant expert meetings. China will continue to support the Report in its smooth functioning to play its role in full.

Mr. Chairman,

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) plays an important
role as a cornerstone in the realm of conventional arms control. As a High Contracting Party to the Convention and its five Protocols China has been supporting the work of CCW, faithfully fulfilling its obligations under the Convention and its Protocols, and actively involved in international engagement and cooperation. China has constructively participated in all the Conferences of the State Parties to the Convention and its five Protocols and will continue to take an active part in this year’s Conference of the State Parties with constructive contributions.

Mr. Chairman,

China attaches great importance to the humanitarian, legal and ethical concerns caused by Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), and supports in-depth discussions on LAWS within the framework of CCW. Although LAWS is a concept of future weapons yet non-existent, China believes that it is necessary to reach an international legally-binding instrument on fully-autonomous lethal weapon systems in order to prevent automated killing by machines. All parties should first reach an agreement on the issues such as the definition and scope of LAWS. The GGE meeting on LAWS has agreed on a guideline by consensus this year when renewing the mandate of the GGE. China commends these efforts, especially the positive role of the GGE Chair (Mr. JIVAN, Minister-Counselor of the Republic of North Macedonia) in this regard. This fully demonstrates that the Convention is the appropriate venue to discuss this issue. China will work with all parties to strengthen exchanges and actively explore effective ways to solve this problem.

Mr. Chairman,

China supports the consideration and formulation of reasonable and feasible solutions to the abuse of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state actors within the framework of CCW. China and Belgium, as co-chairs of the Working Group of the Improvised Explosive Devices Disposal Standards, have worked out IEDD Standards aiming to remove obstacles to the peacekeeping operations and minimize the humanitarian casualties, especially to provide
expertise to the affected countries to improve their disposal capabilities. China stands ready to work with the rest of the international community to continue its constructive role in seeking a proper solution to the problem of IEDs through experience exchange and technology cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

The illicit transfer and abuse of Small Arms and Light Weapons aid and abet terrorist and extremist activities, aggravate instability in the region and heighten security risks. All countries should implement the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and International Tracing Instrument in good faith, continuously enhance capacity building, and steadily take forward the multilateral process of combating illicit trade of SALWs. Vigorous efforts are also needed to carry out international cooperation and maintain international and regional stability. The Chinese government has always been prudent and responsible towards arms export including that of SALWs, strictly regulating arms export according to its domestic laws and due international commitments.

Mr. Chairman,

China is committed to international humanitarian demining assistance. China has provided humanitarian assistance worth RMB 100 million yuan to more than 40 countries through donation, equipment assistance, training programs and field instructions, having trained over 800 professional demining technicians. During the UN Peacekeeping Summit in September 2015, President Xi Jinping declared that China would carry out 10 demining assistance programs in the coming five years, which have been accomplished ahead of schedule. In 2019, the Chinese government provided demining assistance worth RMB 9.5 million yuan in total to Cambodia and Laos in the form of demining training courses and humanitarian aid in kind. China stands ready to continue its international demining cooperation within its capabilities and assist those mine-affected countries to clear mines and rebuild their homes at an early date.
Mr. Chairman,

China stands ready to continue to enhance cooperation and exchanges with other countries, work together to facilitate new developments and breakthroughs in the work of conventional arms control, and make further positive contributions to addressing humanitarian issues caused by the abuse of conventional weapons and safeguarding international and regional peace and stability.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.