Madam Chair,

I would like to congratulate you on your election as President and express my sincere appreciation of your patient, persistent and transparent handling of preparations for this conference. Lithuania looks forward to working with you and all delegations present in this room during the next two weeks.

Lithuania associates itself with the statement made earlier by the European Union. Now, let me emphasize a few points in my national capacity.

There are an estimated 875 million small arms in circulation worldwide. More than 700 thousand people are killed by armed violence each year. The illicit trade and circulation of arms and ammunition has a destabilizing effect for all spheres of human life impacting security, devastating livelihoods, disrupting development, closing schools and hospitals.

Nevertheless, the magnitude and complexity of the issues does not excuse us from doing our utmost to resolve them. Over the last 12 years the UN Programme of Action has taken the central role in coordinating the international community’s activities against the illicit trade in small arms.

The history of PoA implementation meetings has been uneven. The last Review Conference in 2006 failed to agree on an outcome document. At the same time, the 2008 and 2010 Biennial meetings of the States chose to focus on a few priority issues and managed to produce substantial outcome documents.
In order to succeed in our negotiations, we must build on the work done during the last 6 years. Therefore we welcome the fact that Chair’s “zero drafts” and subsequent work by facilitators to a large degree focused on the priority issues identified during the past meetings.

In reviewing the PoA we do not need a repetition of the agreed texts. The time did not stand still since 2001 and we need to look at ways of adapting the PoA to realities of today and tomorrow. Therefore Lithuania would call for substantial and action-oriented implementation plans of the PoA and International Tracing Instrument that would set clear objectives and performance indicators for the next cycle.

Finally, Madam Chair, it is important to take due account of gender and age in the context of small arms. It is crucial in understanding the different ways that men, women, children are affected by armed violence and developing effective solutions.

Thank you.