Statement by Japan on
International Cooperation and Assistance

Madam Chair,

Allow me to express Japan’s basic position regarding international cooperation and assistance for promoting the implementation of the POA.

In order to effectively and efficiently achieve international cooperation among Member States and relevant organizations, it is indispensable for assistance providers, including international organizations, to identify the needs of recipient countries. In this regard, importance should be attached to effective solutions that allow recipient countries to demonstrate their ownership in tackling the problems of small arms. As such, sharing experience among regions is crucial.

Additionally, it is important for UN regional institutions not only to identify the needs of individual States but also to address the issues that are common to States in the region. In the Asia Pacific Region, for example, the United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament (UNRCPD) plays an important role as a common platform for States to facilitate implementation of the POA at the regional level. We expect that three UN regional centers could facilitate the regional discussions in assessing needs. The centers can also support the work of States in sharing good practices of its regional Member States and carry out projects capacity-building projects. Through the support of the UN and contributing States, the regional centers can also provide guidance for regulation-making by the States in the region.

Bearing in mind the positive role that the UN regional centers can play, Japan supported in September 2011 a project carried out by UNRCPD entitled “training for the law enhancement community in Asia and the Pacific to combat illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.” The program contributed to tangible results in enhancing the capacity of law enforcement authorities of regional Member States. These regional efforts can be further elaborated in other parts of the world.
Madam Chair,

To effectively identify the needs of Member States, it is essential for all Member States to engage in active exchanges of views. In this regard, we welcome the working paper submitted by the members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Japan supports the paper’s emphasis on the need to produce tangible and concrete results in the area of capacity building. Such an approach will encourage relevant national law enforcement agencies to tackle the difficult issues of control of small arms and light weapons. Japan has provided equipment such as X-ray detectors and other export control related products that strengthen the control measures of countries in the region.

Japan also attaches importance to a comprehensive approach to strengthening the capacity of individual States, another key point made in the NAM paper. Toward this end, this March Japan provided bilateral assistance to Côte D’Ivoire to strengthen community security as well as to prevent proliferation of small arms. This program encompasses not only the capacity-building of relevant authorities but also the collection of illegal arms and stockpile management for arms possessed by the national police.

The NAM paper also highlights the importance of utilizing the UNRCPD, which Japan strongly supports. We agree with the paper’s emphasis on the role the regional center can play in strengthening stockpile management and capacity-building. Japan looks forward to continuing fruitful exchanges of views with our NAM partners to strengthen the implementation of the PoA, thus ensuring the success of the Review Conference in August.

Madam Chair,

In many countries, we are witnessing an increase in the number of small arms flowing into illicit markets and explosions of ammunition storage facilities due to poor stockpile management by the police or military.
The latter directly causes numerous casualties. It is worth noting that, according to the UN, such incidents have occurred in more than 60 countries over the past 15 years. While implementing a detailed record-keeping, tracing mechanism may take some time, even for developed and industrialized countries, the safeguarding of stockpiles is an urgent issue that cannot be postponed. We therefore believe that appropriate stockpile management could be one of the highest priorities for international cooperation. In 2001, we decided to support the UN SaferGuard Programme developed by the UNODA, which includes capacity-building for securing ammunition stockpiles on a request basis.

Madam Chair,

Last but not least, Japan places great importance on the role played by civil society in the PoA process. Members of civil society are not only strong advocates for the significance of the PoA, helping to raise awareness at the global level, but can also play an important role in supporting the implementation of the PoA by Member States. The upcoming Review Conference should make the best use of such resources provided by the members of civil society. Regular dialogue and increased cooperation among Member States, international organizations and civil society are also key elements to promote international cooperation, thus bringing about the success of the Review Conference.

Thank you for your attention.