Mr. Chairman,

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and express my sincere appreciation to your team and the Secretariat for convening this meeting. I am confident that your proven leadership based on your experience in disarmament will lead this conference to a great success. I assure you of my delegation’s full support for the next two weeks.
Mr. Chairman, Excellencies and Colleagues,

The misuse and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons continue to be a major cause of armed conflicts and violence which led to a significant number of violent deaths in recent years. The lack of adequate control of firearms most of which were brought in during conflicts, severely hinders post-conflict reconstruction. Furthermore they spill over into other regions including non-conflict societies, where most criminal violence are attributed to small arms.

The uncontrolled inflow of weapons undermines reconciliation efforts and peace building process which are essential to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The armed conflicts have devastated to the public institutions, infrastructure, and national economy. As a result, people from destabilized societies threatened by the arms have been exposed to human insecurity.

The challenges posed by illicit trade and circulation of the firearms are becoming more complex due to the development of new technologies and materials. Not least the Internet facilitates uncertified manufacture, conversion and diversion of firearms, allowing individuals access to relevant information and the actual transaction of firearms and their parts.

Since the adoption of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, we have made efforts to combat, prevent and eradicate the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. The ROK governments has completed adjustment of national laws on import of small arms allowing only properly marked small arms to be brought into Korea. My government has also
prohibited the online posting or spreading of methods of manufacturing guns, including 3D printing design. My delegation believes that states should bear the primary responsibility to prevent illicit manufacture, diversion and conversion of SALW.

Effective legal instruments and regulations including certified manufacture and tradesafe firearms management are key factors to ensure safe firearms management. As one of the original signatory states and a State Party to the Arms Trade Treaty, the Republic of Korea believes its full and effective implementation will be a powerful tool against illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

Another important tool is the Peace Building Fund. As a contributor of the Peace Building Fund, the ROK government placed great importance on achieving SDGs and has high expectations that the fund will build the much needed capacity in the regions and countries that are mostly affected by the illicit arms trade. We expect international community to explore synergies and linkages, for disarmament that saves lives, between the relevant global instrument and the UN PoA.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, my delegation once again pledges our full cooperation to work for the success of the Third Review Conference and looks forward to constructive discussions over the conference. Thank you very much. /End/