



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**
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Statement on behalf of the
Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations
delivered by
Mr. Nawin Chirapant,
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Thailand to the United Nations

before the Thematic Debate on
Conventional Weapons
of the First Committee,
the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 19 October 2016

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), comprising Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam and my own country, Thailand.

2. ASEAN recognizes the indiscriminate consequences as well as the growing illicit proliferation of conventional weapons. Each year, there are more than 200,000 civilian casualties caused by small arms in conflict situations, which render these weapons the 'real weapons of mass destruction'.

3. The people of ASEAN and beyond continue to be adversely affected by illicit transfer of conventional weapons as well as the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive remnants of wars (ERW). Their impact extends beyond crime, threatening peace and security and hampering economic and social progress including the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chair,

4. ASEAN supports the full and effective implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as it addresses the proliferation of deadly weapons which continue to claim many lives. We welcome discussions held at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS6) in June 2016, particularly on international assistance and cooperation towards a more efficient control of SALW globally, and look forward to positive outcomes of the 3rd Review Conference in 2018. We also reiterate the importance of the legitimate right and authority of every sovereign nation to the use of conventional weapons for internal security and territorial integrity.

5. ASEAN also takes note of development within other frameworks and international legally-binding instruments. These include the 2nd Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty held in Geneva in August 2016, emphasizing the importance of universalization and implementation of the Treaty, the 6th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions held in Geneva in September 2016, reviewing the progress and challenges of convention's implementation, and lastly the 15th Meeting of the State Parties to the Mine Ban Convention to be held in Santiago, Chile from 28 November to 2 December 2016.

Mr. Chair,

6. Regionally, ASEAN Ministers continue to address concerns on conventional arms including arms smuggling through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime and the ASEAN Regional Forum. In addition to the annual meeting of ASEAN police chiefs or ASEANAPOL, the ASEAN Forensic Science Institute, founded in 2015, also helps to promote law enforcement cooperation and information exchange for conducting forensic investigations.

7. We also welcome the inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) at its Headquarter in Phnom Penh on 21 September 2016. The Centre serves as a regional centre of excellence in addressing the humanitarian aspects of unexploded ordinance and explosive remnants of war in interested ASEAN Member States. It also contributes to promoting cooperation within ASEAN and other countries as well as with relevant institutions including the United Nations Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

8. ASEAN notes that in the conventional weapons agenda, there are striking gender and age elements, where women and children are victims and are disproportionately affected. We urge all prevention and victim assistance efforts to take this into account, and to include all victims' voices and perspectives.

9. I thank you, Mr. Chair.
