**STATEMENT TO UNITED NATIONS ON ATT**

Mr. President, I am Sheldon Clare, President of Canada’s National Firearms Association. Our members are collectors of everything from cartridges to fully automatic firearms; they’re sports shooters and Olympic competitors, wholesalers and retailers, re-enactors, members of the movie industry, hunters, people who hand load ammunition, and those who own firearms for defence. Our members are concerned that UN attempts to regulate trade in arms are misdirected and will have an unfair and unreasonable effect upon the ability of free people to have access to firearms and ammunition for perfectly legitimate purposes. It is a false premise that civilian access to small arms is the problem.

Canada's National Firearms Association (NFA) recommends that controls on small arms and light weapons be limited solely to major weapon systems possessed or sold by nation states - not firearms owned or desired to be owned by civilians, also called non-state actors. The rights and property of Canadians, and our firearms businesses engaged in the lawful trade in firearms and ammunition, including surplus firearms and ammunition, must not be subject to UN edict or control. Quite simply, these are matters of national sovereignty, civil freedoms and property rights, and are related to national culture. Also, marking and accounting for ammunition would be exceptionally onerous and expensive for manufacturers and firearm owners alike. Control of ammunition would be unreasonable, unnecessary, and impossible.

The proposed Implementation Support Unit (ISU) could potentially serve as a form of promotional and enforcement agency for the ATT and thus interfere with national sovereignty over laws affecting firearms ownership and use. It could be used to operate a form of international registration system. Funds given to this body and other initiatives such as the Victims Assistance Fund could be directed to terrorist states. Supporting these potentially huge and inappropriate expenses is not in the best interests of Canadians.

Reducing arms in civilian hands can significantly limit the ability of people to defend themselves. This is especially important in the event of unrest and disorder, or in case of state-mandated crimes against humanity. Civilian ownership of arms is an important factor in preventing and limiting the effect of events such as what occurred in Sebrinica and Rwanda. While governments need to act against terrorism, perhaps better ways to deal with unrest would be to address the economic situations, political differences, and human rights issues that contribute to people agitating for change.

A global ATT would only be in the interests of those who would seek economic advantage by limiting market opportunity and of regimes who would use such a treaty to disarm their citizens in order to rule through fear. Thank you for your consideration Mr. President.