Thank you Mr. Chair, (Ambassador Manalo).

Nonviolence International Southeast Asia congratulates Ambassador Enrique Manalo for being elected Chair of the BMS8 and the Philippines for all its work in ensuring the success of this Conference.

NISEA has been diligently working with states in Asia to ensure the strong implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. With support from the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, and our civil society partners in the region, we highlighted the importance of building confidence among states to share on various aspects of arms transfers regulations in line with the UNSG's Disarmament Agenda, including military expenditures & linkages to the Common Country Assessment for better policy interventions that promotes confidence building in transparency and international cooperation.

NISEA continues to work with states for arms regulation aimed at the eradication of illicit arms transfers and maintained it in the policy agenda of states. NISEA has also worked with states to develop legislation and policy to prevent the diversion of weapons through strong criteria and efficient monitoring.

Furthermore, NISEA recognizes that diversion is fueled by many drivers—among them the proliferation of surplus and unserviceable weapons in illicit markets. There remains an urgent demand among Asian countries for assistance on the proper disposal of these weapons, especially in countries that lack capacity, resources and training to do so. We urge states who are in a position to provide assistance to continue to support countries in need to fulfill this goal.

As the NGO partner of several countries in Southeast Asia, NISEA has been a part of civil society movements that push for more specific, implementable and efficient action plans to address illicit arms proliferation. What has been given little attention in the region are youth-based and gender-specific action plans that focus particularly on cross-sectoral issues that primarily affect these vulnerable sectors of society. For this reason,
NISEA has worked with many youth and women-centered organizations and has consistently worked with partner states on youth and gender-based action plans as part of the umbrella under the UN POA. We encourage states to support these endeavors and hope to bring them at the forefront of national action plans.

Mr. Chair, NISEA remains steadfast and ready to work with you and partner states on the fulfillment of our mutual goals.

Thank you.