Speech delivered by
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On the occasion of the 2nd Ministerial Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

Geneva, 31 October – 1st November 2011
Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Arab Emirates is very honored today to be part of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. By joining this initiative lead by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations development Programme (UNDP), my country reiterates its commitment to take tangible and concrete steps towards addressing the incidence and causes of armed violence in line with our efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals in 2015.

We would like to highlight that the foundations of UAE foreign policy is based on peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding, and non-interference in internal issues, as well as the amicable solution of disputes. The results of this policy account for the openness of the UAE to the world, and the strategic partnerships on the political, economic, trade, cultural, scientific, educational and health levels with many countries in all continents.

We are very involved in the activities of United Nations and the other International Agencies to reinforce the peace keeping operations. We are
also extending continuously our financial and humanitarian aid to several countries, whether through development programs, infrastructure support projects, or offering aid to countries suffering from Armed Conflicts and natural disasters directly or indirectly, through the UN and Specialized agencies programs and with other organizations in this field.

As an example, our support to Afghanistan illustrates very well our involvement to help this country. We donated (Dh1.26billion) in 2009, of which more than (Dh863million) was allocated to construction, with the rest going to transport and storage. More than (Dh26million) went to benefit the social infrastructure and services. Since 2003, six UAE-funded medical centres and one hospital have been established in Afghanistan. The UAE hopes that such efforts in assisting social and economic development will have long-lasting effects. We are also supporting the UN Mission in Afghanistan. In addition to that, the UAE participates in the international efforts to reinforce peace and reconstruction in Iraq.

The problem of armed violence is nowadays recognized as one of the biggest obstacles to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It has destructive impacts on development plans and programmes. We believe that The Millennium Development Goals, such as reducing poverty, ensuring maternal health and promoting education are very associated with the prevention and reduction of armed violence.
The UAE also considers that sustainable and long-term support to peace building efforts is crucial. The international community should support efforts to strengthen legitimate and accountable States, as well as local capacities for dialogue and peace building. It is well known that the Post-conflict situations are very complex and some post-conflict situations have rates of armed violence that are higher than during the conflict. In this regard the post-conflict programmes should include among other measures disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, strengthening of the justice and security sectors and promote dialogue and reconciliation. These programmes must be integrated into international, regional and sub-regional approaches and should be implemented by full partnerships between Governments and the different stakeholders.

Armed violence is both a domestic and international security concern, and has regional and transnational dimensions. We need to work together to identify the risk factors of violence in order to design and implement effective violence prevention and reduction strategies. Therefore, we fully support the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development process and endorse the outcome of the 2nd Ministerial Review Conference. We will not spare any effort to implement them in a very constructive way.

I thank you