

Statement of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)

Check Against Delivery

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address this working group. My name is Emily Callsen, and I am the Communications Officer for the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).

IANSA and its more than 500 network members acknowledge the efforts made by the Chair and Member States to ensure that this Open-Ended Working Group continues to recognise the importance of civil society participation and remains open to hearing our contributions.

We also welcome the publication of the draft Substantive Outcome Document weeks prior to this meeting. It allowed civil society organisations to be ready to contribute to this session and to enable relevant discussions between national authorities and civil society organisations.

IANSA is pleased to see the progress made on several fronts we deem fundamental for an effective global framework on conventional ammunition. Given IANSA's focus on SALW ammunition, we particularly welcome and foresee the practical results of objectives 11, 12 and 13, as delineated in the draft Outcome Document, which can facilitate the enhancement of conventional ammunition traceability, analysis and voluntary information-sharing, and data collection.

As stated by some Member States during the first substantive session, improved ammunition marking leads to better quality criminal investigations. Experience shows that the correct identification and analysis of seized cartridges – provided there is enough information available - and consistent record-keeping can generate better intelligence that ultimately helps prevent the diversion of such ammunition. This process could be much more efficient if only cartridges carried more and standardised information.

IANSA also strongly supports the need for voluntary information-sharing practices among national authorities. Given the transnational nature of the firearms and ammunition illicit trade, there is a fundamental need to design and implement mechanisms that allow for interactive and cooperative transnational operations. This will enhance the ability of national authorities to

uncover diversion points and better understand illicit trafficking routes, criminal profiles, trafficking modus operandi, as well as other criminal dynamics.

We must again stress the importance of having an active, comprehensive, and sustainable international cooperation and assistance program. States that can offer technical and financial support should actively do so starting now. We underline the importance of donor Member States considering programs of assistance to the whole range of operational and logistical bodies responsible for preventing and investigating ammunition diversion, and not only military or law enforcement structures. Such assistance should include, but not be limited to, making funds available to train and provide equipment to professionals working in the areas of: licensing bureaus, distribution and sales monitoring, local law enforcement agencies, and arms and ammunition examiners, among others.

IANSA would also like to highlight the importance of objectives 14 and 15 concerning the full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation of women; and the need for cooperation with civil society, academia, research institutions, and industry to enhance through-life conventional ammunition management. However, it is also vital to ensure that other traditionally underrepresented and marginalised groups such as survivors, youth, indigenous people, people of other gender identities and especially those people who are most vulnerable to the effects of armed violence, are fully consulted and to focus on what is needed in practice to enable such groups to help the authorities eradicate the illicit circulation of ammunition.

Finally, IANSA urges all Member States to commit to an agreement that can effectively improve through-life ammunition management, making the outcome document a floor for other regional and national instruments and practices. The illicit and irresponsible trafficking of ammunition and firearms is a global problem that also affects regional and national peace and security. Therefore, the impact of the work brought forth by this OEWG on lived experiences depends directly on the quality of the agreement that can be achieved among States for a strong global framework and how States will commit to translating these objectives and guidelines into national law and regional policies.

IANSA stands ready to continue contributing to the discussions related to this process and encourages other civil society organisations to engage constructively with states and other stakeholders to agree on a strong framework and ensure its effective implementation. In this regard, it is important to underline the need for those Member States in a position to do so to provide increased and sustained funding to civil society so that it can effectively contribute to the implementation of these guidelines.

Mr. Chair, finally, we in IANSA would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your team for your openness, frank dialogues, and engagement with civil society.

Thank you.