



United Kingdom  
Mission to the  
United Nations

**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 80<sup>th</sup> SESSION  
FIRST COMMITTEE**

**THEMATIC DEBATE ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS**

**STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Sarah Macrory, Counsellor International Law, UKMis Geneva  
New York, 23 October 2025

Chair,

The scale of armed conflict is unprecedented, driven primarily by conventional weapons, but also new methods of warfare and technologies. The challenges to established norms on the use and control of conventional weapons and to international humanitarian law are manifold and civilians bear the brunt.

Three years since its illegal invasion of Ukraine, Russia – a state not party to most humanitarian disarmament treaties – continues to drive instability in Europe and security concerns in a number of states. We recognise that as the context that has led some States to take difficult decisions about their membership of humanitarian disarmament treaties. We nevertheless welcome their continued commitment to international law and the key principles of those treaties.

Our own commitment to key conventional arms treaties - to humanitarian disarmament - remains steadfast. The UK's Global Mine Action Programme will provide over 23 million pounds this financial year for interventions in 11 countries. The UK was also pleased to become the 99<sup>th</sup> High Contracting Party to Protocol Five of the C-C-W this past year.

We must do more to prevent human suffering, be it in Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza, the DRC or Haiti, renewing our collective commitment to areas of cooperation, confidence building and shared interests.

We have been buoyed by recent examples of that.

First, States Parties to the ATT reached agreement on setting a 5-year strategy.

Second, Costa Rica will soon host efforts to strengthen our approach to tackling the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.

Third, on approaches to new technologies, the Group of Government Experts on LAWS has made significant progress. And, next year, we look forward to the first meeting of the Open-Ended Technical Expert Group to explore the role of new technologies in Small Arms and Light Weapons under the Programme Of Action.

Fourth, in the 25 years since the UK led the first UN Security Council resolution on Women, Peace and Security, significant global progress has been made on women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in disarmament. That includes the establishment of Gender Focal Points throughout conventional arms agreements, such as the ATT this year.

We must not roll back progress made towards creating a safer, more secure, more equitable world. We will continue to look for ways to preserve what we have achieved and to find common agreement.

Thank you.

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