

Agenda item 5d: Existing international cooperation and assistance

Geneva, 15 August 2022
Joint Statement

Mr. Chair,

I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of Ghana, Jamaica, Singapore, Switzerland and my own country Brazil.

At the first substantive session of this open-ended working group (OEWG) in May, many delegations stressed the importance of international cooperation and assistance for addressing challenges in through-life ammunition management. Many also considered international cooperation and assistance essential for ensuring the success and sustainability of implementing any political commitments that the OEWG is mandated to elaborate.

Recognising the importance of international cooperation and assistance, Brazil, Ghana, Jamaica, Singapore and Switzerland announced in May their intention to co-convene a Geneva informal dialogue series on the topic. They designed the series as an informal contribution to the OEWG and as a platform for exchange and idea generation on how international cooperation and assistance in through-life ammunition management could be further strengthened.

The first dialogue took place in two virtual, interactive sessions in June and July. It brought together more than 70 participants from States, UN entities, international and regional organisations, and non-governmental organisations. Participants exchanged on needs, expertise and other contributions in through-life ammunition management. In particular, they reflected on the adequacy and gaps of existing international cooperation and assistance mechanisms and explored avenues for advancing international cooperation and assistance, including the potential need for a new global mechanism to that effect.

Mr. Chair,

Let me summarise the topics that, in the view of the five co-conveners, have received important support among participants and that could be promising ideas for the OEWG to consider or explore further:

- First, international cooperation and assistance needs to be as global as necessary, and as regional or sub-regional as possible, in support of national implementation. The OEWG could reflect how the political commitments could entail an agile international cooperation and assistance mechanism within the UN that builds on and strengthens what already exists, and promotes complementarity and coherence at different levels. The need for and role of a clearinghouse also warrant further consideration.
- Second, it is essential for effective international cooperation and assistance to make best use of all relevant mechanisms. This requires a sound understanding of possibilities and limitations of each of them. The OEWG could consider tasking a mapping of the complementarities between international cooperation and assistance mechanisms that would inform the operationalisation of a global UN mechanism.
- Third, the OEWG could pay particular attention to sustainability in international cooperation and assistance, complementing immediate risk mitigation. To that effect, strengthening the organisational and operational capabilities at the national level is key so that technical assistance provided can be fully absorbed, integrated and utilised by States in the long term.
- Fourth, the OEWG could promote assessments and analyses as key instruments in international cooperation and assistance for identifying and addressing needs in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.
- Fifth, the OEWG could promote the understanding that sustainable, effective and efficient international cooperation and assistance requires addressing both safety and security risks at all stages of through-life ammunition management and involving all relevant national stakeholders.

- Sixth, international cooperation and assistance is most effective when it allows for information sharing, exchange of experiences and lessons learnt. The OEWG could consider the relevance of a venue to that effect. It could discuss further the different needs for information-sharing and reporting related to the political commitments.
- Finally, international cooperation and assistance benefits from cross-regional cooperation in through-life ammunition management. The OEWG could consider encouraging cooperation across regions and respective organisations.

The discussions at the first informal dialogue were rich. The co-conveners submitted a working paper to the OEWG which attempts to capture key inputs provided by participants. We encourage delegations to consider it, when deliberating international cooperation and assistance. Copies are available in the room.

Thank you.