



**Remarks by  
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**Open-Ended Working Group on conventional ammunition  
(established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/233)  
First substantive session  
New York, 23–27 May 2022**

Thank you Madame Vice-Chair,

At the outset, I would like to join others in congratulating you for your election as Vice Chair and for leading the work of the OEWG. In the same time, allow me to wish to Mr. Albrecht von Wittke, a speedy recovery and to have him very soon here in New York.

My delegation aligns with the statement delivered this morning by the European Union.

Madame Chair,

As a supporter and cosponsor of the General Assembly resolution 76/233, Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, that established the creation of this Open-ended working group, **Albania welcomes the comprehensive report of the UN Group of Governmental Experts** on Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. They provided the membership with streamlined recommendations, that we believe serve as a good bases for further elaboration during our discussion.

GGE report clearly explains how inadequately managed ammunition poses serious danger to civilians, infrastructure and the environment. This material has high risk of being misused, as is particularly attractive to

non-state actors, criminal gangs or terrorist groups, contributing thus to armed violence, conflict and insecurity. Many countries have suffered by accidental explosions in their storage ammunition sites, leaving behind casualties and environmental disasters.

We support the conclusion of the GGE for a comprehensive framework on conventional ammunition that supports both the prevention of unplanned explosions and of the diversion of ammunition, composed of global commitments, regional and sub-regional efforts and national measures, and to build upon the existing bases.

Madame Vice-Chair,

I would like to recall that Albania has made significant progress in the disarmament process. We are the first country in the region to have destroyed the surplus of firearms inherited before the 90s, with the assistance of donor countries, international and regional organizations.

Additionally, we have significantly developed our capacities in this area that can contribute to a deeper cooperation with interested parties.

We are totally committed to continue with the process of surplus ammunition destruction, the renovation and upgrade of the permanent ammunition storage to meet International Standards (ITAG).

Albania has approved the National Strategy on SALW and the Action Plan, to fight against illicit possession, proliferation and trafficking of firearms, and has established the National SALW Commission, in line with the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of small arms and light weapons in the Western Balkans by 2024.

They provide and monitor the implementation of all obligations according to various international documents on arms control (including the SALW Action Plan and OSCE document, Arms Trade Treaty, UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Code of Conduct of the EU, etc., as well as compliance with the objectives of sustainable development of the UN).

We remain firmly committed to fulfill our engagements in enforcing the international and EU standards with regard to the fighting the trafficking of conventional weapons.

Madame Vice-Chair,

Speaking from the perspective of a small Eastern European country, some of the difficulties that countries may encounter during the process of ammunition storage, management and their destruction, are - lack of trained specialists, need for proper funding, upgraded infrastructure and supply equipment, conditions for safety and security storage, better working conditions for the personnel. Other aspect is the need for further improvement and adaptation of national legislation of states with the international legal framework.

In this context, international and regional organizations, have proven extremely helpful in overcoming these difficulties. Their support for the process is very much needed, in providing long-term solutions and internationally recognized standards. In fulfilling its commitments, Albania is in close cooperation with several international, regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as with partners, like Germany, United States, Norway, United Kingdom, Canada, and others.

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) has been facilitating regional cooperation and supporting governments in the region, to strengthen capacities of national and regional stakeholders to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, advance gender equality, facilitate regional cooperation, in line with SDG 5, 16 and 17, accordingly.

In concluding, we believe that advancement of gender equality in security sector reform is important, thus also contributing to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The under-representation of women in this context hinders the articulation of gender perspective in ammunition management practice and policies.

My country supports the observation made by GGE, on a gender and age related in depth analysis, with the view to mitigating gendered impacts, with the purpose of improving safety and security during conventional ammunition management and to mitigate risks effectively.

Thank you.