

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

Statement at the Open-ended working group on Conventional Ammunition, Second Session

17 August 2022

Statement delivered by Samuel Paunila, Head of AMAT, GICHD

Thank you, Mr Chair,

On behalf of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), allow me to reiterate our support to the important work of the Open-Ended Working Group. I would like to thank you and your team for expertly leading the Group over the past months and for providing a platform for contributions from civil society.

The Ammunition Management Advisory Team –AMAT– was established in 2019 as a joint initiative of the GICHD and the United Nations SaferGuard Programme. Our mandate is to provide technical advice and services to States in ammunition through-life management. Our work contributes to achieving Action 22 – safe and secure ammunition stockpiles – of the UN Secretary-General's *Agenda for Disarmament*, also acknowledged by the Group of Governmental Experts in its report.

Mr Chair,

International cooperation and assistance efforts aim to ensure that ammunition is managed by States according to good practice. One way of achieving this is to increase the capacity of States to put in place safety and security measures outlined in the IATG and other relevant standards and guidelines. In this vein, AMAT is currently working on three projects which we believe could usefully feed into the work of the OEWG.

First, with financial support from Austria, Germany and Switzerland, we have developed the Ammunition Management Activity Platform (A-MAP). This new knowledge sharing platform is designed to facilitate coordination by providing States and organisations a one-stop, global information source on who does what and where in ammunition management cooperation and assistance. While other mapping initiatives exist, for instance in small arms and light weapons, A-MAP is the only global platform dedicated to ammunition. Many of the States and civil society organisations present here today have participated in the development of the Platform, which will be launched in September 2022.

Second, with funding from Switzerland and in-kind support from Austria, AMAT has developed a Standardised Assessment Methodology (SAM) for ammunition management by States. Working closely with an expert working group comprising states and civil society organisations, the SAM project develops practical tools and guidance for assessing organisational capabilities in ammunition through-life management, at strategic, operational and technical levels. The SAM toolset is currently being piloted in Peru and will undergo further testing in North Macedonia and Moldova. By the end of this year, the IATG Technical Review Board will review the assessment tools and, once approved, these will be included in the UN SaferGuard IATG implementation support toolkit, becoming freely available resource for States to use.

Finally, increasing ammunition safety and security through the shelf-life and supply chain can be done through the provision of assurance on the effectiveness of national stockpile management practices. While multilateral and regional standards and guidelines for stockpile management call for the provision of such assurance, there is no globally recognised mechanism, or system, for validating compliance against these standards and guidelines.

Against this backdrop, with funding from the EU Council, AMAT is developing a system to validate arms and ammunition policy and practice at the State and sub-State levels. Besides providing the means of assurance on the effectiveness of national stockpile management practices, this validation system aims to help States assess the risk of diversion and accidental explosions associated with a stockpile, for example when considering export licence applications.

Mr Chair,

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute in this Open-Ended Working Group. We remain committed to supporting your work in the months to come.