



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement

Delivered by

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**at the General Debate of the First substantive session
of the Open-ended working group on conventional ammunition**

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Madam Chair,

1. I begin by joining others in congratulating you, Ambassador Chan, on your election as Vice Chair and would like to also voice our appreciation for spirit of volunteerism you have displayed by stepping in at a moment's notice to preside over this important meeting. Please rest assured of Thailand's full cooperation and support. I would like to also express my sincere regret on the unfortunate situation that did not enable Mr. Wittke, our Chair to join us here in New York. I extend to him my delegation's warmest wishes for his speedy recovery and good health.

2. Thailand is supportive of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Conventional Ammunition, established pursuant UNGA resolution 76/233 and welcomes the inaugural meeting of this important body. We hope this meeting will be a valuable and inclusive opportunity for us to kick start the necessary discussions to reflect the multi-faceted nature of the challenges posed by ineffective management of ammunition, including inadequately secured ammunition stockpiles, as well as risks of being diverted to unauthorized users, including criminals, terrorists and other non-State actors. These threats continue to exacerbate armed conflict and pervasive crime, and have destabilizing consequences on Governments and the well-being of our citizens.

3. Against this backdrop, Thailand would like to share a few thoughts on key considerations that will guide us this week.

4. First, Thailand believes that this Group should take into account and build upon the valuable input of existing frameworks to complement and enrich our work. The need to tackle the grave risks posed by surplus guns and ammunition has been an issue of priority for the UN for decades, starting formally with the adoption of Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) in 2001, and most recently in September 2021, the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Problems Arising from the Accumulation of Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus

published its comprehensive report. Most notably, the report notes that problems associated with ammunition extend beyond national stockpile facilities and that ammunition is vulnerable to diversion throughout its life.

6. Furthermore, ammunition management was also a key component of the UN Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament, as was effective control of conventional weapons to reduce strategic risks in the Secretary General's Our Common Agenda report.

7. Second, it is essential that we continue to be reminded of our ultimate goal of enhancing protection and the livelihood of people. For instance, the poor management of ammunition is a barrier to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Target 16.4 on to significantly reduce illicit arms flows by 2030 and Target 16a on to strengthen relevant national institutions for preventing violence and combating terrorism and crime. Thailand also sees the need to incorporate gender dimensions into the discussion at the OEWG, since in the context of peace and security, women are an effective agent of change and for promoting peace and reconciliation.

8. Third, efforts at the international level must also be complemented by robust enforcement at the national level and by close coordination at the regional and subregional levels. Nationally, Thailand is currently developing an online database of arms and ammunition. Regionally, we hope that this initiative will present opportunities to further strengthen cooperation in the verification and tracing of arms and ammunition in our region. The transparent and continuous information sharing among regional partners has proven useful in curbing threats, many of which are borderless in nature.

9. Fourth, recommendations by this Group must take into account different levels of economic development of the Member States and must not impose excessive burden on developing countries. Thailand sees merit for the Group to discuss parameters that ensure that demand-driven support be provided to those in need, especially to developing States.

Furthermore, a systematic platform to experiences sharing would be most welcomed.

10. To conclude: although the efforts on ammunition management have existed, it has become ever more evident that ammunition requires targeted attention. It is thus our earnest hope that this Group will play a crucial role in putting forward proposals to reduce ammunition proliferation, that will in turn stop the spiral of insecurity and save lives.

11. Thank you Madam Chair.
