

STATEMENT
by the Delegation of Ukraine at the First substantive session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition
(23 May 2022, New York)

Madame Chair,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine allow me to congratulate you on your election as a Vice-Chair of the OEWG. We wish also a speedy recovery to Mr. von Wittke, Chair of the Group, and hope that he will be able to arrive in New York soon.

Ukraine welcomes the adoption of the final report of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus and supports the UN General Assembly resolution 76/233, by which this OEWG was established.

We fully concur with the conclusions of the report of the GGE, in which it is stated that inadequately managed ammunition poses a serious danger to civilians, infrastructure and the environment.

We recognize that the ammunition is also particularly attractive to non-State actors, because it can be used to manufacture improvised explosive devices, as well as with the fact that all ammunition stolen from storage sites can contribute to armed violence, conflict and insecurity.

Considering various challenges stemming from diversion of ammunition, as well as risks related to ensuring proper safety and security of stockpiles of conventional ammunition, we fully support the mandate of the Group aimed at elaborating of a set of political commitments as a new global framework to address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management.

Madame Chair,

We cannot but draw the attention of UN Member States to the ongoing unprovoked and unjustified armed aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

From the first day of the war, the Russian armed forces have been attacking Ukraine with different types of conventional arms, including missiles, tanks, aviation and navy vessels.

Russia uses explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas, such as cluster munitions and incendiary weapons, which cause civilian injuries, including among women and children, as well as severe damage to civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings, hospitals, maternity hospitals and kindergartens.

Russian troops have already massively mined territories and residential districts in various regions of Ukraine.

Considering their struggle to advance, Russian troops continue to shell missiles regularly on peaceful Ukrainian cities in order to terrorize our population. Most of those missiles hit civilians, not military infrastructure. These are clearly desperate actions of the aggressor, who fails to achieve its objectives.

Madame Chair,

Russia has not only practically violated the existing arms control regimes in Europe, but, in fact, totally ruined them, besides that they have already been seriously undermined by Moscow before its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is a brutal violation of the UN Charter and basic norms and principles of the international law, as well as international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Ukrainian law enforcement agencies revealed and launched investigation into almost 8 thousand war crimes committed by Russian forces, with new mass graves and burials found every day.

Ukraine will spare no effort to hold all perpetrators of those crimes accountable.

In conclusion, Madame Chair, we would like to stress that the restoration of European security and stability is impossible unless the Russian Federation seizes its aggression against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraws all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you.