

Agenda item 4: General exchange of views

New York, 13 February 2023
Joint Statement

Mr. Chair,

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

Since the start of the open-ended working group (OEWG), many States have stressed the importance of international cooperation and assistance in addressing the challenges of through-life ammunition management. Many delegations also considered these factors essential for ensuring the success and sustainability of implementing the political commitments that our Group is currently elaborating.

In this context, Brazil, Ghana, Jamaica, Singapore and Switzerland decided to co-organise the Geneva informal dialogue series on the topic of international cooperation and assistance in through-life ammunition management. We designed it as an informal contribution to the OEWG and as a platform for the exchange and generation of ideas on how international cooperation and assistance could be further strengthened. The first informal dialogue took place in summer 2022.

Building on this first informal dialogue and deliberations at the OEWG, the second informal dialogue was held in December 2022 in an interactive online format. It gathered more than 70 participants from States, UN entities, international and regional organisations, and non-governmental organisations. Participants reflected upon elements of international cooperation and assistance being discussed at the OEWG. They also exchanged ideas on strengthening the sub-regional, regional and global architecture for international cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Chair,

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

- First, sub-regional and regional organisations and mechanisms should be the primary level for cooperation and assistance. The OEWG could emphasise their key role in supporting States in through-life ammunition management and ensure their prominent involvement in future global debates. The OEWG could also encourage the UN and other stakeholders to support sub-regional and regional organisations, at their request, to establish or designate an entity for through-life ammunition management, where it does not exist.
- Second, international cooperation and assistance needs to be facilitated at the sub-regional and regional levels as far as possible. Yet, some regions may not have related mechanisms or such mechanisms may have limited capacity. The OEWG could ensure that the political commitments include an agile and efficient global mechanism, within the UN SaferGuard programme, available to all States to request, offer and receive assistance. In this regard, the OEWG could task UNODA to develop the necessary templates, processes and modalities, including a clearing house function. Such a clearing house could help promote coordination, complementarity and coherence in international cooperation and assistance, in support of and as a supplement to sub-regional and regional assistance mechanisms.
- Third, reporting on the implementation of the political commitments is essential, but can be a burden for States. The OEWG could reflect further on an efficient and meaningful scope and frequency of national reporting. It could also recommend that a future reporting template allow for efficient cross-referencing with reporting processes under other relevant frameworks.
- Fourth, the OEWG could consider an efficient focal point system by requesting States to designate one national focal point for the implementation of the political commitments. The OEWG could also recognise the relevance of sub-regional and regional focal points, and promote cooperation and coordination among focal points.

- Fifth, follow-up meetings can be an effective means to monitor the implementation of the political commitments. Their mandate and frequency require careful consideration. The OEWG could recommend that global-level meetings focus primarily on operational matters. It could also consider a flexible initial set-up for follow-up meetings that allows for later review and adaptation as needed.
- Sixth, expert-level meetings can be an effective means for the exchange of lessons learnt. The OEWG could explore the suitability of the international meetings of national mine action directors and UN advisers as a potential model for expert-level exchanges among ammunition management practitioners.
- Finally, rosters of experts with different expertise, validated according to the IATG, and from different regions, are an essential instrument for effective international cooperation and assistance. The OEWG could task UNODA to maintain the global roster of experts under the UN SaferGuard programme and diversify it in line with the possible expansion of the IATG on security aspects.

The co-conveners have submitted to the OEWG a working paper titled “Second Geneva informal dialogue on international cooperation and assistance for through-life ammunition management: Strengthening means to match needs, expertise and resources” which seeks to capture input provided by participants during that informal dialogue. We encourage delegations to consider it this week, when discussing international cooperation and assistance as well as a follow-up and review process. Copies are available in the room.

Thank you.