



Small Arms Survey
Maison de la Paix 2E
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2
CP 1672 - 1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland
t +41 22 908 5777 f +41 22 732 2738
e sas@smallarmssurvey.org w www.smallarmssurvey.org

Statement of the Small Arms Survey¹
Fourth Substantive Session
Open-ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition
8 June 2023

Thank you, Chair. Distinguished members of the Open-ended Working Group and representatives of international organizations, regional organizations and civil society.

The Small Arms Survey, an associated program of the Fondation pour l'étude des relations internationales et du développement in Geneva, Switzerland, welcomes the progress made in developing the draft Global Framework for through-life management of conventional ammunition, and we sincerely congratulate the Chair, the Vice Chair and their remarkable team for leading and facilitating this process so ably.

The Small Arms Survey has documented illicit and diverted small-calibre ammunition and its effects in a range of contexts. Our most recent major report, *Weapons Compass: The Caribbean Firearms Study*,² produced in partnership with CARICOM IMPACS, builds on research techniques applied in a 2022 study of crime ammunition mapping in four European countries.³ I will briefly mention a few specific findings from this workstream, which are of particular relevance for the draft Global Framework and perhaps, in particular, Objective 11.

First, according to these studies, only a small minority of ammunition recovered by law enforcement agencies in crimes had a year of production mark (some 11% in the Caribbean

¹An associated program of the Fondation pour l'étude des relations internationales et du développement, accredited to this substantive session (see A/CONF.239/2022/INF/1).

²Fabre, Anne-Séverine, Nicolas Florquin, Aaron Karp and Matt Schroeder. 2023. *Weapons Compass: The Caribbean Firearms Study*. Geneva: Small Arms Survey. April.

³Desmarais, André, Anne-Séverine Fabre, Benjamin Jongleux, Glenn Lawrence, Denis Werner and Nicolas Florquin. 2022. '[Monitoring illicit ammunition through the ballistic datasets of four European countries.](#)' *Forensic Science International*, Vol. 330, January.

sample and 28% in the European sample), so we would support the statement of the distinguished representative from CARICOM IMPACS on the advantages of including the year of production marking on conventional ammunition in Objective 11(a)(1).

We would add that, in the future, profiling ammunition seizures and cartridges used in crimes and shootings, as the Survey has done, will become all the more policy relevant as this Group's guidance on marking is implemented. Monitoring will offer a window into whether the new marking recommendations in Objective 11 are being implemented and whether new ammunition in circulation is in line with the guidance.

Second, the Caribbean and European studies point to a marking issue that the Technical Expert Group may wish to consider following the conclusion of the Framework: that is, large producers have manufacturing facilities in several countries. If the goal is to facilitate the identification of diversion or illicit trafficking, then for large manufacturers, especially, marking the specific country of production information is also important.

Third, these studies have demonstrated that significant untapped datasets of illicit ammunition already exist, for instance those maintained by national ballistics laboratories, that contain significant relevant information and imagery on illicit ammunition. We are convinced that these existing capacities can be adapted for the purpose of firearms ammunition identification and tracing by law enforcement, without necessarily building new systems from scratch.

Finally, other recent Small Arms Survey research indicates that there is still much to be done to understand the role that diverted ammunition plays in different kinds of armed violence, and the differentiated impacts on women, men, boys and girls.⁴ This requires linking ammunition profiling to sex-disaggregated victim data, and represents a clear and unambiguous link between the work of this Group, the resulting Global Framework, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁴ See LeBrun, Emile, André Desmarais, Kheira Djouhri, and Nicolas Florquin. 2022. [*Extracting Evidence: Opportunities and Obstacles in Assessing the Gendered Impacts of Diverted Ammunition*](#). Geneva: Small Arms Survey. July.

Chair, that was our prepared statement. But if I could have 10 more seconds, a number of delegations have spoken eloquently this week about the essential contributions that women play in all aspects of the peace and security domain. I would like to remember and register my personal gratitude to one such individual, Dr. Katherine Kaufer Christoffel, the first mentor I had in work on arms and ammunition proliferation control, back in 1994. Dr. Christoffel, who is unfortunately gravely ill at the moment, was an early pioneer in the public health approach to armed violence reduction, especially among children, and though I am sure she would not want her own contributions elevated above those of the many other early pioneers that laid the groundwork for our collective work, I am also sure that I am not the only one to have been inspired by her contributions and by her example.

Thank you, Chair.