Statement by
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First Substantive Session

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In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude for your assumption of the
chairmanship of this august body and assure you of our constructive engagement in the
deliberations of the OEWG.

Apart from the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, we believe that
conventional ammunition should be handled with caution, taking into account the
legitimate needs and concerns of member states, including the need to address their
national security concerns.

The elaboration of any framework to manage the conventional ammunition, including
problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in
surplus, must not jeopardize the legitimate rights of all States to the inherent right to
individual or collective self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.
This inherent right should encompass the right of each State to manufacture, import, and
retain the non-prohibited weapons and ammunition for self-defense and security
purposes, as well as its participation in peacekeeping operations. However, criminal
groups and terrorist organizations must be denied access to these weapons.

Therefore, to reinforce the safety and security of these weapons, a number of
requirements including the following are in order:
1. The final document of the OEWG should reflect its voluntary and non-binding nature while encompassing various positions of the member states. The Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus should have focused on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus as the only task that was assigned to the GGE. However, there is now a big contrast in terms of the scope and breadth of the GGE's mandate and its final report.

2. The outcome document should reaffirm the state's inherent right to individual or collective self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter as well as each state's legitimate right to manufacture, import, and retain conventional ammunition for self-defense and security purposes. We recommend that this legal entitlement be acknowledged at the beginning of the document.

3. It should also be highlighted that it is the sovereign prerogative of Member States to decide, oversee, and manage the safety and security of their conventional ammunition.

4. The management of the conventional ammunition should be addressed in a comprehensive, long-term, and effective manner emphasizing the necessity of long-term capacity building, financial support, technology, and equipment transfer. As a result, international cooperation through concrete measures should be elaborated in the outcome document specifying the proper commitments by all, particularly the developed countries, the private sector, and industry. We are convinced that adequate, measurable, sustainable, unconditional, non-discriminatory, and timely international cooperation and support are required to guarantee the full and effective implementation of the framework to be developed on conventional ammunitions. A review of the GGE report as well as the program of work of the OEWG reveals that while there is an ambitious approach towards the suggested elaboration of a new global framework that can address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management, the issue of international cooperation is not viewed through a similar prism. It is even unusual that the Report calls for international cooperation to be consistent with national laws in paragraph 66, whereas the correct approach should be the opposite. Similarly, the Report makes no mention of the importance or even the issue of technology transfer.

5. The GGE report should be supplemented by a thorough examination of all potential threats to the safety and security of conventional ammunition. UCMs and their detrimental influence on access to essential technologies are prime examples in this respect.
6. Last but not the least, the decision-making by consensus should be preserved and respected in this process. Since the GGE Report was used as a basis to adopt Resolution 76/233 establishing this OEWG without giving member states enough time to reflect and submit their views on the report, using a consensus approach in this OEWG will strengthen the credibility and viability of the final outcome. Furthermore, we believe that non-consensual issues, such as establishing synergy with instruments that are not universally accepted, should be avoided.

Thank you!