STATEMENT BY

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COUNSELLOR

“OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION”

23rd May 2022
New York
Mr. Chair,

At the outset my delegation congratulates you on your election as Chair of the Open-ended working group on conventional ammunition. We also congratulate all the other members of the Bureau on their election and assure the Bureau of our full cooperation and support.

2. Ghana aligns itself with the statement delivered by Gambia on behalf of the African Group. We however would like to make some additional remarks in our National Capacity.

Mr. Chair,

3. Ghana recognizes that though a number of global norms and instruments have been adopted to address the illicit trafficking, trading and diversion of small arms and light weapons, the minimal success achieved has meant that these drivers have continued to fuel conflict and armed violence and have impacted negatively on development. The seeming lack of impact, is largely attributable to the absence of controls in ammunition transfers given that guns are “worthless” without bullets. This clearly indicates, that any global effort aimed at addressing the humanitarian consequence of the misuse of small arms and light weapons without the control of ammunition will not achieve the desired purpose.

4. The current standards governing international trade in ammunition are inadequate, often weak, less accountable and less transparent in comparison with those governing trade in arms. Ammunition flows are difficult to monitor,
as such, the risk of diversion to unauthorized or illicit users is ever present. It is in this regard that Ghana repeatedly calls for the global management and control of ammunition to address the gaps in the global efforts to curb the misuse of small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chair,

5. You would recall that, at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of State Parties (BMS6) held last June to consider the implementation of the UN Program of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and light weapons in all its aspects (UNPoA), Ghana made a strong call for the inclusion of ammunition in the UNPoA implementation process. Ghana’s statement was supported by forty-three (43) other States (Mostly from the European Union) showing a strong support by several delegations for the call.

6. Also, ahead of the Third Review Conference (RevCon3) of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects (UNPoA) held in June, 2018, Ghana and Germany published a joint working paper on ammunition through which Member States can establish effective synergies between the UNPoA and UN General Assembly resolution 75/22 on ammunition management, in ways that are mindful of each country’s position on the subject. Aside our national interventions, Ghana also initiated a process and received the support of 76 states from Africa, the Caribbean States, Latin American States and States within the European Union to deliver a joint statement for the inclusion of ammunition management and regulation of its illicit trade in the UNPoA outcome document during the Conference.
Mr. Chair,

7. Ghana’s expression of interest and membership of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant Resolution 72/55 titled “Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus” is therefore in demonstration of our commitment to the work of the Group.

8. The report of the GGE provides an excellent basis for further work to be done by states to address the existing gaps in the through-life cycle management of ammunition.

Mr. Chair,

9. On our part, we believe the report reflects priorities, views and perspectives of ECOWAS Member States on the GGE process, which were discussed and collated during various consultation meetings organized by the ECOWAS Commission.

Mr. Chair,

10. Ghana therefore supports the proposed multilayered response to address the existing gaps in the through-life cycle management of ammunition. That is, a global set of political commitments, a regional mechanism and a robust implementation mechanism to mobilize action at the national level.

Mr. Chair,
11. My delegation would present more elaborate proposals in our subsequent interventions and looks forward to those of other member states.

I thank you Mr. Chair.