Madam Chair,

First of all, Japan would like to congratulate you for assuming the position of Vice Chair, and also express our appreciation to you for helping us all to have this first session of our important working group as originally scheduled.

Japan would also like to express its gratitude to the Chair, H.E. Mr. Von Wittke, and his team for their tireless work to convene this meeting, and wishes the speedy recovery of Mr. Von Wittke.

Japan attaches importance to the international efforts for safe and secure through-life management of conventional ammunition, and respects the deliberation that has been made in this area so far, especially the work done by the Group of Governmental Experts in the past two years, which produced a valuable set of recommendations.

Japan welcomes that this Open-Ended Working Group has now commenced, and hopes that our Group’s discussions will build on previous work towards safe and secure ammunition management at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels.
Madam Chair,

Today’s international situation makes us recognize again that universalization is key to successful arms control and disarmament. We believe that, in order for our working group to be a success, we need to aim to reach an outcome that is acceptable to as many States as possible so that it enjoys universal commitment.

We look forward to constructive discussions this week. Madam Chair, please be assured of Japan’s support to you and the Chairman throughout this process. Japan is ready to contribute to the work of our Group to increase safety and security through better ammunition management.

I thank you, Madam Chair.