Open-Ended Working Group on conventional ammunition

New York, 23–27 May 2022

General Statement – POLAND

Mr. Chair,

Let us first to congratulate you on your appointment as chairperson.

Poland fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the EU and wishes to underline, our long-standing commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at strengthening international peace and security, promoting transparency in international arms holdings and transfers. as well as compliance with universal values and international obligations in field of International Humanitarian Law. Today, the entire international community is witnessing how these values are violently undermined and broken by the Russian armed forces waging an aggressive war in Ukraine. This fact would greatly undermine all cooperation initiatives, with the participation of a state that is openly opposed to the values commonly held by all civilized countries.

We would like to emphasize the importance of international initiatives taken at the UN forum and other multilateral formats for the international regulation of the issue of trade in weapons and ammunition. As a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty and other international agreements contributing to the transparency of international arms transfers and building mutual trust, Poland actively participates in the forums related to the control of arms transfers and dual-use technologies. Together with other EU Member States, we have managed to establish a community framework for cooperation based on common control standards set out in Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, also in the field of conventional ammunition. We are constantly striving to universalize standards in this area.

The development and adoption of international political recommendations for the management of ammunition throughout their lifetime are in line with the overall objectives of international arms trade, arms control agreements and disarmament initiatives. This applies in particular to the trading of SALW and the risks of diversion, accidental explosions or illegal trade. One should be aware that all necessary and useful initiatives aimed at regulating the issue of conventional ammunition affect areas directly related to the security policy of each country. Considering the importance of this fact, a careful approach and development of a policy framework related to ammunition management should be sought to make it acceptable and applicable to the widest possible range of stakeholders.

We trust that the proceedings of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework that will address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management serve such purposes. Therefore, Poland declares its readiness to actively participate in the discussion on the future regulation of the safe management of conventional munitions, adopted on the basis of the broadest possible consensus and voluntary approach. Only such a perspective guarantees the effective universalization of the adopted solution in the spirit of commonly held values and the common goal of building mutual trust and international security.

Thank you.