Thank you, Mister Chair.

We are glad the Chair has made it to New York in-person and we thank DPR Chan of Costa Rica for her able leadership and for her swift response to the call of duty. Again, you can both count on the full support of the Philippines, Mister Chair and Madame Vice Chair, to the success of this OEWG.

Mister Ivor Fung,

Thank you for your expert briefing on existing international cooperation and assistance.

Mister Chair,

On agenda item 5(d) – Existing International Cooperation and Assistance, the Philippines wishes to emphasize that, indeed, those with the most severe ammunition management problems are often those least equipped in identifying and addressing them. Thus, international cooperation and assistance are indispensable to enable states to identify and help them address problems on conventional ammunitions management.

There must be a root cause analysis of national or even regional or subregional challenges so that plans, programs and actions are responsive to the needs of the state/region/subregion.

Capacity assessment programs would be useful to allow states to identify and mitigate security and safety risks at each stage of the through-life management of conventional ammunitions. Further, it will enable states to identify available resources and maximize national capacity.
Existing programs, reporting mechanisms and institutions can be expanded to accommodate conventional ammunitions management. In the Philippines, the current 2022 draft National Action Plan on small arms and lights weapons includes ammunition in all functional areas, to reflect the fact that existing laws, especially Republic Act No. 10591 or the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Act, include conventional ammunitions management. As created by Republic Act No. 10697 or the Strategic Trade Management Act and its implementing rules and regulation, the Philippines has the Strategic Trade Management Office, the lead government agency responsible for the establishment of management systems for the trade in strategic goods and other related matters pertaining to national security, non-proliferation, foreign policy, national defense and strategic industrial resource functions.

Once needs are identified and various aspects of capacity are assessed, Member States, especially developing and least developing ones, would now need a menu of options for cooperation and assistance. It would be useful, if, within the ambit of the UN, there is a clearing house where a menu of options for cooperation and assistance matching recipient and donor states of its needs and capacity, respectively. In this clearing house, recipient states transparently see available options which matches their needs, priorities and sovereign policies. This is important as many Member States take that position that assistance must not be hinged on any conditionalities. It should be needs-based and with tailored operationalization of standards, guidelines, best practices, taking into account existing mechanisms.

Finally, Mister Chair, we find that, on many aspects of the through-life management of conventional ammunitions, we need not reinvent the wheel. Many existing plans, programs, guidelines and institutions can be taken advantage of. They can be expanded or we can build upon them.

Thank you, Mister Chair.