



**Statement on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Service**

**Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade  
Treaty**

**Tuesday 23 August 2016**

**Geneva**

Mister President,

It is my pleasure to address you today on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Service, UNMAS, and to congratulate you on your assumption as President of the Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

The Arms Trade Treaty is one of the most important treaties in the field of disarmament and arms control. It has the potential for reducing the impact of the illicit and irresponsible trade of conventional arms, including notably small arms and light weapons, but also to limit the consequences of unsecure and unsafe stockpiles through weapons and ammunition management. The importance of weapons and ammunition stockpile management is also stressed in Article 16 of the Arms Trade Treaty.

In his 2015 report on small arms, the Secretary-General underlined the importance of weapons and ammunition management. I quote, “poor weapons management is an area of alarming concern. Many States lack thorough planning, consistent attention and adequate resources to ensure their safe storage, handling, transportation and disposal.” End of quote.

Weapons and ammunition management is a relatively new area in which the mine action sector has been engaging. The long-term expertise in dealing with explosive ordnance and established best practices within the mine action community has proven valuable to addressing weapons and ammunition management.

Inadequately managed conventional arms and ammunition stockpiles pose a threat to civilian populations, and represent a risk to the security of states. Not only do the effects of unplanned explosions at arms and ammunition storage sites have wide reaching consequences, but also poor management and control of stockpiles can lead to illicit cross-border trafficking of the arms used to fuel conflicts.

When requested by the Security Council, or by a host government, UNMAS deploys its technical experts to mentor, train and, at times, equip national authorities on effective weapons and ammunition management responses. UNMAS weapons and ammunition management projects have been established in a number of countries including Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Bissau,

Haiti, Mali, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan. Through its work, UNMAS strengthens the capacity, supports peacebuilding and protects civilians from the consequences of illicit arms and ammunition trafficking.

UNMAS uses its “Pool of Experts” of Ammunition Technical Officers to enable rapid deployment, maintains a Community of Practice to capture and share lessons learned, and operationalizes the International Technical Ammunition Guidelines (IATGs). Gender perspectives are also mainstreamed in all aspects of UNMAS work in order to maximise impact.

UNMAS also supports states parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions to comply with their respective obligations regarding the destruction of stockpiles of antipersonnel mines, as well as of cluster munitions and explosive submunitions, respectively.

UNMAS will elaborate further on our contribution to international assistance, and on partnerships, during the relevant discussions this afternoon.

Thank you.