



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,

The United Nations Mine Action Service, UNMAS, welcomes the decision of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty to hold discussions on Article 16 regarding International Assistance, which provide us with the opportunity to share some of the activities that UNMAS conducts in support of weapons and ammunition stockpile management.

As mentioned in our statement during the general debate, when requested by a host government or by the Security Council, UNMAS supports the development and strengthens the capacity of relevant national institutions like security forces (army, police or gendarmerie) through:

- The training and mentoring on weapons and ammunition management;
- The provision of technical advice, including for the drafting of national guidelines, strategies and plans; and,
- The construction, rehabilitation and equipping of storage facilities.

UNMAS weapons and ammunition management projects have been established in a number of countries, such as in Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Mali, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan, predominantly through peacekeeping mandates.

UNMAS is also a significant promotor and supporter of the operationalization of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs). Based on the IATGs, UNMAS also supported authorities in the development of their own national standards, such as the case of Côte d'Ivoire. At the global level, partnering closely with the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, UNMAS was instrumental in developing the United Nations SaferGuard toolkit for implementing the IATGs.

UNMAS has also created a pool of experts of Ammunition Technical Officers with experience in storage, inspection, transportation and stockpile destruction of ammunition, as well as in the development and administration of new storage facilities.

An internal Community of Practice has also been established to allow for the review of UNMAS interventions, and the identification and sharing of lessons learnt, best practices as well as, areas for improvement.

UNMAS explores opportunities to build on its collaborative relationships to strengthen existing partnerships with the African Union and its member states, and other key regional organizations.

UNMAS also works with counterparts to raise awareness and advocate for compliance with treaties dealing with weapons and ammunition, such as with provisions on storage and stockpile destruction in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and in the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Furthermore, UNMAS has supported the compliance of national authorities with conditions related to arms embargoes. Strong weapons and ammunition management procedures implemented with the support of UNMAS have resulted in partial lifting of some embargoes, as in the case of Somalia.

Another partner has been UNIDIR. UNMAS worked closely with UNIDIR on a weapons and ammunition management project in Somalia, the objective of which was to enhance the capacity of national lawmakers and relevant security authorities in Somalia by supporting or leading the review of relevant national frameworks.

South-South cooperation has proven to be an effective model for capacity development and could also make a significant contribution to the implementation of Article 15 on International Cooperation. UNMAS promotes South-South cooperation in its activities, and facilitates exchanges of experiences and lessons learnt between national authorities. For example, UNMAS organized exchanges between security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Sudan with UNMAS technical experts and also UNMAS-trained national authorities.

Capacity development for effective weapons and ammunition management is critical to long-term sustainable implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. Stockpile management is

an important enabler and UNMAS continues to stand ready to contribute its technical expertise, as needed.

Thank you.