



## **Statement of Tech 4 Tracing**

### **Open-ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition Fourth Substantive Session**

**8 June 2023**

Distinguished members of the Open-ended Working Group and representatives of regional and international organizations and civil society,

My name is Robert Sim, and I am Research Director at Tech 4 Tracing (T4T), an NGO partnership between new technology experts and arms control professionals whose objective is to incubate, test, and help deploy new technologies for enhanced arms and ammunition control in advancement of international agreements and in support of national authorities, law enforcement, human rights investigations and peacekeepers.

T4T applauds the progress that this Group has made over the last year toward achieving its mandate to address gaps in the through-life management of conventional ammunition held by States. It is encouraging and exciting to see consensus emerging.

In my intervention I will make just a few brief points based on the language in the Rev.2 version of the Draft Global Framework.

Objective 13 on 'enhancing data collection and analysis by competent national authorities' is of vital importance. As the rationale section of the outcome document rightly notes, 'Collecting data on seized and recovered conventional ammunition, within the context of national law enforcement and customs and border control operations, is fundamental to identifying, analyzing and redressing diversion.'

The rationale section also partly explains why this gap exists, noting that authorities may overlook ammunition while investigating weapons trafficking. It might be added that, even when national authorities pay attention to ammunition in the context of investigations, they may not take steps to thoroughly document it, or seek to establish whether it was diverted, either because investigations prioritize other objectives or because relevant authorities do not have capacities or systems in place to facilitate analyses.

As T4T has highlighted in the previous meetings of this Group, as well as during a side event co-hosted by Belgium and Mexico at the Eighth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the set of new tools available to authorities to identify, document, and map illicit arms and ammunition is set to grow rapidly.

Since T4T is working in this domain in consultation with authorized law enforcement and other agencies, I will mention one such initiative in development, our automated ammunition identification tool, which uses computer vision to document ammunition seized using not only headstamp markings but other physical features of cartridges including geometry, dimensions, and type of material and surface coloration. The development of this tool is being supported by UNSCAR and the European Union.

With this in mind, we strongly support the inclusion of paragraph (a)(iv) of the common enabling measures of Objective 13, to 'encourage the development, application and adoption of new technology-based enhancements for effective conventional ammunition documentation, identification and tracing.'

Finally, we encourage the Technical Experts Meetings envisioned under Section V, paragraphs 41 and 42 of the outcome document to include discussions of new technology-based solutions to data collection for documenting diversion, and the scope for their application in a range of crime and conflict contexts.

Tech 4 Tracing looks forward to engaging the Secretariat and cooperating with Member States that have a particular interest in advancing in this area, in the months and years ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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