



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 954th FSC Plenary Meeting on SALW and SCA
(16 September 2020, Hofburg, also via video teleconferencing)
(Agenda item 1, Security Dialogue on SALW/SCA)

Madame Chairperson,

We join other delegations in warmly welcoming today's speakers and thank them for their thoughtful presentations and valuable contribution to this important discussion on SALW and SCA. Ukraine recognized the importance of this topic by organizing dedicated FSC security dialogue this May during its Chairpersonship.

Illicit SALW and conventional ammunition continue to contribute to instability and armed violence, derailing sustainable development and crisis management efforts, further destabilizing the OSCE region, fueling conflicts, organized crime and terrorist attacks in our region and beyond.

OSCE has a unique set of tools to address these pressing challenges to regional security and stability. Broad and continuous application of our political-military instruments dealing with arms control and disarmament is of paramount importance to this end. A vital role herein plays full and bona fide implementation of the OSCE documents in the field of SALW and SCA.

We welcome the efforts aimed at updating best practice guides in order to enhance the implementation of our commitments in this field, considering new challenges and technological advance. This work should continue with the view to modernize the OSCE documents on SALW and SCA. Particular attention should be attached to effective mechanisms in tackling cross-border illicit trafficking of SALW and conventional ammunition, not leaving aside the conflict areas.

The OSCE, through its field missions and offices, implements a range of practical assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA in many participating States. This is an effective tool to enhance the participating States' capabilities in combating illicit trafficking, excessive and destabilizing accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition.

Ukraine has been benefiting from this assistance projects which contributed to alleviating the threats of explosive remnants of war, reducing stockpiles of hazardous rocket fuel and other materials. On behalf of Ukraine, I would like to express appreciation of the contributions of the participating States to SALW/SCA project activities in Ukraine. In particular, the announced contribution of the United States to the project activities related to removal and disposal of over 460 tons of chemical hazardous waste from Bila Tserkva and thus, addressing threats to the human security and environment. We also appreciate the United States contribution to promote good practices, knowledge transfer and equipment assistance programme in explosive ordnance disposal.

Distinguished colleagues,

Countering illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a top priority given formidable security challenge we face nowadays defending Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Ukraine is being committed to continue implementing standing OSCE and international documents in the field of small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition. In particular, the production, possession and destruction of small arms and light weapons in my country are licensed and supervised in accordance with a number of national regulations. We attach particular importance to ensuring effective export control procedures that meet all international requirements. In this sphere Ukraine strictly adheres to decisions taken by the OSCE, UN Security Council and international export control regimes.

Ukraine has been facing large scale illicit trafficking SALW and conventional ammunition through the segment of its border located within the temporarily occupied areas of the Donbas region of Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission regularly reports on clandestine night-time convoys entering and exiting Ukraine through points deviating border crossing facilities. More weapons and military equipment, including SALW and conventional ammunition, find its way to Ukraine through the above-mentioned parts of the border under the guise of humanitarian assistance or by other diverse routes. All of the mentioned convoys and cargos enter and exit the territory of Ukraine in full violation of its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Such actions contradict the letter and the spirit of the OSCE norms and principles in the field of SALW and SCA and undermine further global and regional efforts in this domain. They erode the internationally established export control and licensing procedures securing effective customs and border controls.

The only viable way to halt this downward trend is to restore full control by the Government of Ukraine over the entire stretch of our country's internationally recognized borders.

Further progress in this direction would substantially strengthen the security of the whole OSCE region and terminate further destabilizing transfers of weapons and ammunition.

Thank you!