



United States Mission to the OSCE

Forum for Security Cooperation SALW/SCA Session Statement

September 16, 2020

Thank you Madame Chairperson,

Twenty years ago, participating States recognized the threats of excess stockpiles of small arms and light weapons, or SALW, and agreed on the OSCE Document on SALW. When the participating States of the OSCE adopted this document, we agreed on measures to combat the illicit trafficking in SALW and prevent their irresponsible transfer or export and the destabilizing accumulation of SALW. The United States has been a strong supporter of efforts to implement all components of the OSCE Document on SALW over the last twenty years.

Since the document's original adoption, the United States has been a leading contributor to assistance programs, both within the OSCE region and worldwide, that helps states destroy excess stockpiles of small arms and light weapons and better secure those retained for legitimate national defense, as well as to improve state capacity to manage these issues. Simply put, the United States has helped to make the OSCE region safer. Some highlights of U.S. funding assistance in the 20 year time span of the OSCE Document on SALW have included the following, including assistance funded through OSCE, other multilateral mechanisms, and bilaterally:

In Albania: We joined many of our OSCE partners in a NATO Trust Fund to assist Albania to with reducing its excess and obsolete stockpiles and funded the demilitarization of SALW and more than 12,000 metric tons of munitions. A separate project following the accidental explosion at Gerdec saw the removal of nearly 150,000 pieces of dangerous munitions.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina: Since 2012, we have contributed \$13.8 million for the destruction of SALW and over 4,100 metric tons of obsolete munitions.

In Georgia: A 2015 United States contribution supported the OSCE project to destroy its cluster munitions stocks and other aerial bombs.

In Serbia: We contributed to the joint OSCE-UNDP Conventional Ammunition and Stockpile Management project in 2016, which destroyed SALW stockpiles and over 1,100 metric tons of munitions, enhanced the Serbian MOD's demilitarization line, and upgraded three Ministry of Interior depot sites to international safety and security standards.

In Tajikistan: Since 2006, The United States has allocated over \$3.6 million to the OSCE Program Office for the renovation, upgrade, and construction of a national ammunition warehouse facility on the outskirts of Dushanbe, in addition to assistance for bolstering Tajikistan's demining and explosive hazard management capacity.

In Ukraine: As Lead Nation for the NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund, the United States invested just over \$30 million in the demilitarization of nearly 46,000 metric tons of conventional ammunition and the destruction of over 529,000 pieces of SALW since 2004. We continue to support the development of Ukraine's capacity to manage its SALW. Recent U.S. contributions funded modernization of Ukraine's ammunition management systems, including modernization of testing laboratories, to enhance the lifecycle maintenance of ammunition. We are pleased to continue the great work the OSCE is conducting in Ukraine with a contribution of \$700,000 to the OSCE project to assist the Ukrainian National Police to better identify – and control the illicit proliferation of – SALW in Ukraine.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that the United States will also contribute the equivalent of approximately €3.0 million to an OSCE project for the removal and disposal of chemical hazardous waste originating from the liquid rocket fuel component Mélange in Ukraine.

Finally, In Kyrgyzstan: Since 2011, the United States has allocated over \$1.3 million to the OSCE Program Office for stockpile management training and the renovation, upgrade, and construction of three national ammunition storage depots. Since 2014, we have contributed to a complementary effort through ITF Enhancing Human Security for the demilitarization and destruction of more than 140,000 pieces of excess and unserviceable large-caliber ordnance from legacy ammunition stockpiles; and the renovation, upgrade, and construction of multiple ammunition storage warehouses.

In 2018, the United States contributed \$300,000 to a project to address a stockpile of the rocket fuel oxidizer mélange located near the capital of Bishkek. This dangerous chemical was leaking through containers and posed an immediate threat to the nearby population. Subsequently, at the same site the OSCE discovered an additional cache of 41 metric tons of the rocket fuel component samin. Although not weapons themselves, these chemicals post a direct and immediate threat, not only as an environmental hazard but as a potential target for exploitation by

terrorists. I am pleased to announce that the United States is now allocating an additional \$345,000 to complete the project and eliminate this threat.

As new challenges have arisen, the Forum for Security Cooperation has adopted decisions and approaches over the years to combat all aspects of illicitly trafficked SALW and SALW accumulated in excess. Recalling Decision 5/08 on MANPADS, an annex to the OSCE Document on SALW, we recognize the threat that poorly secured stockpiles of MANPADS pose, and have endeavored to ensure these weapons stay out of the hands of criminals and terrorists. U.S. efforts have resulted in the destruction of more than 39,000 MANPADS since 2003, including more than 300 destroyed through an OSCE effort in Cyprus and thousands more destroyed elsewhere in the OSCE region. The United States intends to hold a security dialogue on MANPADS – focused on illicit proliferation and destruction efforts – as part of our upcoming FSC chairpersonship, and we look forward to a robust discussion on the issue.

As we move forward it is clear that, despite all the progress we have made, a threat remains from excess, poorly secured, and otherwise at-risk stockpiles of SALW and conventional ammunition. We call on participating States to fulfill their commitments under the OSCE Document, as well as those under other relevant instruments such as the UN Program of Action on SALW. Rest assured that the United States will remain a strong supporter of these important efforts.

Thankyou Madame Chairperson.