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**EU Statement on Small Arms and Light Weapons / Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their interesting presentations. We commend the Swiss FSC Chairmanship for including the topic of SALW/SCA on the agenda of this Forum.

Only a few weeks ago, at the Ministerial Council meeting in Milan, we reaffirmed our SALW- and SCA-related commitments, and acknowledged the need to continue to enhance the OSCE SALW- and SCA-related norms and best practices and their implementation. We therefore see our exchange today as an important follow-up to the MC.DOC/5/18 and the continuation of efforts of previous FSC Chairmanships. We thank you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing to our attention relevant efforts at global level with the aim to identify synergies between the OSCE and global endeavours avoid duplication of effort, especially the ongoing preparations for 2020 Group of Governmental Experts on conventional ammunition and.

The EU and its Member States attach great importance to enhancing peace and security in the OSCE area by reducing the threat posed by illicit trafficking and excessive accumulation of SALW and conventional ammunition. We remain committed to the full implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW and the UN Programme of Action which provides a valid and effective strategy to fight against the illicit trade in SALW and a global forum to share and develop further actions at national, regional and international levels. The OSCE has a number of measures aimed at addressing illicit trafficking of SALW, including through air transport. We believe that the OSCE can be a useful forum to explore enhancing existing mechanisms and best practices in the field of illicit trafficking of SALW and excessive accumulation of conventional ammunition, and to discuss current initiatives in these areas, including on maritime transport and through inland waters.

Since the adoption of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in 2005, the EU has been investing considerably in cooperation and assistance to third countries with a view to combat the illicit trade in SALW. In light of relevant developments since 2005, on 19 November 2018 the Council of the EU adopted a new EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition replacing the 2005 Strategy. Relevant developments since then include the evolved security context, including the threat of terrorism inside the EU, and developments in SALW design and technology affecting the capacity of governments to address the threat.

The new Strategy takes into account the guiding principles of the 2016 EU Global Strategy that requires an integrated approach across external policies, between Member States and EU institutions, and between the internal and external policy dimensions. It also takes into account the outcome of the Third Review Conference of the PoA, the entry into force of the ATT, and the launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which affirms that combatting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is necessary for the achievement of many goals, including those relating to peace, justice, and strong institutions, poverty reduction, economic growth, health, gender equality, and safe cities and communities. The purpose of a revised strategy is to guide integrated, collective and coordinated European action to prevent and curb the illicit acquisition of SALW and their ammunition by terrorists, criminal and other unauthorised actors, and to promote accountability and responsibility with regard to the legal arms trade.

The main objective of the revised EU Strategy remains the full and effective implementation of the UN PoA and the ITI at national regional and global levels. The Strategy therefore puts forward measures to improve implementation of the UN PoA at national and regional levels in the EU. It also proposes cooperation and assistance in other regions of the world and at global level. This support will include collection and destruction of surplus SALW and ammunition, physical security and stockpile management for SALW and ammunition, capacity development for marking, record keeping and tracing, capacity development for arms export control, capacity development for law enforcement in countering illicit trafficking, support for embargo monitoring and tracing of diverted weapons.

Turning to the issue of stockpiles and promoting more effective state and regional action on excessive and poorly maintained stockpiles: Poor stockpiles are a key

factor allowing arms and ammunition to be diverted from the licit to the illicit markets. In line with the Strategy, the EU and its Member States will continue to help other countries to improve the management and security of state-held stockpiles by strengthening national legislative and administrative frameworks and institutions that regulate the legitimate supply and stockpile management of SALW and ammunition for defence and security forces, with a particular focus on marking and record keeping. The EU will also promote and implement standards and good practices for the handling of small arms and ammunition (ISACS, IATGs).

In this context, the EU and its Member States fund various projects in cooperation with the OSCE or other implementing partners working in the OSCE region. Let us mention in this context the EU funding for a project in Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to strengthen security in the regions of South-Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus by reducing the threat from the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW and conventional ammunition, or the Council Decision in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) for the implementation of the Franco-German Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans.

This support is fully in line with the principles which guide the new Strategy, namely to promote cooperation and partnerships at all levels, to take responsibility in relation to priority regions, and to promote a global rules-based cooperative order with multilateralism as its key principle. Incorporating gender and diversity aspects in SALW-control projects and actions is another guiding principle the EU and its Member States follow. In this context, the Council of the EU adopted in December 2018 a dedicated Council Decision in support of gender mainstreamed policies, programmes and actions in the fight against small arms trafficking and misuse, in line with the Women, Peace and Security agenda. This is why we welcome that the OSCE pS were able to acknowledge the "negative impact of illicit trafficking in SALW on our societies, noting in particular the impact on women and children" in the declaration on SALW adopted at the Ministerial Council in Milan last year. In this context, we would like to ask our distinguished speakers to share with us their experience with the integration of gender-specific aspects into their SALW- and SCA-related work.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you for the opportunity to exchange views on this important topic. Thank you for your attention.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.