

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly - First Committee

Statement by Canada – Thematic Statement #4: Conventional Weapons

New York, _____ October 2022

[Mister/Madam] Chair,

Conventional arms represent the vast majority of weapons used in armed conflicts. Their proliferation and unlawful use can:

- fuel, intensify, and prolong conflict;
- lead to regional instability;
- perpetuate crime, terrorism, and violent extremism;
- contribute to violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including gender-based violence; and
- hinder development.

It is critical that we universalize and implement the relevant international laws and norms that we have agreed to, and regulate the transfer of these weapons.

Collectively, UN Member States are working to prevent conflict and insecurity by better addressing their links to human rights and development. It is important that these efforts reflect a full integration of gender considerations, whether they fall in the spheres of humanitarian, peace and security, or development work. History has shown us that policy and programming efforts addressing both the drivers and consequences of armed conflict must be gender-responsive in order to achieve robust and lasting outcomes.

[Mister/Madam] Chair,

Canada is an active member of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We strongly support the advancement of gender and gender-based violence provisions of the ATT, and encourage comprehensive discussion on these issues. To this end, Canada, through its Weapons Threat Reduction Program, is providing financial support to the valuable work of UNIDIR's Gender and Disarmament programme, for the development and systematic application of gender perspectives in multilateral conventional arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Similarly, Canada is supporting Control Arms in the development of methodologies and tools to further the objectives of the ATT's Gender and Gender-based violence Action Plan, as well as developing guidance on the implementation of the ATT's Article 7.4 "Violence Against Children".

At the Eighth Conference of States Parties, we were glad to announce Canada will continue funding the ATT Sponsorship Programme, with a contribution of \$75,000.00 annually for three years. Further, Canada is pleased to serve for a second two-year term as a member of the Voluntary Trust Fund Selection Committee. Lastly, Canada also calls on all ATT States Parties to make their reports publicly available, as transparency is a cornerstone of this Treaty.

Regarding the worsening financial situation of the Treaty, we can only express our strong concern. We urge all States Parties to pay their annual contributions in full and on time. Fulfilling this legal obligation is essential to the survival of the ATT.

[Mister/Madam Chair],

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the signature of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which was the culmination of the Ottawa Process and years of civil society engagement. Canada remains

staunchly committed to advancing the goals and objectives of the Convention, towards a world free of landmines.

For Canada, mine action is essential to the success of the Sustainable Development Goals, as it underpins peace and stabilization efforts, and helps ensure the secure delivery of humanitarian aid.

Considerable legacy contamination remains and new contamination continues. We call on all States who have not yet done so to join the Convention, with a view to reaching full universalization.

As a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we call on all States to join the Convention and pursue the goal of a world free of cluster munitions by 2030. The large number of States that are already party to the CCM reflects a growing awareness of the devastating humanitarian impact of these weapons.

As required by international humanitarian law, we must also continue to work to restrict or ban weapon systems that, by their nature, are either indiscriminate or cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering. These weapons systems have severe, multifaceted, and lasting impacts on civilians and their communities. Canada will continue its participation in the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. All weapons used in armed conflict must be compliant with International Humanitarian Law.

Thank you.