Mr. Chair,

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I will highlight a few points of particular importance to my country.

Mr. Chair,

It is imperative that we join efforts in ensuring a successful outcome of the 10th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This would demonstrate our determination and ability to keep the pragmatic and constructive spirit in order to advance our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons and to provide for the responsible use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in line with the highest international safety, security and non-proliferation standards. We stress the key importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguard mechanism for the NPT’s implementation and call for the universalization of the IAEA Additional Protocol.

Bulgaria remains committed to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons and believes it is best pursued through a progressive approach and realistic steps which move us towards achieving verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament in a safe and secure manner, in accordance with art. VI of NPT.

Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty is among the building blocks in the construction of a world without nuclear weapons. 25 years after its opening for signature, the efforts of the international community are still required for its entry into force. Once in force, the CTBT will provide a legally binding global ban on nuclear explosions of any kind. Therefore, we call upon all States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the CTBT without any further delay.

The Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty remains among our top priorities in the nuclear disarmament field. We share the view on the necessity for commencing FMCT ne-
negotiations as soon as possible, since this is the issue with highest maturity for negotiations or working towards negotiations. The work done by the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group is a proof of that.

Mr. Chair,

Achieving progress in the area of conventional weapons is of equal importance.

Bulgaria is firmly committed to the principles and the objectives of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols, which provide an effective multilateral platform for responding to present and future developments of weapons technologies. We actively participate in the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) with a view to developing and adopting an effective and comprehensive normative and operational framework for control on their production, use and transfer. We hope that CCW Sixth Review Conference will duly address the remaining challenges, including by reaching tangible results in the area of LAWS.

We welcome the successful outcomes of the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States Parties to the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (BMS7) and the Seventh Conference of State Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) this year as a demonstration of the effectiveness of multilateralism in finding solutions to major international problems such as the prevention of diversion, illicit trade and unauthorized use of conventional arms. ATT, in particular, is an excellent example of how the application of common standards for regulation of the international trade in conventional arms can contribute to security and stability on a global scale. We strongly support its universalization and full implementation and call upon all states, that have not yet done so, to join the Treaty.

We cannot have truly effective measures against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons without controlling ammunition - both the supply as well as the stock-piles. We welcome the consensus outcome of the work of the Group of governmental experts in the context of UNGA resolution 72/55 (2017) and look forward for the next steps towards a new global framework which would address the existing gaps in the lifecycle ammunition management.

Thanks you!