Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this assembly. My name is Seydi Gassama. I’m the Executive Director of Amnesty International Senegal, and a member of the leadership team of the International Action Network on Small Arms. I’m speaking on behalf of IANSA today.

2022 is the 21st anniversary of the adoption of the Programme of Action; it’s also IANSA’s 20th anniversary. IANSA’s global network of several hundred members continues to advocate for the effective and global implementation of the PoA to curb armed violence and eradicate the illicit proliferation, trade, and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

IANSA has worked to help our network members increase their capacity to establish a solid basis for a long-term engagement with States on the effective, forward-looking, and comprehensive implementation of the PoA.

For example, IANSA has been promoting dialogues between government authorities and civil society to help set national targets for effective PoA implementation. Thanks to the support of UNSCAR, local members of IANSA have organized national dialogues in 12 countries over the past year, resulting in commitments and action plans.

Each Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) or Review Conference (RevCon) outcome has provided important advances in commitments for the meetings that have followed to build on. But there are still missing elements. It is critically important that these agreed commitments be a floor for the consideration of proposals to strengthen the implementation of the PoA, not a ceiling.

In the BMS8 Outcome Document, IANSA calls on States to include these commitments:

1. Build on the gender outcomes of RevCon3 and BMS7 by ensuring the inclusion of other traditionally underrepresented groups such as youth, survivors, and those most vulnerable to small arms violence.

2. Enhance provisions for the collection and destruction of illicit, obsolete, and surplus SALW and their ammunition

3. Move forward on developing national targets for the implementation of the PoA

4. Ensure attention of states to synergies among instruments that are critical to preventing SALW proliferation, violence, and harm

5. Increase attention to the need for sustainable international cooperation and assistance in implementing the PoA and the ITI
6. Set a robust agenda and mandate for RevCon4 that allows proposals to be discussed that address changing threats and challenges of the illicit trade in SALW.

These overarching recommendations correspond to the six key issues that IANSA has identified as needing special attention in BMS8; several other IANSA members’ statements provide specific action steps from that briefing paper. Six Key Issues and many other IANSA publications are available on our website at www.iansa.org

Most IANSA members live with and suffer from the direct and indirect daily realities and consequences of SALW proliferation and violence. Our work is a critical part to making progress in curbing gun violence globally. We in the IANSA movement remain committed to working with you to achieve peaceful and secure communities.

Thank you.