Thank you Mr. Chair,

MAG is an international humanitarian organisation working in conflict prevention, response and recovery. We refer to our work in terms of weapons and ammunition management, which we consider operationally essential, whether the political framework is broad application of the UN Programme of Action or the commendable ongoing work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition. Throughout, we would like to highlight the importance of addressing diversion through the full life cycle and embedding technical assistance in long term capacity development, as well as recognising the significance and relevance of the armed violence reduction lens. MAG works in the spirit of genuine partnership, dialogue and cooperation with regional organisations, other international experts and UN agencies across Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region.

MAG would like to thank the ECOWAS Small Arms and Light Weapons Division for our long term and valued partnership, and commend their steadfast support to ECOWAS Member States in the face of ongoing challenges of conflict and insecurity. We are also delighted to have recently commenced partnership with CARICOM IMPACS, and we look forward to furthering the progress already made during a recent assessment to Trinidad and Tobago, as well as with other CARICOM Member States. In this regard, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight the critical role of regional organisations in coordination, sustainability, and capacity development.

The examples set in the CARICOM and Western Balkans regions are excellent models for the sector, recognising that the proliferation of SALW and ammunition – and the consequent destabilising effects – must be addressed as a shared endeavour between neighbouring states. MAG also strongly recommends continued investment of support in designing, updating, and implementing national action plans. We welcome the WAM Baseline Assessment initiative coordinated by UNIDIR and encourage all stakeholders to participate in and draw on these where they are undertaken. MAG welcomes the adoption of voluntary national and regional targets at BMS7 in order to strengthen national ownership and measurability and we support IANSA’s call for development of such targets by the Fourth Review Conference. Such targets should draw on existing plans, roadmaps and assessments.

To ensure the best possible use of state capacity whilst centralising national ownership, action plans should seek synergies with other areas of work, such as Security Sector Reform, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and addressing transnational organized crime with a view to harnessing the capacity of arms control strategies and initiatives to contribute to wider peace and security efforts.

Mr. Chair,

Even as we strive to respond to the needs of a growing number of states and regions in combating the diversion and illicit proliferation of weapons and ammunition, needs continue to outweigh
resources. Your thematic focus on international cooperation and assistance is thus of great importance and extremely welcome. It is essential to ensure coordination to avoid duplication and concentration of resources in one country or region. International cooperation and assistance should be responsive to the needs identified in national action plans and roadmaps, and it should mainstream gender and youth, as well as support research on the gendered impact of SALW in specific contexts.

As a global implementer, MAG has observed significant interest in supporting initiatives in conflict-affected countries and regions, while those that are perceived as more stable receive less attention – with action often being taken by the international community too late, after a deterioration in the context. We would therefore like to emphasise the important role of PoA implementation as a tool for conflict prevention and armed violence reduction and we encourage states to use it as such. Ultimately, we must not lose sight of the fact that the greatest cost of weapons proliferation is felt daily in the form of human harm and suffering which we, as a community, have a responsibility to prevent.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

ENDS