

Guiding Questions: Set A

Speaking Points: South Africa

Question 1

From your Member State perspective, what are the main risks and impacts of ineffective management of conventional ammunition?

From South Africa's perspective, ammunition security poses the biggest risk due to the threat of diversion into the illicit markets, to armed non-State groups and unauthorised recipients. In South Africa we also face challenges in dealing with pervasive crime in the form of home invasions, car-jackings and opportunistic petty theft, often perpetrated by individuals or criminal gangs. This is a far larger problem than the issue of trans-national organised crime witnessed in order areas of the world.

The risk of diversion is something that continues to be prevalent and adequate security measures, when it comes to stockpile management, is vital in addressing the security aspect.

This is not meant to downplay the issue of conventional ammunition safety, but we are confident that our ammunition management system and related regulation is adequate. However, this remains a challenge in monitoring State-owned stockpiles through regular stocktaking and disposal practices.

On the issue of disposal, the best effective approach of dealing with responsible disposal is that of the destruction of surplus, obsolete and confiscated ammunition. South Africa continues to do so on a regular and ongoing basis.

The issue of surveillance in the context of safeguarding is not only an important security issue, but also through monitoring and warnings to civilian populations in developing countries. Often urban sprawl, especially in the form of informal settlements leads to the encroachment on and encirclement of ammunition storage facilities, where people move through these facilities to go about their daily lives poses great risk to them. The 2007 Maputo, Mozambique arms depot explosion that killed almost 100 people is a case in point.

While I am speaking from my national perspective, the challenge faced by many developing countries, especially in Africa, is the lack of capacity to carry out such monitoring practices and the identification of stockpiles that should be

destroyed. Without the requisite provision and receipt of international cooperation and assistance, this problem will remain.

Question 2

From your Member State perspective, what are some essential principles that support and promote the safe, secure, and sustainable through-life management of conventional ammunition at the national, subregional, regional and global levels?

Respect for international law and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter are first and foremost, as are the inherent right to individual collective to self-defence.

In this regard, the right to the manufacture and acquisition of conventional ammunition by States for their self-defence and security needs is a fundamental principle, as is the prerogative of a State to address its ammunition requirements, while at the same time addressing the safety and security risks associated with its existing ammunition stockpiles.

The final principle that I would wish to highlight is that of technical, financial and capacity-building cooperation and assistance to support national, regional and global ammunition management efforts.

Question 3

As far as this question is concerned, my delegation believes that you and your team have covered most, if not all of the gaps.

We will provide you with the copy of both this intervention, as well as our general statement for this session.

Thank you.