



BANGLADESH

Statement by Bangladesh delegation under Thematic Discussion on “Conventional Weapons” in the First Committee of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly on 24 October 2019

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) under this thematic cluster.

Bangladesh shares concerns with other delegates at the growing number of loss of innocent lives through the unauthorized use of a variety of conventional weapons across the globe. As part of our shared commitment to advance conventional arms control for peace and prosperity, we remain committed to fulfilling our obligations under various international instruments including the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCW) and its Protocols that we are party to. We welcome the prospect of developments in the 2018 meetings of the High Contracting Parties to the convention and relevant protocols.

Mr. Chairman,

The Third Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action (UN PoA) on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons had been significant for its successful conclusion and the adoption of an outcome document. We stress the need for and assure our support towards minimizing further gaps for the meaningful implementation of the POA through multilateral cooperation and mutual assistance including in the areas of ammunition, and tracing of illicit SALWs.

As a signatory to the Arms Trade Treaty, we align with the position that States have the sovereign right to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their components for security requirements and self-defence. We also emphasize that no unilateral coercive measure be imposed on the transfer of such arms. As a country on a sharp development trajectory, we also reaffirm the positive correlation between the UN PoA and the realization of the relevant targets under the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh joins other states in sharing growing concern over the humanitarian consequences of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Last year, we drew attention of this Committee to the findings of the report of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission to the Third Committee about the use of anti-personnel mines by the Myanmar authority against their own people including the forcibly displaced Rohingya community into our territory. The Myanmar's response to such a fact-based report, however, had been one of outright denial. A culture of impunity continued to prevail. This year's report once again mentions Myanmar's "use of landmines at the border" as one of the "civilian Government and Tatmadaw-led activities making it very difficult if not impossible for the Rohingya to return to their villages".

Notably, during his visit to Myanmar in May 2018, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty Special Envoy called upon Myanmar to accede to the Treaty. Pending such a welcome development, we reiterate our call to the Myanmar authorities to take urgent necessary steps to ensure mine clearance, declare a moratorium on production of landmines and end casualties suffered by civilians.

I thank you.