Thank you, Chair.

I speak on behalf of the International Action Network on Small Arms, IANSA. We are a global network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working to decrease the human costs of armed violence. We are also the official coordinator of civil society in the United Nations small arms process. We gratefully acknowledge the support of UNSCAR for this work.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are frequently the weapons of choice in acts of armed violence. According to the Small Arms Survey, in 2017 there were 589,000 violent deaths. Most of these violent deaths occur outside of direct armed conflict situations. To reduce deaths resulting from the use of SALW, states need to focus on armed violence as a whole, rather than limiting their efforts to addressing only conflict violence. As the Secretary General stated in "Securing our Common Future, "High levels of arms and ammunition in circulation contribute to insecurity, cause harm to civilians, facilitate human rights violations and impede humanitarian access." We add that the many harms civilians face include physical and mental injuries, disappearances, hostage taking, torture, rape, arbitrary arrests, and destruction of housing, health facilities, schools, and places of worship.

In June 2020, the United Nations will hold the seventh Biennial Meeting of States on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA). This is an opportunity to assess progress toward implementing the results of the June 2018 Review Conference on the UNPoA (RevCon3). The final outcome document for RevCon3 included strong statements on many issues, including on ensuring that gender concerns are mainstreamed in policies on SALW transfers, and on destroying surplus, confiscated, seized, and collected SALW.

During this First Committee, we urge delegations to demonstrate plans to meet their RevCon3 commitments for BMS7, and to prepare proposals to encourage states to exchange good practices on preventing, combatting, and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW and ammunition.

We also urge you to focus on gender-based action to curb SALW proliferation and violence, and work to ensure women’s full and effective participation and representation in arms control programmes and diplomatic processes, including incorporating the results of the fifth Conference of States Parties on the Arms Trade Treaty.

Strengthening the focus on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and respecting human rights law, international humanitarian law, and UN principles governing the use of force is also needed.

Furthermore, we urge you to:

- Partner with civil society organizations, by including civil society representatives on national delegations, fully integrating them into the work to reduce the human costs of armed violence, and ensuring diverse leadership from survivors, youth, and other traditionally underrepresented groups;
- Commit to increasing funding for civil society work on these issues; and
• Implement all of the SDGs that are related to arms control issues (not just SDG16), for example, by pursuing SDG 5, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," through the UNPoA and ATT. This would affect the substance of states' deliberations, as well as the membership and staffing of relevant agencies, national commissions, and delegations to international meetings and negotiations.

Chair, the young people of today are inheriting a world in which we have approximately one billion guns, and millions more are added annually. Not only that, they are also inheriting a climate crisis. Climate change is a threat multiplier that is already aggravating conflict and crime. Especially given this context, we call on all delegations to make decisions during First Committee, BMS7, and beyond that will significantly—and swiftly--control the flow of guns nationally, regionally, and internationally.

Thank you.