Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Moldova associates itself with the comprehensive statement on conventional weapons made by the European Union as well as the joint statement delivered by Ireland on the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. Therefore, I will only highlight a few points that are of particular importance for my country.

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation, excessive accumulation and misuse of conventional arms are at the heart of the main security challenges of our time.

The Republic of Moldova attaches great importance to the effective implementation of the conventional arms control instruments, including CCW, APLC, CMC, as well as to continuing, with determination, on creating new instruments where necessary.

We want the existing conventional arms control regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international peace and security. Their rules and obligations must be respected and guidelines followed.

It is imperative to reduce the unregulated availability of conventional arms and SALW in areas of conflict or potential conflict by ensuring strict transfer controls and safe destruction of surplus weapons as well as helping affected governments to deal with all aspects of these problems.

From this perspective, we call on all UN Member States, in particular the major arms exporters, importers and transit countries to join the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The full implementation of this treaty as well as of other complementary instruments, such as the International Tracing Instrument, the Firearms Protocol and UN Programme of Action would prevent conventional weapons from being used to threaten security, destabilize States or exacerbate conflict.

The Republic of Moldova supports the approaches put forward by the UN Secretary-General in his Agenda for Disarmament to improve action, including at the country-level to end the illicit transfers in arms and their ammunition, particularly on the basis of a deeper understanding on the impact of the over-accumulation of arms in prolonging conflicts.
We welcome the informal consultative process established by UNGA Resolution 72/55 on Problems Arising from the Accumulation of Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus which has helped to identify issues for potential consideration in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts to be convened by the Secretary-General in 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

The illicit production, illegal transfers of and excessive and destabilizing build-ups of conventional arms in the so-called “grey zones” where the Governments do not exercise complete control on parts of their territory, is a matter of deep concern for many States.

This phenomenon is also characteristic for the eastern part of my country, partially controlled by an unconstitutional militarized entity and where there are huge quantities of conventional armaments and ammunitions belonging chiefly to the Operational Group of Russian Forces, continuously stationed there without the consent of the Republic of Moldova.

While located on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, these conventional arms and munitions are not under its “jurisdiction or control”.

Due to complete lack of transparency on and access to Russian armaments, both the Moldovan Government and the OSCE mission in Moldova, that has a proper international mandate, are effectively prevented to verify the existing stockpiles, to monitor their transfers or to assess the technical conditions of munitions, some of which may pose substantial environmental danger.

These specific circumstances prevent the Republic of Moldova to implement, on the whole territory of the country, the provisions of multilateral instruments in the area of conventional arms, including the transparency provisions.

The Government of the Republic of Moldova has repeatedly apprised the UN General Assembly and the High Contracting Parties to respective conventions, particularly those that ban certain categories of conventional weapons, of its concerns in that regard.

This situation shall not be allowed to continue indefinitely and positive action, without political preconditions, shall follow in accordance with existing international legal commitments.

In this context, we are encouraged by the recent statement of intent by the Russian Federation (24 August 2019) to proceed with the destruction and removal of its ammunition and armaments from the Cobasna depot that contains more than 20000 metric tons.

We welcome the OSCE declared readiness to ensure the transparency of this process and to coordinate financial and technical assistance offered to this end.

We expect that the resumption of and complete withdrawal of Russian military forces and armaments from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with the 1999 Istanbul Summit Outcome Document and as required by the UNGA resolution A/72/282, will contribute to demilitarization of the transnistrian region and to the subsequent extension of conventional arms legal instruments’ effects in the eastern part of the country.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.