

Chinese Delegation at the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized  
Crime Thematic Statement at the Tenth Meeting of the Working Group on Firearms

Mr. Chairperson:

Congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Working Group. I thank you and the Secretariat for your hard work and thoughtful arrangements. The Chinese delegation is ready to cooperate fully with you and other delegations to promote the success of the Conference.

At present, the international gun control situation is serious and complex. First, violent gun crimes are far from being solved. In some countries and regions, the proliferation of firearms and incidents of gun-related violence occur from time to time, and casualties among civilians and even vulnerable groups such as women, students and children remain high. Secondly, as regional unrest rises and falls, a large number of firearms flow into conflict zones, increasing the risk of illicit transfers and diversion. Thirdly, new materials and technologies have made the design, manufacture and movement of firearms more convenient and tracing and regulation more difficult.

To properly address these issues, it is urgent for countries to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination and improve the level of firearms management, and it is even more necessary for the international community to strengthen cooperation and join hands to address them. Against this background, the theme of this morning's discussion, "Strengthening Coordination and Cooperation", is of great relevance. I am pleased to share China's experience and practices as a representative of the Asia-Pacific region.

With a population of more than 1.4 billion people and a total border length of more than 55,000 kilometres, China faces many challenges and difficulties in managing firearms, maintaining social stability and safeguarding people's lives in such a large country. However, over the years, the Chinese government has taken people's safety as

its objective, adhered to the supremacy of the people and life, always adhered to strict control of firearms, maintained a high pressure of "zero tolerance" for gun-related crimes, and explored a proven road to gun control. Through long-term unremitting efforts, the number of gun-related crimes in China has continued to decline, and China has become one of the safest countries in the world with the lowest incidence of violent gun-related crimes, creating the "two miracles" of rapid economic development and long-term social stability, and making an important contribution to peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

China's achievements in gun control are inextricably linked to the following four efforts. First, it has improved laws and regulations relating to firearms. In accordance with China's national conditions and with reference to relevant international norms, China has formulated and improved laws and regulations such as the Firearms Control Law, the Regulations on the Administration of Military Exports and the List of Military Exports, which provide solid legal safeguards for strict control of firearms and crackdown on all kinds of firearms-related crimes.

Second, a sound coordination mechanism has been established. In order to strengthen inter-departmental coordination in the domestic fight against gun-related crimes, China established the inter-ministerial joint meeting system in 2018 to combat and rectify gun and explosive crimes, and to unify the organization and leadership of national operations against gun-related crimes. The system is led by China's Ministry of Public Security, with the participation of the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the General Administration of Customs and other departments, and each unit holds regular meetings with a clear division of labour, and each has its own duties and cooperates with each other to ensure that the decisions and plans of the meeting are fully and accurately implemented.

Thirdly, special operations have been carried out continuously. To enhance the

effectiveness of crackdown and rectification, the inter-ministerial joint conference has deployed several rounds of special operations, adhering to both the symptoms and the root causes, multi-pronged measures, comprehensive treatment and systematic treatment, strengthening the whole process of firearms management from production to destruction, enhancing the collection of illegal firearms, and strictly investigating and dealing with crimes such as illegal possession, manufacturing and trafficking of firearms. The inter-ministerial joint meeting regularly reviews the progress of the special operation and takes targeted initiatives to solve problems, effectively filling loopholes and eliminating weak links.

Fourth, China has been deeply involved in international cooperation. China has conscientiously fulfilled its international obligations, fully participated in the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons and other international small arms and light weapons control processes, strictly enforced the management of military exports, and pledged not to export firearms to non-state actors. China's public security and customs departments have maintained close cooperation with the relevant authorities of various countries and international organisations such as Interpol and the World Customs Organisation (WCO). 2021 onwards, China has actively funded and supported Interpol's "Operation Trigger" against firearms and explosive crimes in Asia. 2021 onwards, from February to June 2022, China will launch the third phase of the WCO Asia Pacific. From July to December 2022, China launched the third phase of the "Lady Peace" joint law enforcement operation under the framework of the Lancang-Mekong Integrated Law Enforcement Security Centre, and jointly conducted "Operation Jinggun" with Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand. "This has effectively curbed the high incidence of gun-related crimes in the Mekong River Basin and played a positive role in maintaining border security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. China actively supports the AU's "silencing the guns" initiative and is ready to provide assistance to African countries in implementing the initiative to the best of its ability.

Mr President.

The proliferation of firearms seriously endangers the safety of people's lives and social stability in all countries, and undermines the goals of world peace and long-term sustainable development. Last April, President Xi Jinping proposed a global security initiative, stressing that all countries should adhere to a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable concept of security, build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, and build a community of destiny in the field of security. China is willing to continue to uphold the concept of a community of human destiny and support countries in strengthening cross-sectoral coordination and international cooperation in combating gun-related crimes. In this regard, China would like to make the following suggestions for the reference of this Working Group:

First, to establish and improve laws and regulations relating to guns. It is necessary to establish the legal and policy orientation of strict control and control of firearms, and strictly combat all kinds of gun-related crimes, so as to form a high-pressure situation and strong deterrence for criminal groups and provide an effective legal basis for combating gun-related crimes.

Second, strengthen national responsibility. A collaborative mechanism to combat gun-related crimes should be established at the national level with the broad participation of various departments and each having its own duties, with a clear division of work between the lead department and various departments, strengthening joint cooperation, eliminating bureaucracy and forming a joint force to combat gun-related crimes.

Thirdly, special operations should be organised. To combine with the actual situation in the country, the comprehensive use of inventory collection, listed key cases to supervise, the organization of special arrests of people involved in guns at large and other means to crack down on key gun-related criminal activities, to enhance the effectiveness of crackdown and rectification.

Fourth, to conduct research on the characteristics of smuggling of new types of firearms and their parts and components, and to pay attention to cross-border logistics and modular gun trafficking.

Fifth, international exchanges and cooperation should be strengthened. The role of international organisations such as Interpol should be fully utilised to continuously

strengthen bilateral and multilateral law enforcement cooperation in combating gun-related crimes. Regional mechanisms for police cooperation in combating gun-related crimes should be continuously improved, taking into account regional characteristics, to prevent criminals from taking advantage of differences in policies of different countries to carry out illegal firearms manufacturing and trafficking. On a voluntary basis, countries can establish and improve working mechanisms for intelligence sharing, joint law enforcement and joint training.

Mr. President.

The Firearms Protocol is the only global legal instrument aimed at combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms and related transnational organized crime, and is an important pillar in the field of international firearms control. In September last year, China announced the official launch of the domestic ratification process of the Firearms Protocol. At present, the relevant legal procedures are progressing steadily and it is expected that the Protocol will be formally ratified this year. Through its own efforts, China is willing to drive other countries, especially large countries with a high incidence of gun violence, to join the Protocol and increase its universality.

Building a peaceful and safe world free from gun violence is the aspiration of the Chinese people and the dream of all peoples. As a permanent member of the United Nations and a responsible member of the international community, China is willing to take the ratification of the Firearms Protocol as an opportunity to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with all parties, strictly control the illegal cross-border movement of firearms and their parts and components, actively carry out relevant international cooperation and make greater contributions to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security.

Thank you, Mr. President.