Mr. Chair,
Distinguished delegates and representatives,
Fellow members of civil society,

I would like to start by warmly thanking the Secretariat, the UNODC Civil Society Unit for having us here for this First Constructive Dialogue, their entire team for their dedication and efforts, the member states, and the Mexican Representative for chairing and supporting this crucial initiative.  

I am Romain Le Cour Grandmaison, Program Director on Security and Violence Reduction at México Evalúa, a Mexican Think tank and NGO, dedicated to promoting more open, transparent, and evidence-based public policies.

**Why is the issue of firearms so important to me, to my team, and to my work?**

I could go talk for hours answering this question, but I will keep it to one core idea: it is undeniable that illicit firearms exponentially fuel homicide violence, gender violence, youth involvement in crime, insecurity, and the expansion of criminal activities in general, among many other dynamics, especially in Latin America.

*However, I come from academia. And I here talk on behalf on civil society.*

Both worlds usually face the same question, or challenge, when it comes to participating to such conferences: **what can we concretely do to advance towards an improvement of the situation?**

*Well, this is what I will present here, in 3 very brief topics, activities and pillars for future work and collaboration, dedicated to the issue of firearms.*

→ **What can we bring to this table, and what do we want to do?**

**First: to Document**

- We need to produce more empirical, qualititative knowledge and tools, in order to better understand and grasp the functioning of the illicit networks that lie behind firearms trafficking:
  - Who runs those networks?
  - How do they work?
  - Who is buying weapons and ammunitions? How do you buy them? Where do they come from?
  - How much do firearms cost, and how these markets actually work?
  - What are the precise regions where weapons are most available? Who is using them?

- These questions seem simple, but in many cases, we don’t have the answers.
- We therefore need stronger research, fieldwork and documentation.

*We can’t be blind about the realities that we want to tackle and solve. We need to know more.*
Second: we need to Measure better.

- We need to be able, in articulation with the empirical data, to produce more robust, timely, and available quantitative data on firearms trafficking.
- Concretely, I think that we must work, all together, the UN, the governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector to invest resources, in order to be able to produce timely data on illicit flows, on arms possession, and on the number of firearms in circulation in a given place, or between countries.
- There is data, very good data, produced by Small Arms Survey, among others, but I think we need to go even more local. Region by region, subregion by subregion, within a given country, to understand illicit trafficking networks much better.
- This, in order to produce useful data: data that serves prevention, public policy and evidence-based decision-making.

Third, and final, we must Advocate better.

- Our work must be disseminated and made available inside, and outside of our inner circles. In our countries of work, with our neighbors, and at the multilateral level of course.
- Our work aims at making prevention stronger; at making sure that society as a whole is aware of the threats, and the challenges posed by illicit firearms.
- We need to communicate better, reach wider audiences, in order for these constructive dialogues, and make them stronger and stronger over time.
  - Media
  - Public Campaign
  - Interventions in schools; working with the youth in rural and urban environments.

To conclude, a quick summary:

We need to document, measure, and advocate better;

I hope these spaces of dialogue continue, and I thank you very much for your time and attention.