



Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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Report on the meeting of the Working Group on Firearms held in Vienna on 4 and 5 May 2022

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 5/4, entitled “Illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition”, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group on firearms, in accordance with article 32, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and rule 2, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure for the Conference, to be chaired by a member of the Bureau of the Conference, to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate with regard to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

2. In that resolution, the Conference also decided that the working group should perform the following functions: (a) facilitate implementation of the Firearms Protocol through the exchange of experience and practices among experts and practitioners; (b) make recommendations to the Conference on how States parties could better implement the provisions of the Firearms Protocol; (c) assist the Conference in providing guidance to its secretariat on the activities of the secretariat and on the development of technical assistance tools relating to the implementation of the Firearms Protocol; and (d) make recommendations to the Conference on how the working group could better coordinate with the various international bodies combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, in the area of supporting and promoting implementation of the Firearms Protocol.

3. In its resolution 7/1, entitled “Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto”, the Conference decided that the Working Group on Firearms would be a constant element of the Conference of the Parties, forwarding its reports and recommendations to the Conference, and encouraged the Working Group to consider meeting on an annual basis, as needed.

4. In its resolution 8/3, entitled “Strengthening the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime”, the Conference acknowledged that the Working Group on Firearms served as a useful network of experts and competent authorities



in order to improve international cooperation, exchange of information and good practices related to illicit firearms trafficking.

II. Recommendations

5. At its meeting held in Vienna on 4 and 5 May 2022, the Working Group on Firearms adopted the recommendations presented below.

A. General recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Working Group on Firearms should consider the impact of illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms and ammunition on the well-being of peoples, their social and economic development and their right to live in peace, including by integrating references to this issue into its reports and recommendations.

Recommendation 2

The Working Group on Firearms should assess the appropriate use of its previously adopted recommendations and identify challenges and means to strengthen collaboration and international cooperation in this regard.

Recommendation 3

States should make further progress in fruitful dialogue within the Working Group on Firearms that raises the awareness of all parties of the human dimension and the humanitarian consequences of illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition, including its negative impact on the lives of women and girls.

B. Recommendations on preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition

Recommendation 4

States should take effective measures to stem the illicit trafficking in and use of firearms, including efforts to prevent the illicit supply of ammunition.

Recommendation 5

With a view to establishing effective controls over ammunition and countering the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition, and to closing gaps and addressing challenges between different jurisdictions, States parties to the Firearms Protocol should consider the positive aspects of aligning, where appropriate and feasible, their ammunition-related legislation and definitions in accordance with their regional and international obligations and domestic law.

Recommendation 6

States should consider implementing measures, on a voluntary basis, to reduce safety and security risks at each stage of the through-life management of ammunition, and should regularly conduct risk assessments of ammunition stockpiles, with a view to preventing unplanned explosions and the diversion of ammunition.

Recommendation 7

With a view to facilitating the identification and tracing of ammunition, States should consider, on a voluntary basis, taking into account their technical and financial capabilities, marking ammunition and ammunition packaging, including with lot or

batch numbers on single cartridges and their smallest packaging units, and maintaining accompanying records of that information.

Recommendation 8

When available, ammunition markings, including head stamps, data and records, should permit investigators to identify the country and year of manufacture, lot and/or batch numbers and, if possible and feasible, the purchaser and the final recipient.

Recommendation 9

States should consider, where feasible, using microstamping technology for newly manufactured and imported firearms for the purpose of linking ammunition retrieved at a crime scene to a particular firearm.

Recommendation 10

States should seek the support and cooperation of ammunition and firearms manufacturers to prevent and detect the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition, to prevent commercialization practices that facilitate the commission of these offences and to support the identification of the origin of recovered and seized ammunition.

Recommendation 11

States that have established limits for the purchase of ammunition by civilians should consider adopting measures to prevent purchasers from exceeding those limits.

Recommendation 12

In conducting commerce in and transfers of ammunition, States should assess the risk that the ammunition might be misused, diverted or trafficked, including by making use of seizure data and tracing results, and should take measures to prevent the transfer if they identify an overriding risk of diversion, onward trafficking or use for the commission of serious crimes.

Recommendation 13

States should establish control over the purchase and possession of specialized equipment for ammunition reloading, where the reloading of ammunition cartridges requires authorization.

Recommendation 14

Following the recovery or seizure of illicit ammunition, States should aim to trace it back to its source, inform the country of origin accordingly and share relevant information; the country of origin should start a parallel investigation against end users suspected of being involved in the diversion. To that end, States should, with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), upon request, train law enforcement personnel to trace ammunition and foster international cooperation.

Recommendation 15

States should test-fire, when appropriate and feasible, all newly registered firearms to establish ballistic reference databases, make ballistic imaging and comparison of cartridge casings that are recovered at crime scenes or seized a standard procedure in criminal investigations and engage in cross-jurisdictional cooperation at the regional and international levels for the purpose of using ballistic information systems and networks.

Recommendation 16

States should consider establishing national ballistic comparison systems for investigating firearms-related criminality and possibly linking recovered ammunition at crime scenes, as feasible; States should also consider joining regional or international ballistic information networks, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Ballistic Information Network, and facilitating interoperability among those networks.

Recommendation 17

States should continue to collect and analyse data on seized and recovered ammunition, including the information provided by the markings on ammunition and their packaging, with a view to gaining a better understanding of sources of illicit ammunition and the size of the illicit ammunition and firearms market, which is needed for evidence-based policies and proactive and intelligence-led investigations with technical assistance provided by UNODC, at the request of States.

C. Recommendations on a multi-year workplan for the Working Group on Firearms

Recommendation 18

The secretariat of the Working Group, when proposing topics for future meetings for consideration by the extended Bureau, should:

(a) Draw, for the first substantive agenda item, a topic from the list of topics related to the Firearms Protocol recommended by the Working Group on Firearms at its eighth meeting, while keeping abreast of future priorities that may require new topics to be added to the non-exclusive list on an exceptional basis;

(b) Follow, for the second substantive agenda item, the order of topics and the timeline of the multi-year workplan, contained in the annex to the present report, which was recommended by the Working Group at its ninth meeting, while monitoring the progress of the review process in order to propose amendments, if necessary.

III. Summary of deliberations

6. The summary of deliberations set out below was not subject to negotiations or adoption during the meeting. The process was approved, as part of the hybrid meeting format, by the extended Bureau by means of a silence procedure on 29 March 2022. The summary of deliberations stemming from the meeting was prepared by the secretariat after the meeting in close coordination with the Chair.

A. Preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition

7. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 4 May 2022, the Working Group considered agenda item 2, entitled, “Preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition”.

8. The discussion was facilitated by Albrecht von Wittke, Head of Section, Conventional Disarmament and Arms Control, Federal Foreign Office of Germany and Chair of the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition, and Félix José Descalzo Coto, Inspector, Ministry of the Interior of Spain, both on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States; Botha Marthinus, Head of Organized Crime and Staff Officer, Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation of South Africa, and Hamid El Mahdi, Magistrate, Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons (in charge of arms), Ministry of Justice of Morocco, both on behalf of the African Group; and Marcus Vinícius Da Silva Dantas, Head of the Service for the Repression of

Firearms Trafficking and Coordinator of the National Firearms Tracing Center, Federal Police of Brazil, and Wilmer Delgado Peralta, Coordinator of Trade in Arms, Ammunition and Related Materials, National Authority for the Control of Security Services, Weapons, Munitions and Explosives for Civilian Use of Peru, both on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

9. Mr. von Wittke delivered a presentation on the German experiences in chairing parallel ammunitions-related processes at the international level and major findings emerging from such processes, in particular the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus and the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition. He explained how the Group of Governmental Experts had considered the safety and security aspects of conventional ammunition management to address risks posed by unplanned explosions and diversion, discussed the need for operational guidelines on supply chain security and diversion monitoring and recommended developing a set of political commitments as a new global framework on conventional ammunition. In that context, he highlighted the importance attached by the Group of Governmental Experts to ensuring through-life management of ammunition to prevent the risks of unplanned explosions and diversion. On that basis, the General Assembly, in its resolution [76/233](#), had established the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework addressing existing gaps in through-life ammunition management, including international cooperation and assistance. He highlighted the mutually reinforcing nature of those processes with other existing processes and mechanisms, such as the Working Group on Firearms, and concluded that the Firearms Protocol, with its focus on the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms ammunition, could be an important building block in efforts to develop such a global framework.

10. Mr. Marthinus started his presentation by providing an overview of relevant specialized units in South Africa and explained that seizures of firearms also often included ammunition and that trafficking in firearms and ammunition should not be addressed in isolation. He outlined the national legal framework, in particular the Firearms Control Act and the Explosives Act, mentioned the most relevant sections of the laws and the definition of ammunition and cartridge and highlighted that certain types of 9-millimetre blank ammunition for gas pistols were explicitly excluded from the regulatory framework on ammunition. He underlined the importance of marking ammunition cartridges and ammunition packaging, including with lot and batch numbers, for tracing purposes and shared experiences in using head stamps to trace ammunition back to the manufacturer. Moreover, he discussed the need to identify surplus military ammunition and ensure its safe destruction under controlled circumstances to prevent diversion. In his conclusion, he recommended harmonizing ammunition-related legislation and definitions at the regional and international levels and marking ammunition cartridges with batch and lot numbers to permit identification and tracing.

11. Mr. Descalzo Coto explained that, while the import, export and sale of ammunition were strictly regulated in Spain, seized and recovered ammunition had often been diverted from the legal civilian market to the black market with the involvement of individuals who purchased large amounts of ammunition, in particular for hunting. To a lesser extent, military ammunition could also be found on the black market. When addressing specific challenges in ammunition control, he referred to the difficulties posed by differences in national legislation to transnational investigations and seizures, and reiterated the call for harmonization of laws. He highlighted the need for further information-sharing and analysis to gain a better understanding of movements of ammunition across borders and the actual size of the black market, taking into account the long life cycle of ammunition. In addition, he underlined that law enforcement entities required specialized expertise in relation to the tracing of ammunition and should foster inter-agency and international cooperation between different investigative and administrative units. Ammunition-tracing was important not only for solving specific cases, but also for

enhancing general understanding of illicit ammunition flows for proactive investigations.

12. Mr. Vinícius Da Silva Dantas provided an overview of practices related to the marking and record-keeping of ammunition in his country. The packaging of ammunition sold in Brazil must bear a barcode, which allowed for the identification of the manufacturer, the purchaser, the ammunition type and its production lot. Moreover, since 2005, all ammunition intended for use by security forces must contain laser-engraved lot markings on the cartridge case, with lots limited to 10,000 rounds. He stressed that implementation of ammunition-marking had been cost-efficient and did not interfere with the production process, as long as lots of more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition were marked. He explained that three different, complementary electronic systems accessible by the Federal Police of Brazil contained information on ammunition: (a) the Ammunition Package Tracing System (SIREM), which contained a database of the barcodes on ammunition packaging that included information on the manufacturer, the purchaser, the ammunition type and its production lot; (b) the Ammunition Sell and Stock Control System (SICOVEM), which permitted the retrieval of information on the quantities and lot number of ammunition purchased by civilians, including for monitoring compliance with limits for ammunition purchases; and (c) the Personalized Ammunition Identification System (SIP), which contained a database of the lot numbers of ammunition sold to the security forces. Ammunition-tracing based on the lot numbers on ammunition cartridges had been successfully undertaken in the past for ammunition retrieved at crime scenes, for seized ammunition that had been trafficked and ammunition that had been diverted by corrupt officials. The markings on ammunition permitted investigators to properly trace illicit ammunition and monitor seizures to analyse patterns and routes of ammunition trafficking and the origin of trafficked ammunition. Consequently, he recommended the systematic use of ammunition-marking, not only for the purpose of ammunition management, but also for detecting and investigating the diversion of and trafficking in ammunition. Lastly, he underlined that, when issuing export licences, exporting countries should analyse seizure data, stemming from the tracing of seized ammunition, for their risk assessments in line with the Arms Trade Treaty.

13. Mr. El Mahdi described the Moroccan control system for regulating the transfer and manufacturing of firearms and ammunition. Manufacturers of ammunition were required to mark ammunition with the country code of Morocco, the year of manufacture, lot or batch numbers and the name of the manufacturer. He highlighted that trafficking in ammunition had been established as a criminal offence in his country. A draft law, which was currently tabled before the parliament, set forth that information on international ammunition transfers from or to Morocco should be kept in a record-keeping-system. For the management of ammunition stockpiles, North Atlantic Treaty Organization criteria were applied, taking into account the different physical, chemical and technical specificities of stored ammunition throughout their life cycle until safe destruction. At the international level, he proposed an amendment to the Firearms Protocol to strengthen the international regulatory framework on ammunition.

14. Mr. Delgado Peralta explained the organizational structure of the relevant national authorities involved in preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms and ammunition in Peru. The import, export and sale of firearms and ammunition were authorized through one single office, which acted as a one-stop shop. The same office also carried out physical verifications to ensure that ammunition stored with gun dealers for sale was not diverted. In Peru, no private companies manufactured ammunition; however, the defence forces had a special licence to manufacture civilian ammunition and sell it to civilian agents. Sellers of ammunition required authorization to have stocks of ammunition on their premises and must inform the office about ammunition transactions to permit the tracing of ammunition. At the present time, licensed firearms holders could purchase up to 600 rounds of ammunition per month, but Peru intended to reduce that amount. He

highlighted the importance of monitoring compliance with established purchase limits and explained that his country was currently developing a real-time online notification system through which dealers would be obliged to provide real-time information about ammunition transactions. The system would prevent purchasers exceeding their purchase limits. He concluded by announcing that Peru was currently considering the adoption of a regulation on the marking of ammunition with the aim of tracing ammunition found at crime scenes, both to investigate the crime and to identify the illicit origin of seized or recovered ammunition.

15. Following the panel discussion, several speakers addressed questions to the panellists, including on the appropriate size of lots for investigative purposes and how lot-marking specifically supported efforts to trace ammunition. The panellist from Brazil explained that a working group of the Federal Police had decided that 10,000 rounds of ammunition would be a feasible lot size. While the size of lots could be decreased to some extent without major issues, the marking of lots of less than 1,000 rounds of ammunition could be more difficult to introduce into production flows. Asked about the sale of lot-marked ammunition to other countries, he explained that, to date, at least four countries had purchased such ammunition for their public security forces from Brazil. He also explained that the lot number was not the only evidence that could be used in criminal investigations; it was only one investigative lead that must be supported by additional information and evidence. Responding to a question posed by another speaker, he mentioned that reloaded ammunition cartridges, for instance from shooting ranges, found at crime scenes had hampered efforts to use the cartridge markings to trace the cartridges back to their last legitimate owner. Another speaker posed a question to the panellist from Germany on the role of the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition in the development of a new global framework on conventional ammunition and how such a framework could make use of and complement existing legal frameworks. The German delegation reiterated that the Firearms Protocol could be an important building block in efforts to develop the framework and that the process could benefit from the recommendations adopted by the Working Group on Firearms, which could be presented to the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition.

16. Following the discussion with the panellists and taking note of their recommendations, the Chair invited the meeting participants to share further observations or provide ideas for additional recommendations. In the discussions that followed, several speakers welcomed the establishment of the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition and praised the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/55](#), encouraging all States to employ best practices in ammunition management, such as the ones contained in the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. The view was expressed that those processes were the appropriate forums to develop measures to prevent trafficking in ammunition and that the Working Group of Firearms should not get ahead of the work of the open-ended working group on conventional ammunition. Other speakers emphasized opportunities for coordination and synergies between the processes.

17. Some speakers shared their national practices of safe and secure ammunition management throughout all stages of the ammunition life cycle to prevent the risk of unplanned explosions but also to prevent ammunition falling into the hands of criminals. Measures that were mentioned included safe storage requirements for dealers and users, purchase and possession limits and record-keeping requirements for ammunition dealers and storage facilities that allowed for the tracing of ammunition.

18. The traceability of ammunition was at the core of the discussions. Several speakers mentioned the urgent need for international standards to establish identification measures to permit the tracing of ammunition through supply chains. It was also mentioned that globally binding marking standards for ammunition and ammunition packaging were needed and still lacking, which created significant

difficulties in effectively tracing illicit ammunition back to its point of origin. Consequently, the illicit origin of seized or recovered ammunition was disregarded during investigations. Some speakers mentioned the application of unique serial numbers to ammunition cartridges and comprehensive registries that contained information on ammunition and reminded countries to strengthen their national legal and regulatory frameworks on ammunition and to intensify law enforcement cooperation with the aim of effectively preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition. It was mentioned that regional commitments might also play an important role to that end.

19. Several speakers underlined that preventing and combating trafficking in ammunition was the responsibility of all States, including exporters and importers, that information-sharing was key in that regard and that States should cooperate with the manufacturing industry in order to prevent negligent and irresponsible commercialization practices. In that context, some speakers reported that their countries applied the export prohibitions and criteria contained in articles 6 and 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty to international ammunition transfers. Recalling Security Council resolution 2370 (2017), on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons, and the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, another speaker called upon exporting States to establish risk assessment mechanisms for international firearms and ammunition transfers that took human rights considerations and effective post-delivery verification measures into account. In that context, the negative impact of diversion and illicit or unregulated transfers of firearms and ammunition on peace, security and human rights was also mentioned, also in the context of gender-based violence. Other speakers addressed the risks posed by the excessive accumulation of ammunition and their diversion to unauthorized end users, including State-sponsored diversion to terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters and trafficking in arms and ammunition to terrorists through organized criminal groups.

20. Several speakers shared their experiences on the use of both national and international ballistic information networks to match ballistic evidence with evidence in other cases of violent crime involving firearms, with the ultimate aim of identifying shooters and the source of their guns. An example was shared regarding 5.3 million pieces of ballistic evidence in one country's ballistic information network, which had resulted in 520,000 leads for criminal investigations. The Working Group was informed about the utility of exploring possible solutions for exchanging ballistic data between different ballistic analysis information systems and hence striving for the interoperability of those systems.

21. Several speakers addressed the destruction of excessive surplus of ammunition. The Working Group was informed about a good practice involving one country that, after the end of a civil war, had systematically reduced such surplus and had destroyed more than 500 tons of ammunition, mines and explosive devices, including those in the possession of the armed forces and designated as surplus. Another good practice that was shared related to a national handover plan under which financial incentives were given for the voluntary surrender of firearms and their ammunition for destruction in one country. As a result, between 2007 and 2021, more than 2 million rounds of ammunition had been surrendered and destroyed.

22. Lastly, some speakers underlined the importance of an integral understanding of the entire life cycle of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, including of trafficking routes, new dynamics and technologies that facilitated diversion to the illicit market, which was considered a sine qua non to preventing and countering such conduct. The Working Group was exhorted to play a critical role as a forum for exchanging such information.

B. Presentation and discussion of a multi-year workplan for the Working Group on Firearms

23. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 4 and 5 May 2022, the Working Group on Firearms considered item 3 on its agenda, entitled “Presentation and discussion of a multi-year workplan for the Working Group on Firearms”.

24. The Working Group, at its eighth meeting, in 2021, had requested the secretariat to prepare a proposal for a multi-year workplan for discussion and adoption at the ninth meeting of the Working Group. In accordance with that request, the secretariat presented a proposal for such a workplan (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/3). The proposed workplan followed a two-pronged approach, combining one agenda item on the scope and implementation of certain provisions of the Firearms Protocol, supporting a common understanding of those provisions, and one agenda item dedicated to specific topics and thematic priorities related to the Firearms Protocol deemed of particular interest by the Working Group. As presented, the workplan would cover a period of 10 meetings of the Working Group.

25. After a presentation by a representative of the secretariat of the Working Group, several speakers supported the idea of synchronizing the workplan of the Working Group on Firearms with the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto. While supporting the general idea of the workplan, some speakers questioned whether the workplan should specify the work of the Working Group until 2032, or whether the workplan could be adopted periodically, in order to guarantee predictability while, at the same time, leaving more flexibility to adjust it if needed. Some speakers also proposed that the Working Group itself decide on the agenda items for future meetings, instead of leaving that decision to the extended Bureau of the Conference of the Parties. The representative of the secretariat explained the standing practice according to which the secretariat proposed agenda items, accompanied by an explanatory note, which were shared with the extended Bureau for approval. In the event that the workplan for the Working Group on Firearms was adopted, the secretariat would be guided by the workplan when proposing topics to the extended Bureau.

26. In accordance with the observations made by the different speakers, the secretariat of the Working Group prepared a shortened version of the workplan, covering a period of four years. In the proposal, which was aligned with the review process, the agenda item on the scope and implementation of certain provisions of the Firearms Protocol was focused on the criminalization provisions of the Firearms Protocol and of the Organized Crime Convention, the scope of application of the Protocol and the use of terms. Various speakers welcomed the shortened four-year workplan, which is contained in the annex to the present report, and agreed to adopt the workplan by means of recommendation 18 in the present report.

C. Matters pertaining to the review of the implementation of the Firearms Protocol

27. At its 3rd meeting, on 5 May 2022, the Working Group considered item 4 on its agenda, entitled “Matters pertaining to the review of the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime”.

28. Given that no list of observations arising from the review process had yet been concluded, the Working Group could not consider the substantive issues arising from the review of the implementation. Instead, a representative of the secretariat of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto delivered a presentation on the latest status of the review process, providing updated information.

To date, 80 per cent of the countries (104 out of 130 countries) participating in the first group and 72 per cent of the countries (94 out of 131) participating in the second group had nominated at least one focal point; 70 per cent of those focal points were men and 30 per cent were women. Of the 62 reviews in the first group, 50 per cent were currently active, while 42 per cent were inactive and 8 per cent were on hold. Of the active reviews, 6 reviews were at the stage of preliminary consultations; in 8 cases, the country under review was preparing their self-assessment questionnaires; in 16 reviews, written feedback by the reviewers had been provided; and 1 review was at the stage of the list of observations being finalized. In the second group, 62 per cent of the 63 reviews had not yet started, 16 per cent were on hold and 22 per cent were active. Of the active reviews, six reviews were at the stage of preliminary consultations and eight countries under review were currently preparing their self-assessment questionnaires.

29. The representative of the secretariat explained that several reviews had not yet started or were on hold because focal points had not been nominated (50 per cent in the first group and 62 per cent in the second group). Additional challenges included technological limitations of the focal points and challenges in using the review software RevMod, as well as the multiple working languages of the reviews. In that regard, she explained that one working language had been chosen for 58 per cent of the reviews, two working languages had been chosen for 31 per cent of the reviews and no agreement could be reached for 11 per cent of the reviews, owing to the lack of resources for translation. The secretariat had received requests for technical assistance from Member States, in particular in the areas of operating the RevMod software, filling out the self-assessment questionnaires and drafting observations. The availability of the secretariat and its readiness to support States in any phase of a review were stressed. The secretariat was to circulate a new survey to assess technical assistance requests.

30. To date, the secretariat had delivered 64 training sessions in five of the official languages of the United Nations and had organized 35 preliminary consultations reaching more than 1,500 focal points and governmental experts from 120 countries to provide support during the review process.

31. Following the presentation by the representative of the secretariat, some speakers suggested that lessons learned should be shared upon finalization of the first reviews.

D. Other matters

32. At the same meeting, the Working Group considered item 5 on its agenda, entitled “Other matters”.

33. Under agenda item 5, a representative of the secretariat of the Conference of the Parties to the Organized Crime Convention provided an update to the Working Group on organizational matters related to the constructive dialogues to be organized in accordance with paragraph 53 of the procedures and rules of the functioning of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto.

34. In the discussion that followed, several speakers highlighted the importance of broad participation by non-governmental stakeholders in the constructive dialogues, which had been designed specifically for the purpose of such exchange, underlined the need for the inclusivity of the process and expressed their sincere regret about and reservations against the objection made by one State party against the participation of one non-governmental organization in the constructive dialogues. A speaker stressed that, in general, her country supported the participation of civil society organizations in the constructive dialogues, but reiterated the objection made by her country against the participation of one non-governmental organization on the basis of the national security of her country.

IV. Organization of the meeting

A. Opening of the meeting

35. The ninth meeting of the Working Group on Firearms was held in Vienna on 4 and 5 May 2022 and comprised a total of four meetings. As agreed by the extended Bureau of the Conference of the Parties by means of a silence procedure on 29 March 2022, the meeting was held in a hybrid format in view of the continued impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with a restricted number of participants present in the meeting room and all other participants connected remotely using an interpretation platform contracted by the United Nations.

36. The meeting was opened by Alejandro Celorio Alcántara (Mexico), Chair of the Working Group.

37. The Director of the Division for Treaty Affairs of UNODC addressed the Working Group at the start of the meeting, highlighting the importance of considering the topic of ammunition and mentioning that the Firearms Protocol was the first global instrument that addressed ammunition.

B. Statements

38. Representatives of the secretariat provided introductory remarks under agenda items 2, 3 and 4.

39. With the Chair presiding, the discussion under item 2 was led by the following panellists: Albrecht von Wittke (Germany), Botha Marthinus (South Africa), Félix José Descalzo Coto (Spain), Marcus Vinicius Da Silva Dantas (Brazil), Hamid El Mahdi (Morocco) and Wilmer Delgado Peralta (Peru).

40. Under agenda item 2, statements were made by representatives of the following parties to the Firearms Protocol: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, European Union, Ghana, Mexico and Turkey. A statement was also made by the signatory State China. Statements under the item were also made by the observers for Colombia, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, INTERPOL and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

41. Under agenda item 3, statements were made by representatives of the following parties to the Firearms Protocol: Argentina, Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Switzerland. Statements were also made by the signatory State China and by the observers for Colombia and the United States.

42. Under agenda item 4, a statement was made by a representative of the following party to the Firearms Protocol: European Union.

43. Under agenda item 5, statements were made by representatives of the following parties to the Firearms Protocol: European Union, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Turkey. A statement under the item was also made by the observer for the United States.

C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

44. At its 1st meeting, on 4 May 2022, the Working Group adopted by consensus the following agenda:

1. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Opening of the meeting;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

2. Preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition.
3. Presentation and discussion of a multi-year workplan for the Working Group on Firearms.
4. Matters pertaining to the review of the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.
5. Other matters.
6. Adoption of the report.

D. Attendance

45. The following States parties to the Firearms Protocol were represented at the meeting, including online, owing to the specific format of the meeting in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Iraq, Italy, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

46. The following States signatories to the Firearms Protocol were represented by observers, including online, owing to the specific format of the meeting in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic: Canada, China and Luxembourg.

47. The following States that are not parties or signatories to the Firearms Protocol were represented by observers, including online, owing to the specific format of the meeting in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic: Botswana, Colombia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Myanmar, Namibia, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United States and Yemen.

48. The following intergovernmental organizations and United Nations entities were represented by observers, including online, owing to the specific format of the meeting in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic: Commonwealth of Independent States, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, INTERPOL, Police Community of the Americas (AMERIPOL), League of Arab States, South-East European Law Enforcement Centre, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, Office for Disarmament Affairs, UNODC, OHCHR, Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies and World Customs Organization.

49. A list of participants is contained in document [CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/INF/1/Rev.1](#).

E. Documentation

50. The Working Group had before it the following:
 - (a) Annotated provisional agenda ([CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/1](#));

(b) Background paper prepared by the Secretariat on preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/2);

(c) Background paper prepared by the Secretariat containing a proposal for a multi-year workplan for the Working Group on Firearms (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/3);

(d) Conference room paper prepared by the Secretariat on the status of the functioning of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2022/CRP.1).

V. Adoption of the report

51. At its 4th meeting, on 5 May 2022, the Working Group adopted chapters I, II, IV and V of the present report.

Annex

Four-year workplan of the Working Group on Firearms

<i>Year and meeting</i>	<i>Agenda item 2 (flexible)</i>	<i>Agenda item 3 (fixed)</i>
2023 Tenth meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One topic from the non-exclusive list of proposed topics recommended by the Working Group on Firearms at its eighth meeting, prioritizing topics that have not yet been discussed by the Working Group, ideally building on synergies with other relevant bodies of the United Nations Or, exceptionally, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional topic deemed of priority upon proposal to and approval by Member States through the extended Bureau 	Topic 1: articles 3 (Use of terms) and 4 (Scope of application)
2024 Eleventh meeting		Topic 2: article 5 (Criminalization) and effective criminal justice responses
2025 Twelfth meeting		Topic 3: article 1 (Relation with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) and effective criminal justice responses under the Convention to the offences covered by the Protocol
2026 Thirteenth meeting		Topic 4: articles 6 (Confiscation, seizure and disposal) and 9 (Deactivation of firearms)