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STATEMENT

Distinguished colleagues,

I wish to begin my presentation by pointing to the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed clear political commitment to strengthening small arms and light weapons control in Southeast Europe and that it actively participated in drafting the Road Map and expressed full support for its implementation.

We can say with certainty that the Road Map, which we prepared in close cooperation and with the assistance of our colleagues from the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of France, the European Union and the Regional Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, represents a key document for achieving a sustainable solution in this area. The adoption of this document created a quality platform based on which the competent authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina can now enhance measures and activities on addressing this very important security issue.

In addition to the migration crisis and the present aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina gives high priority to the issue of small arms and light weapons control and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies in this field. All data available to us indicate that the problem of illegal arms trade is still present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that the majority of incidents involving firearms are committed in the criminal context and that we need to approach resolving this problem in a serious way.

Consequently, following the last joint conference held in Berlin, we have continued to work on the implementation of goals defined by the BiH Strategy for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons 2021-2024, which has been harmonized with the Road Map. We have fully aligned our policy document with the recently adopted European Union strategy in this field, as well as the Action Plan for the implementation of the "Road Map". We are happy that the representatives of the European Union have recognized our efforts on resolving this problem. The institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina responsible for its implementation have demonstrated a high level of determination and commitment to work on its implementation, but also strengthening the existing mechanisms in order to facilitate the most efficient practical application. This is also evident from the recently adopted EU action plan on firearms trafficking which includes certain solutions with regard to regular collection of data and monitoring progress in the implementation of the Road Map, which we in the Western Balkans developed as we worked on the implementation of the Road Map.

Dear colleagues, it's been a while now since the "Road Map" was adopted. During this time, we have implemented a number of activities in cooperation with our partners towards accomplishing the 7 identified strategic goals. Despite facing numerous problems caused by the COVID 19 pandemic, we have still been able to achieve certain progress.

Please allow me to share with you some of the most important activities that we have implemented:

1. We have ensured a continuous process whereby the firearms control legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be established and fully harmonized with the EU regulatory framework and other relevant international commitments and that it would also be standardized in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Specifically, in practical terms this means that the Law on Weapons and Ammunition of Una-Sana Canton is, for the most part, harmonized with EU Directives. This is the first cantonal law on weapons (BiH has 12 laws on weapons) for which the Directorate for European Integration provided an opinion on compliance with the European Firearms Directive. Furthermore, the Police of Brčko District and the Ministries of Interior of Posavina Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton, Central Bosnia Canton, Tuzla Canton, Bosnian-Podrinje Canton and Sarajevo Canton have started activities on drafting new or amending existing Laws on Weapons.

I'd like to briefly comment on the provisions of the Protocol stipulating "illicit manufacturing", "illicit trade" and "marking" of firearms. In accordance with the Law on Manufacturing Weapons and Military Equipment, the Law on Foreign Trade in Weapons, Military Equipment and Special Purpose Goods and the Law on Marking of Small Arms, Light Weapons and Related Ammunition, BiH has fully legally defined the production of firearms, its marking (Article 8 of the Protocol, MARKING OF FIREARMS), as well as foreign trade which has to be conducted with the approval of the competent authority in BiH (Article 10 of the Protocol, General requirements for export, import and transit licensing or authorization systems), namely the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations. We also wish to remind that the Law on Control of Foreign Trade in Weapons, Military Equipment and Special Purpose Goods (BiH Official Gazette, 53/16) and the procedures laid down by the Law are harmonized with the Common Position of the Council of the European Union defining 8 criteria in the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, the first criterion relating to the Respect for the international obligations and commitments, in particular the sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council or the European Union, agreements on non-proliferation and other subjects, as well as other international obligations.

In accordance with its international obligations, BiH regularly submits the Annual report on transfers of conventional arms and SALW to the ATT Secretariat, the regular annual report to the UN and the OSCE on issued licenses

during the previous calendar year (Conventional Weapons and SALW). Reports with more details about arms export/import are published by the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC).

2. We have ensured that policies and arms control practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina are based on facts and criminal intelligence. Through the implementation of the CIAT project, we have been able to enhance the capacities of the Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina to combat illicit arms trafficking through Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond. Activities on developing the database on the transport of legal arms, improving the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Identification Platform, procuring specialized border control equipment and strengthening interinstitutional cooperation are currently underway. It should also be noted that this project is supported by the UNDP office in Sarajevo and the Multilateral Fund for the Western Balkans. We are actively working on reducing prohibited flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans region, both within and beyond it. The implementation of the HALT project began in February 2020 as a joint activity of the UN Development Program in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with the general objective of further improving security within and beyond the Western Balkans through targeted action on improving the capacities of Bosnia and Herzegovina on combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The project has been extended until 30 September 2022. The project is funded by the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of France, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Kingdom of Norway, with the support of the European Union, as part of the Road Map for control of small arms and light weapons in the Western Balkans.
3. We are implementing activities aimed at significantly reducing the flow of firearms, ammunition and explosives to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans by 2024. Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the first regional workshop of criminal police representatives organized by SEESAC on 14 and 15 December 2021. Initial findings of the Needs assessment of capacities of Criminal Police Services in the Western Balkans were presented at the meeting. This in-depth assessment of capacities of criminal police services of Western Balkans was successfully conducted in all six Western Balkan jurisdictions during 2021. Needs assessments are expected to be finalized in 2022. The assessment will set the basis for further support on strengthening capacities with regard to the development of procedures, procurement of equipment and the delivery of training.
4. Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently implementing activities on reducing the supply, demand and misuse of firearms by raising awareness on threats

posed by weapons, but also through education, promotion of arms control and better informing citizens as part of the PILLAR project.

5. Constant activities are systematically conducted on reducing surplus and destroying seized small arms (approx. 1,400 pieces of small arms and light weapons and approx. 14,000 rounds of ammunition were destroyed last year), including those in the possession of the BiH Armed Forces designated as surplus (approx. 535 tons of ammunition and mines and explosive devices). Improvements have been made to storage facilities for small arms and light weapons as part of the OSCE's SAFE UP project, the marking of SALWs in the possession of the BiH Armed Forces has been completed in cooperation with the HALO Trust and activities on the EXPLODE + project with UNDP have continued.
6. We are implementing activities on reducing the risk of proliferation and redirecting firearms, ammunition and explosives into illicit flows.

In conclusion of the report on activities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I find it necessary to point out that the BiH Ministry of Security and the OSCE Mission to BiH signed a Protocol on cooperation on reducing the risk from the proliferation of firearms and misuse of small arms and light weapons which will benefit security forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the project includes improvements to the storage infrastructure at 10 police small arms and light weapons storage locations, the installation of necessary surveillance technical equipment and the procurement of canines for the detection of firearms).

Despite the results achieved during the previous year, it is evident that we have not been able to resolve all the problems in this field and therefore we will need additional support, primarily with regard to the deactivation of firearms, the establishment of a firearms focal point, capacity building and cooperation between police and judicial authorities on resolving criminal offences of misuse of firearms, as well as strengthening ballistic capacities.

We expect to continue cooperation with countries in the region and international organizations that have supported us in this process in order to maintain continuity in the implementation of our strategic goals.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to work with the assistance of our international partners on improving cooperation at all levels on addressing general threats posed by illicit firearms trade. We will certainly be a reliable partner to the European Union and NATO in the fight against all forms of crime, including in the field of small arms and light weapons control.