

## **IHLI Statement Under item 5 General Debate**

Thank you Mr President,

We would like to express our warm welcome to the convening of the Eleventh Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, and to commend the efforts undertaken during the preparatory discussions in February and May, which paved the way for constructive dialogue here in Geneva.

We would like to take this opportunity, under Item 5 of the General Debate, to highlight that armed violence and gender-based violence remain among the most pressing global challenges. From 1 June to 1 July, as part of the 2025 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence, we launched the campaign “For Her Peace and Health” in partnership with the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and with the support of the European Union. The campaign shed light on the devastating consequences of the unregulated spread of small arms, light weapons, and conventional ammunition fuelling sexual violence, forced displacement, and the collapse of healthcare systems, disproportionately affecting women and girls.

The campaign also aimed to amplify the voices of victims and survivors. We successfully reached over a cumulative total of 122,410 views for public awareness, and collected testimonies from affected communities in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Libya, and Sudan. In Sudan alone, more than 1,100 cases of conflict-related sexual violence have been officially reported since April 2023 mostly perpetrated by armed groups while the real number is likely much higher due to fear and impunity. Our Initiative documented how ammunition is used not only in combat but also as a tool of intimidation in systematic assaults targeting women and girls.

Furthermore, IHLI organized several events, including a June 3 discussion entitled “Strengthening Survivor-Centered Approaches” and a June 4 panel “For Her Peace and Health”, featuring activists and experts from various countries. These discussions underscored the importance of practical synergies between the Global Framework for Through-Life Conventional Ammunition Management (GFA), the Arms Trade Treaty, and the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms, as a foundation for enhancing civilian protection particularly for women and girls.

Mr. President,

The adoption of the GFA represents a long-awaited step in closing a major gap in the international arms control architecture. With its comprehensive objectives and measures covering the entire life cycle of ammunition, the Framework provides a complementary and reinforcing tool to the legally binding obligations of the Arms Trade Treaty, particularly in preventing diversion and strengthening national control systems.

---

**International Humanitarian Law and Youth Initiative (IHLI)**

[IHLI.team@outlook.com](mailto:IHLI.team@outlook.com)

+41772305610

In this regard, our Initiative calls upon States Parties to:

- Integrate the GFA into the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty.
- Make use of mechanisms such as the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund to support national activities aligned with the Framework's objectives.

In conclusion, we stress that protecting communities from armed violence and achieving the humanitarian objectives of the ATT cannot be realized without adopting a survivor-centered approach, and without ensuring the meaningful participation of youth and women as essential pillars and active partners in building peace and security.

Thank you.