



**Statement of Tech 4 Tracing**  
**Open-ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition**  
**First Substantive Session**  
**25 May 2022**

Distinguished members of the Open-ended Working Group and representatives of international organizations and civil society,

Tech 4 Tracing (or T4T) is a partnership between arms control and new technology professionals whose objective is to incubate, test, and help deploy new technologies for enhanced arms and ammunition control in advancement of international agreements, protocols and treaties, and in support of law enforcement, human rights investigations and peacekeepers.

T4T applauds the creation of this Open-ended Working Group and its mandate to address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management, as well as its call for contributions from civil society as part of this process. **We believe the new technology sector can make important contributions to these discussions.**

The importance that the General Assembly has placed on ammunition security-- that is, efforts to prevent the diversion of ammunition held by national authorities-- is an extremely important one.

Recognizing ammunition diversion when it occurs can be a challenge for authorities and they should be supported to enhance their capabilities to do so.

**The development of new tools for identifying illicit ammunition in situ, at sites of violence, is equally important.** Ideally, this important task should be automated using deployable platforms that employ new technology capabilities, including optical character recognition, machine learning and artificial intelligence.

One such initiative to do just that is **Tech 4 Tracing's Illicit Ammunition Identification and Tracing Tool**, a mobile platform that will help authorized actors easily, accurately and rapidly identify ammunition in the field. When deployed and linked to an associated **Master Headstamp Dataset**, it will be possible to cross-reference illicit ammunition data to identify patterns of sourcing and trafficking. This initiative has been selected for a 2022 UNSCAR grant and will involve cooperation with a number of new technology experts and, ultimately, we expect, UN entities.

We should not forget that, though the phenomenon is not well documented, diverted conventional ammunition is often used to commit human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations, making it all the more important to be able to identify diverted ammunition when it has been used in those contexts, and to capture relevant data in ways that ensure it can be used as evidence in prosecutions and other processes to establish accountability. **New technologies have a vital role to play in fulfilling these needs.**

I will close by noting that Member States and NGOs have spent the last few years trying to come to grips with the use of new weapons technologies, but **this community has not yet seized the vast potential for the strategic application of new technologies to arms and ammunition control efforts.** Let us not fall behind in the race to innovate. As the tools of violence evolve, arms and

ammunition control efforts cannot stay behind in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; the human security consequences of doing so would be too grave.

Thank for the opportunity to make this intervention on behalf of Tech 4 Tracing. We look forward to contributing expertise, if called upon, to this and related forums.

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