

**Permanent Mission of India
New York**

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UN Security Council Open Debate on Small Arms

Statement by Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, Permanent Representative
10 November 2025

Thank you, Mr. President,

1. I congratulate Sierra Leone on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council and thank you for convening this Open Debate on Small Arms. We also thank the briefers for their briefings.

2. The illicit trade, trafficking and diversion of small arms and light weapons remains a major threat to international peace and security. As a complex and multidimensional problem, it has cross-cutting impact on development, security, humanitarian and socio-economic aspects.

3. India attaches high importance to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. An integrated approach to Small Arms & Light Weapons management requires addressing both the security and developmental dimensions. India believes that five key elements are critical for effective Small Arms & Light Weapons control: (i) National ownership through strong legislation and political commitment; (ii) A standardized organizational structure for coordinated action; (iii) Effective data management to enable real-time tracing and accountability; (iv) Risk management to prevent diversion and misuse; and (v) Security protocols and deterrence measures to strengthen border controls and stockpile management.

Mr. President,

4. India welcomes the Report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2025/670, on the ways and means by which the Security Council could contribute to this issue. The report notes that the diversion and illicit **trafficking of small arms and light weapons continue to sustain terrorist groups** and armed organisations in several conflict-affected regions. It highlights that porous borders, weak stockpile security and cross-border trafficking networks enable the steady flow of such weapons, while improvised and craft-produced weapons further complicate tracing and accountability.

5. The illicit trafficking of small arms and related ammunition continues to be a major factor **sustaining armed groups and terrorist organizations**. The consistent access of such entities to weapons highlights the need for coordinated action to prevent their acquisition. The Security Council must continue to uphold a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to those who facilitate, sponsor, finance or enable the use and movement of such weapons. Arms embargoes

authorized by this Council are an important tool to restrict the flow of weapons into conflict zones and must be implemented consistently, objectively and without selectivity.

Mr. President,

6. India has fought the scourge of terrorism for several decades and is therefore aware of the dangers posed by the diversion and illicit transfer of small arms and ammunition to armed non-State actors and terrorist groups. India has suffered due to cross-border terrorism carried out using illicit weapons trafficked across our borders, including now through the use of drones. The increase in the volume and sophistication of such arsenals reminds us that these groups cannot sustain themselves without being enabled, financed or supported. In this regard, India welcomes the consensus outcome document at the Eighth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Program of Action on Small Arms & Light Weapons that recognized the adverse effects of illicit arms trade in exacerbating terrorism.

7. International cooperation is indispensable in preventing diversion, disrupting trafficking networks, improving customs and border coordination, and enabling timely intelligence and information exchange. India supports the redoubling of efforts at the national and global level to strengthen the implementation of the UN Program of Action (PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), including through national legislative measures and enforcement, export controls, information sharing and capacity building. India **also** participated actively in the deliberations and supported the establishment of a Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, which, we hope, will strengthen the safe, secure, and sustainable ammunition management **which contributes significantly to our efforts to combat the threat of illicit diversion to terrorists.**

Mr. President,

8. UN Peacekeeping Missions, where mandated, can assist host States in building institutional capacities related to stockpile security, marking, registration and disposal of recovered weapons from non-State actors. However, peacekeeping missions should not be assigned embargo-enforcement roles, as such tasks alter their core mandate and may place peacekeepers in direct operational risk.

9. India regularly submits national reports under the Programme of Action and International Tracing Instrument. We have established strong legislative, regulatory and administrative mechanisms to prevent and combat illicit arms trafficking. India also maintains strict export controls over all munitions and related items. Our commitment is further reflected in our constructive participation in the Wassenaar Arrangement, including during India's Plenary Chairship in 2023, where we worked to strengthen global non-proliferation norms, including in the area of Small Arms & Light Weapons.

Mr. President,

10. India has also been contributing to gender-responsive capacity-building in the field of small arms and ammunition management. Indian women Armament and Ammunition Technical Officers have participated in regional seminars led by UN Regional Centre for Peace & Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific on fostering gender-responsive arms control, where India shared its regulatory practices and experience in secure stockpile management. In addition, Indian women officers have served as trainers in UN-led programmes on conventional ammunition management, supporting the implementation of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and encouraging the meaningful participation of women technical experts in this field. India remains committed to sharing its expertise and advancing inclusive approaches to safe and accountable ammunition practices.

11. In conclusion, let me reiterate India's firm commitment in preventing the misuse of small arms and light weapons by terrorist groups and thereby continue to contribute in the global fight against terrorism.

I thank you.