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Thank you Mr. Chair,

My name is Ivan Marques, I'm the Director of Instituto Sou da Paz in Brazil, and we are a member of IANSA. In countries very severely affected by gun violence, we see with great clarity the consequences of the proliferation of small arms. It is not only that these weapons take lives. Armed violence delays socioeconomic development in all its forms. It prevents children from going to school because the streets they need to walk on are not safe. It prevents new businesses and investment from flourishing. It deepens historical inequalities, which disproportionately victimises the young, black, and poor.

In Brazil, we have seen the power of good gun control rules, and we also see the effects of the circulation of these long-lasting items. We passed a good law in 2003 that restricted civilian access, but today we are still confiscating illegal weapons, mostly from decades ago.

Weapons from the 1960s continue to cause death and injury, because their owners still have access to ammunition. As we know, the potential harm that each gun can do depends on the amount of ammunition available.

We regret that serious attention to ammunition control is not yet part of the main body of work of the Program of Action. Talking about firearms control without talking about ammunition control is ignoring a major part of the problem.

The exclusion of ammunition from the PoA makes it impossible to fully implement the PoA.

Strict ammunition regulation can deter armed crime and conflict.

We also need to focus attention on ammunition storage, which poses a continuing risk to public safety.

We welcome the commitments of dozens of states at the 6th Biennial Meeting of States in 2016, when they supported fully integrating ammunition into the PoA. And we agree with the many States who have already reiterated that commitment this week.

We should require marking of all ammunition and recording its sale, and we must improve cooperation among countries to investigate the origin and routes of diversion. These measures are not easy, but they are necessary in order to understand those flows which, for the most part, still run in the shadows.

I will give you an example of the enormous potential of these measures on a case that caught the attention of the world last week. Marielle Franco was a black woman, born in a poor community, who overcame remarkable obstacles to become a municipal council member and a human rights defender for poor communities in Rio de Janeiro. She was executed last week – her car was hit 13 times by 9mm shots, killing her and her driver. Since we have compulsory marking of cartridges sold to security forces in Brazil, in less than 48 hours it was determined that the ammunition involved in this shooting had been sold years ago to the police. This information opens new avenues for the criminal investigation of her murder.

We know that this problem of diversion is too common in the world and is extremely serious. States are large buyers of arms and ammunition; they are also the regulators of the manufacture and sales of these weapons, and they are the guarantors of the safety of their citizens. Therefore all States should have the tools that enable them to quickly identify diversions, interrupt them, and hold those responsible to account.

Data on ammunition seized in the world are still scarce. An example of the potential benefits from more research on these issues came from an investigation by Instituto Sou da Paz. We determined that 52% of the ammunition seized in Rio de Janeiro was of national manufacture. This is contrary to the common belief that had guided public policies, which was that most ammunition arrived in Brazil via long and complex smuggling routes. The study also highlighted the fact that the Mexican and US ammunition seized in Rio can't be traced, since those munitions are not marked. Understanding better how ammunition is diverted will allow our countries to develop manufacturing and trade standards as well as risk assessments that better match reality.

Marking of munitions and maintaining adequate sales records are also basic tools for solving criminal investigations. We invest millions of dollars in ubiquitous video monitoring systems and complex DNA trace tests. But we still allow an element present in almost all crime scenes — right next to the victim's body — to continue to have no ID.

We urge the international community to adhere to a common framework on marking, record-keeping, and international cooperation as part of its work to control the flow of ammunition.

We cannot imagine whose interests would be opposed to shining the light on the ammunition market, other than criminal, terrorist organisations, and corrupt officials.

Thank you very much.