Mr. Chairman, I am Torb Lindskog, President of the World Forum on Shooting Activities (WFSA), a UN EcoSoc NGO representing more than 100 million hunters, sport shooters and civilian firearm owners around the world.

For the past 20 years, the WFSA has endeavored to attend and participate in every UN small arms and light weapons meeting and conference to bring forth the voice of the 100 million legal firearms owners we represent.

This past August we attended the Third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. Unfortunately, issues such as illegal arms sales and diversions continued to be ignored. Instead, the conference focused on expanding the mandates of a Treaty that was adopted without consensus.

It should come as little surprise that civilian owners of legal firearms throughout the world are concerned that as initiatives like the ATT, Program of Action and UN Firearms Protocol continue to look to expand while accomplishing little in relation to their intended objectives, that focus will shift to those with absolutely nothing to do with illegal trade, diversion and criminal use of small arms and light weapons. In other words, civilian owners of legal firearm.

In a recent Twitter chat hosted by UN DESA’s Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs discussing the Sustainable Development Goals, Thomas Gass stated that the “SDG’s mst [sic] not limit countries ambitions to tackle legal [firearm] ownership+use”.

Despite this acknowledgement, the WFSA is here to remind you that the 100 million legal hunters, sport shooters and civilian firearm owners around the world will not sit quietly in the face of any international or nation ambition to attack the legal ownership and use of firearms.

Instead, the WFSA is here to remind you that firearms are a tool, a tool used by lawful hunters to provide healthy sustenance for their families and neighbors. A tool used for recreational and competitive shooting. And a tool lawful owners use to protect their families, their homes, and their communities from the threats so many UN initiatives purport to address.

And while the WFSA and our respective member associations will continue to defend the lawful ownership and use of firearms throughout the world, we would also like to remind you of our continuing offer of assistance.

Our collective expertise in the firearms arena is unique, and with our assistance we believe the United Nations can accomplish its goals through initiatives that truly target illegal activities and not legal firearm owners.

The 100 million hunters, sport shooters and civilian firearm owners around the world we represent make up a quiet majority. A quiet majority that pleads for the UN to operate in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, and a quiet majority that truly believes international initiatives targeting the illegal use and trade of firearms can only be successful when the lawful civilian ownership of firearms throughout the world is acknowledged and codified.