

ARMS TRADE TREATY

Tenth Conference of States Parties Geneva, 19 – 23 August 2024

Statement by Austria/General Debate Mr. Christoph Wieland Deputy Permanent Representative of Austria

Chair

Thank you for giving me the floor. We wish you and your team all the best for your chairpersonship and thank the Head of the Secretariat and his team as well as all the facilitators for their excellent work in preparing this meeting.

Chair, let me join others in expressing our deepest condolences to the Secretariat and the family and friends of Mr. Stefan Ott for their loss.

Austria aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its member states, the statement made by Mexico on behalf of a group of countries and the Political Declaration for the next decade of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

It has been 10 years since the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty – a key instrument for regulating international trade in conventional arms and for preventing and eradicating their illicit trade. Austria is convinced that the ATT in the tenth year of its existence has and will continue to play an important role in contributing to international peace, security and stability as well as in reducing human suffering as stated in Art. 1 of the Treaty.

Nonetheless, this is a crucial moment and our debate is more relevant than ever. As we speak, brutal aggressions, armed conflicts and terrorism have devastating impacts on people all around the world and remain a challenge to the international community. We mourn all the victims of all these conflicts and we call on all parties to armed conflict to exercise utmost restraint.

Apart from the situation of armed conflict, armed violence is rife in many countries, including Austria. A new law, based on EU regulations, recently entered into force in Austria, increasing measures for prevention, protection of victims of domestic violence and strengthening accountability.

Chair

In this context, we would like to highlight the following aspects to be addressed in this CSP:

- First, gender-based violence is a recurring theme in ATT CSPs. Recent estimates from UNIDIR show that between 70-90% of all incidents of conflict-related sexual violence involve weapons and firearms, strongly linking efforts to prevent such violence with the ATT. The Treaty

explicitly requires States Parties to duly take into account the risks of gender-based violence in arms export assessments, which in turn contributes to the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Let us bear in mind that LGBTIQ rights should be part of this debate.

- Second, transparency is an important building block of the Treaty. It promotes mutual trust and we expect that all ATT States will return to full and comprehensive national reports once concerns for national security have been met.
- Third, post shipment verification is an important tool to ensure an effective licencing system. A recent progress report on SDG16 indicators by UNDP, OHCHR and UNODC referred to a significant share of illicit arms being traced internationally to a foreign registry and the importance of cooperative practices at the international level in this regard. The ATT can therefore clearly play its role in achieving the 2030 Agenda in the coming years.
- Last but not least we are looking forward to continuing discussions on the role of industry from last year and building on the paper that Joint Working Paper by Ireland, Mexico and Austria from CSP9.

Thank you for your attention.