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WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING
INTRODUCTORY PAPER FOR MEETING OF 17 FEBRUARY 2022

Introduction and mandate for the WGTR CSP7-CSP8

1. During [the Seventh Conference of States Parties \(CSP7\) of the Arms Trade Treaty \(ATT\)](#), held in hybrid format due to the COVID-19 pandemic from 30 August–03 September 2021, States Parties dealt with a number of recommendations of the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR) that followed from the WGTR's discussions during its meeting of 28-29 April 2021 and the remote consultations in May - June 2021, endorsed the [revised initial and annual reporting templates](#) and recommended their use by States Parties in compiling their reports in accordance with Article 13 of the Treaty, as well as endorsed a number of standing agenda items and recurring and specific tasks for the WGTR for the period between CSP7 and CSP8.
2. Following the WGTR recommendations in [the WGTR Co-Chairs' report to CSP7](#), States Parties:
 - a. *Recalled that transparency is a key purpose of the Treaty and as such, the WGTR must ensure that transparency is reflected in all its processes, discussions and proposals aimed at the fulfilment of the objectives of the Treaty;*
 - b. *Reiterated that reporting is a fundamental obligation of the ATT, and submitting initial and annual reports is an indicator of the commitment of a State Party to the Treaty;*
 - c. *Expressed its concern for the low rate of compliance with the reporting obligations;*
 - d. *Urged States Parties that are not fully compliant with their reporting obligations to submit their reports or, in case of difficulty to do so, to make use of the available assistance mechanisms in order to achieve full compliance with the Treaty's reporting obligations;*
 - e. *Encouraged all relevant stakeholders to continue to implement the Outreach Strategy on Reporting that was adopted at CSP4, and to use all available means to actively engage with States Parties that are not fully compliant with the reporting obligations, in order to raise awareness on the mandatory nature of reporting and to provide assistance upon request;*
 - f. *Encouraged States Parties and signatory States to register online for access to the IT platform and make use of the information exchange platform;*
 - g. *Endorsed the revised Initial reporting template, as contained in Annex C of the Co-Chairs' report, and recommended its use by States Parties in compiling their initial reports in accordance with Article 13 paragraph 1 of the Treaty;*
 - h. *Endorsed the revised Annual reporting template, as contained in Annex E of the Co-Chairs' report, and recommended its use by States Parties in compiling their annual reports in accordance with Article 13 paragraph 3 of the Treaty;*
 - i. *Endorsed the standing agenda-items and the recurring and specific tasks for the WGTR in the period between CSP7 and CSP8, as included in Annex A of the Co-Chair's report.*

3. The standing agenda items that States Parties instructed the WGTR to deal with as a minimum are the following:
- a. *State of play of compliance with reporting obligations;*
 - b. *Challenges concerning reporting;*
 - c. *Substantive reporting and transparency issues;*
 - d. *Organizational means for information exchange;*
 - e. *IT platform: reporting and transparency functionalities; and*
 - f. *WGTR mandate in the period between CSP8 and CSP9.*
4. Under each of these standing agenda items States Parties charged the WGTR with both recurrent tasks and specific tasks for the period between CSP7 and CSP8:
- a. *With regard to the **state of play of compliance with reporting obligations**, at every meeting the WGTR will review the status of reporting, thereby focusing on the progress that has been made in comparison to the previous status updates.*
 - b. *With regard to **challenges concerning reporting**, the WGTR will as a minimum:*
 - i. *encourage participants of States Parties that are in non-compliance with their ATT reporting obligations to share their challenges to submitting timely and accurate initial and annual reports;*
 - ii. *monitor the implementation of the project of voluntary practical bilateral and regional assistance with reporting (peer-to-peer);*
 - iii. *give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss other means to support States Parties in addressing their reporting challenges;*
 - iv. *encourage participants to report on initiatives taken to implement the document entitled [“Outreach strategy on reporting”](#), adopted at CSP4;*
 - v. *give participants the opportunity to discuss submitted proposals for alterations or additional questions and answers for the [‘FAQ’-type guidance document on the annual reporting obligation, adopted at CSP3](#); and*
 - vi. *monitor the impact and usefulness of the [updated Initial Reporting template and the updated Annual Reporting template](#) endorsed at CSP7.*
 - c. *With regard to **substantive reporting and transparency issues**, the WGTR will as a minimum:*
 - i. *give participants the opportunity to raise and discuss substantive issues about the reporting obligations that could benefit from consideration by the WGTR;*
 - ii. *monitor and coordinate further work on the project to facilitate the identification of the conventional arms in Article 2 (1) of the Treaty in the "Harmonized System" (HS) of the World Customs Organization (WCO);*
 - iii. *exchange practices, challenges and limitations concerning the public availability of annual and initial reports; and*
 - iv. *exchange practices, challenges and limitations concerning the aggregation of data in annual reports.*
 - d. *With regard to **organizational means for information exchange**, the WGTR will as a minimum:*
 - i. *give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss structured mechanisms, processes or formats facilitating the information exchanges that are required or encouraged by the Treaty, both on the policy level, as well as on the operational level;*
 - ii. *follow up the implementation of the three-tier approach to sharing information on diversion, adopted at CSP4.*
 - e. *With regard to the **reporting and transparency functionalities of the IT platform**, the WGTR will*

as a minimum:

- i. give participants the opportunity to flag any problems or inconveniences concerning the IT platform;
 - ii. give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss improvements to the IT platform to enhance transparency and facilitate the implementation of the reporting and information exchange obligations of the Treaty, including proposals to harness information from the initial and annual reports in a manner that allows follow-up on these reports;
 - iii. monitor and assess the use of the online reporting functionality and the information exchange platform on the ATT website; and
 - iv. work towards the consideration of a functionality that makes the information in annual reports available in a searchable database that allows for queries and extracting data.
- f. With regard to the **WGTR mandate in the period between CSP8 and CSP9**, the WGTR will review the relevance of the aforementioned standing agenda items and recurrent tasks in the light of the state of play of ATT transparency and reporting, with a view to preparing a proposal for consideration by CSP8.

5. The Co-Chairs have prepared this introductory paper to unpack the tasks of the WGTR for discussions in the period between CSP7 and CSP8, and to allow WGTR participants to prepare efficiently for the first WGTR meeting, which will take place in February 2022, as indicated in the CSP8 President's letter of 22 November 2021. The paper explains the background of the given tasks, summarizes past proposals and discussions, sets out elements for discussion and puts a number of proposals for consideration to WGTR participants. This should ensure a structured and effective discussion during the meeting.

6. In light of the reduced time allocated to the meeting due to the format of the meeting, caused by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Co-Chairs have adapted the agenda in order to ensure that enough time is allocated for those topics that either may require a decision by CSP8 or are necessary to discuss though they may not lead to a decision by CSP8. Some of the topics that are omitted from the agenda for the 17 February 2022 meeting can be addressed in writing, or be postponed to the next preparatory meetings of the CSP8 cycle.

7. As the paper includes several calls to WGTR participants to submit their own proposals on certain topics, the Co-Chairs encourage participants to submit any proposals in writing, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat, or via the information exchange platform, by 04 February 2022.

Agenda item 1: State of play of compliance with reporting obligations

Recurring task: The WGTR will review the status of reporting, thereby focusing on the progress that has been made in comparison to the previous status updates.

8. Reviewing the status of reporting is traditionally done through a presentation by the ATT Secretariat. **During the 17 February 2022 meeting, the ATT Secretariat will give a general overview of the reporting status and of the progress that has been made in comparison to the previous status update.**

Agenda item 2: Challenges concerning reporting

[Recurring task 1: The WGTR will encourage participants of States Parties that are in non-compliance with their ATT reporting obligations to share their challenges to submitting timely and accurate initial and annual reports.](#)

9. This recurring task is traditionally included in the WGTR mandate to offer States Parties a continuous platform to share problems and difficulties as well as solutions and good practices, in the organization and fulfilment of their reporting obligations. In that respect, in previous meetings some States Parties shared their difficulties in establishing effective procedures for information gathering and reporting, whilst other States Parties presented how they dealt with such challenges in their control system. **The Co-Chairs therefore invite States Parties that have not yet complied with all their reporting obligations to share the obstacles that have kept them from reporting, during the 17 February 2022 meeting. The Co-Chairs also invite State Parties that have complied with their reporting obligations to share their experiences in compiling and submitting their reports.**

10. The Co-Chairs remind States Parties about the comprehensive assistance tools that the CSP already recommended and endorsed, namely:

- The document "[National-Level Measures to Facilitate Compliance with International Reporting Obligations and Commitments](#)" – offering guidance on the organization of reporting duties;
- The document "[Reporting Authorized or Actual Exports and Imports of Conventional Arms: Questions & Answers](#)" - providing guidance in the form of questions and answers to facilitate the preparation of the mandatory annual report; and
- The "[Outreach strategy on reporting](#)" (under which all States and other ATT stakeholders will be asked to brief the WGTR about any initiative undertaken to promote and enhance compliance with the reporting duties of the Treaty).

11. The Co-Chairs also point out that States Parties that are experiencing challenges with respect to their reporting obligations can apply to the Voluntary Trust Fund for assistance.

12. Besides, States Parties can take part in the project of voluntary practical bilateral and regional assistance with reporting (peer-to-peer), which was conceived as an auxiliary instrument to assist States Parties that have specific questions on reporting.

[Recurring task 2: The WGTR will monitor the implementation of the project of voluntary practical bilateral and regional assistance with reporting \(peer-to-peer\).](#)

13. The project of voluntary practical bilateral and regional assistance with reporting (peer-to-peer) was supported by States Parties at CSP5. The first step in the project was a meet & greet event, which took place on 06 February 2020, among delegates of States that expressed interest either in offering or in receiving assistance on reporting issues. The reactions of participants in the event were positive and revealed their willingness to continue these peer-to-peer exchanges.

14. During the 06 February 2020 meeting of WGTR, it was decided that the follow-up of this project would remain in the hands of the ATT Secretariat. No further meetings or meaningful follow-up have been possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ATT Secretariat is now considering ways to follow-up on this project in the face of COVID-restrictions.

Recurring task 3: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss other means to support States Parties in addressing their reporting challenges.

15. Compliance with the ATT's annual reporting requirement is on a downward trajectory. While the challenges faced by governments due to the global COVID-19 pandemic might have caused delays in reporting, this negative trend threatens to undermine the treaty's objective of transparency and confidence building in the global arms trade. This stresses the importance that the WGTR, while continuing to implement existing measures, develop new ones to address this situation.

16. In light of the reduced time allocated to the 17 February 2022 meeting, and given that currently there is no specific proposal under discussion, the Co-Chairs propose to postpone the discussion of this agenda item for the next preparatory meeting of the CSP8 cycle. ATT stakeholders are invited to submit any proposals they may have, in writing, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat or via the information exchange platform by 04 February 2022.

Recurring task 4: The WGTR will encourage participants to report on initiatives taken to implement the document entitled "Outreach Strategy on Reporting".

17. Continued downturn trends in reporting confirm the relevance to increase efforts in implementing the "[Outreach strategy on reporting](#)" adopted at CSP4, which includes several recommendations and calls on all ATT stakeholders to pay attention to reporting issues in their work on implementing and helping to implement the Treaty.

18. The Presidents of CSP6 and CSP7 engaged with those States Parties that are in arrears with their reporting obligations on a bilateral basis and through individualized letters.

19. The ATT Secretariat has monitored the responses to individualized letters sent out by the President of CSP7. Of the States Parties contacted, three (3) submitted their Initial Reports, and four (4) submitted outstanding Annual Reports.

20. The Co-Chairs have encouraged the beneficiaries of VTF funded projects related to improving reporting capacities to share with the WGTR their experience and lessons learned. States that have received VTF funding to improve reporting capacity have shared positive feedback regarding their experiences, and the Co-Chairs continue consultations with beneficiaries of these projects. **The Co-Chairs encourage beneficiaries of VTF funded projects related to reporting to share their experience and achievements in this area during the 17 February 2022 meeting.**

21. Afterwards, the Co-Chairs will call on States Parties, civil society and regional organizations to brief WGTR participants about any information sessions or promotional events on reporting that they have held, and about any other initiative focused on enhancing compliance with the reporting duties.

Recurring task 5: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to discuss submitted proposals for alterations or additional questions and answers for the 'FAQ'-type guidance document on the annual reporting obligation, adopted at CSP3

22. The '[FAQ'-type guidance document on the annual reporting obligation](#) was endorsed by States Parties at CSP3 and updated at CSP5, when States Parties endorsed a number of amendments that were necessary to reflect the introduction of the online reporting tool.

23. CSP7 endorsed the revised Annual reporting template and recommended its use by States Parties in compiling their annual reports in accordance with Article 13 paragraph 3 of the Treaty. The Co-chairs reviewed the "FAQ"-type guidance document on the annual reporting obligations in light of the revised

Annual reporting template and, with the support of the ATT Secretariat, have prepared draft suggested amendments to the document to reflect the revised template (Annex A).

24. The “FAQ”-type guidance document on the annual reporting obligation requires that proposals for alterations and additional questions and answers be considered in the WGTR. **The co-chairs therefore invite WGTR participants to review their suggested amendments in Annex A and submit any comments or additional proposals for alternations and additional questions to the co-chairs and the ATT Secretariat, or via the information exchange platform, at the latest ten days before the WGTR meeting in which they want to have their proposals discussed. The Co-Chairs will brief the WGTR participants to the meeting if specific suggestions are received, and will invite the proponents to present their contributions.**

Specific task 6: The WGTR will monitor the impact and usefulness of the updated Initial Reporting template and the updated Annual Reporting template endorsed at CSP7.

25. CSP7 endorsed the revised Initial reporting template and the revised Annual reporting template and recommended their use by States Parties in compiling their reports in accordance with Article 13 of the Treaty.

26. **In light of the limited time that has passed since the introduction of the revised templates and the reduced time allocated to the 17 February 2022 meeting, the Co-Chairs propose to postpone the discussion of this agenda item for the CSP9 cycle.**

Agenda item 3: Substantive reporting and transparency issues

Recurring task 1: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to raise and discuss substantive issues about the reporting obligations that could benefit from consideration by the WGTR

27. This is a recurring task to allow WGTR participants to raise any issue on the substance of any of the obligations in article 13 of the Treaty. **All participants are invited to raise any substantive issue they want to see discussed in the WGTR in writing, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat or via the information exchange platform during the current CSP8 cycle.**

28. The Co-chairs recall that the CSP5 decided that in order to increase understanding of the gendered impact of armed violence in the context of the ATT all Working Group Chairs and facilitators are encouraged to consider gender aspects in their sessions. **Though the Co-chairs underline that this topic is not included in the mandate and there is no treaty obligation to provide information regarding thematic discussions, a representative of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) will be invited to reflect on ways to promote transparency regarding the topic of Gender and Gender Based Violence within the ATT framework during the 17 February 2022 meeting.**

Recurring task 2: The WGTR will monitor and coordinate further work on the project to facilitate the identification of the conventional arms in Article 2 (1) of the Treaty in the “Harmonized System”(HS) of the World Customs Organization (WCO)

29. This project dates back to the 31 May 2018 WGTR meeting, when a briefing by a representative of the World Customs Organization (WCO) informed that except for SALW, most of the conventional arms covered under Article 2 (1) of the ATT are not classified by specific customs codes that would allow identification of those conventional arms in the Harmonized System (HS). As this was found regrettable from the perspective of not only reporting and record-keeping, but also enforcing arms transfer controls,

participants unanimously agreed that, where absent, introducing specific customs codes for the conventional arms covered under Article 2 (1) of the ATT could be beneficial. The briefing demonstrated that amendments concerning conventional arms would not be controversial and that conventional arms would also lend themselves well to specific codes. It would be recommendable to work towards the 2027 review, which would require finalized amendments by 2024. The amendments to the HS should be submitted by Member States through their customs administrations, thus States Parties are strongly encouraged to discuss the issue with their national customs administrations and to share their feedback with WGTR participants.

30. Since the briefing, the project has been on the agenda of every WGTR meeting but no concrete steps had been taken. In this light, the Belgian Co-Chair of WGTR at the time in the CSP6 cycle, committed to draft a concept note on the topic and, when available, he would share this with those States Parties that have shown interest in the matter. **As the Co-Chairs have been advised that this work is still under development and that the said document will be presented to the WGTR after its finalization, the Co-Chairs propose to address this agenda item be postponed to the CSP9 cycle, depending on its progress.**

Specific task 3: The WGTR will exchange practices, challenges and limitations concerning the public availability of annual and initial reports

31. The number of States Parties that choose to make their reports available to States Parties only has increased year by year. Besides, the Co-Chairs note that some of these experienced in submitting public ATT annual reports gradually shifted to limiting their availability to States Parties only. Several States Parties and stakeholders have expressed concern about this trend, which the Co-Chairs consider legitimate in light of the Treaty's purpose in Article 1 of promoting transparency.

32. A discussion on this subject took place during the meeting of the WGTR in April 2021. The Co-Chairs see value in further discussion on this subject taking place to help ATT stakeholders to understand the challenges, limitations and/or preferences of States Parties that choose not to make their reports public, without questioning their right to do so.

33. In any case, the Co-Chairs encourage States Parties to access the [reporting section on the ATT website](#). States Parties whose reports have been made accessible on the restricted area of the website only are encouraged to signal any changes in preference to the ATT Secretariat.

34. **The Co-Chairs will invite States Parties and other stakeholders to share practices, challenges and limitations concerning the public availability of the annual and initial reports.**

Specific task 4: The WGTR will exchange practices, challenges and limitations concerning the aggregation of data in annual reports

35. The Co-Chairs emphasize that this topic is not included in the mandate to discuss whether or not disaggregation of data is a treaty obligation, as this was discussed when the templates were initially adopted, but to have an exchange on States' practices and challenges on this particular topic. The Co-Chairs do point out that the FAQ-style guidance document on the annual reporting obligation, in questions 22 & 23 indicate expressly that States Parties should consider disaggregating their information by category of conventional arms on which they are reporting, as well as by country of origin or destination, and then strongly encourages States Parties to do so per country. The disaggregation of data is even more valuable in light of the discussion about the development of a searchable online database, as aggregated data would complicate comparability.

36. In light of the reduced time allocated to the meeting of 17 February 2022 meeting, the Co-Chairs

propose to postpone the discussion of this agenda item for the next meeting in the CSP8-cycle.

Agenda item 4: Organizational means for information exchange

Recurring task 1: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss structured mechanisms, processes or formats facilitating the information exchanges that are required or encouraged by the Treaty, both on the policy level, as well as on the operational level

37. This is a recurring task to allow WGTR participants to propose and discuss any instrument that could strengthen, promote or expedite the information exchanges that the Treaty requires or encourages States Parties to undertake in articles 7 (6), 8 (1), 11 (3), 11 (5), 13 (2), 15 (2-4) and 15 (7).

38. The Co-Chairs remind ATT stakeholders that during the preparatory process of CSP6, the WGTR focused on two mechanisms, namely the information exchange platform in the restricted area of the ATT website and the Diversion Information Exchange Forum among States Parties and signatory States.

39. Concerning the information exchange platform, during the 06 February 2020 meeting of the WGTR the Co-Chairs suggested that the platform could be used as a tool in the preparation for meetings of the ATT working groups and for intersessional work, as well as for any exchanging or sharing of information that is required or encouraged by the Treaty including, but not limited to, information sharing on diversion, as part of the three-tier approach (referenced in the following agenda item). While such proposals were well received by the participants, some pointed out the need of support from the ATT Secretariat to make States Parties and Signatories aware of announcements on the platform, and others questioned the security of the IT system.

40. In the remote consultations that followed the February 2020 meeting the Co-Chairs discussed the use of the platform for the proposed substantive purposes with the ATT Secretariat and the Chair of the WGETI and encouraged them to request input on pending issues from States Parties and signatory States by posting “announcements” on the platform. The Co-Chairs posted announcements on the platform requesting input and comments on several working documents ahead of the CSP6. Only a couple of States Parties responded to this request by uploading their feedback in the IT platform.

41. Given that the number of users that have requested access to the information exchange platform remains quite limited, the Co-Chairs strongly encourage States Parties and signatory States to [register online](#) for access to the restricted area of the ATT website and for access to the IT platform.

42. The Co-Chairs recall that exchanges via the information exchange portal are one of the predefined tiers in the three-tier approach to sharing information on diversion that was endorsed by States Parties at CSP4, next to discussions in the WGETI and the Diversion Information Exchange Forum adopted by the CSP6.

43. The Co-Chairs invite WGTR participants to propose and discuss other structured mechanisms, processes or formats facilitating the information exchanges that are required or encouraged by the Treaty, both on the policy level, as well as on the operational level. The Co-Chairs welcome any written proposals, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat or via the information exchange platform, as well as oral proposals during the 17 February 2022 meeting.

Recurring task 2: The WGTR follow up the implementation of the three-tier approach to sharing information on diversion, adopted at CSP4

44. With the adoption of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum and its [Terms of Reference](#) in CSP6, a relevant step was taken in the fulfilment of one of the pillars of the three-tier approach to sharing

information on diversion. It is expected that the broad support provided to the Forum will be reflected in active participation and constructive exchanges that will help address the problem of arms diversion. CSP7 recognized that because of the confidential nature of the DIF and the sensitivity of the relevant information, and in order to be meaningful and effective, Diversion Information Exchange Forum meetings need to be held in-person and allow for broad participation of States Parties and Signatories and mandated the CSP8 President to organize the first formal meeting of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum as soon as broad in-person participation is feasible.

45. The mandate of the WGTR still includes the task to monitor the implementation of the three-tier approach to sharing information on diversion because the said approach was instituted by the WGTR and the group has a role in monitoring the usefulness and value of the initiatives that are taken in the context of the three-tier approach, including the DIF.

46. During the CSP7-cycle, a State Party put forward the idea to consider the possibility of complementing the information exchange platform with a public part feature to allow broader and more inclusive exchanges among all ATT stakeholders, including for the intersessional work. In this context, the Co-Chairs invited participants to consider this idea and invited them to provide written input on the elements that could be considered for the addition of the said feature, including the parameters for its use, the type of information that could be exchanged, the benefits of the project, and any other relevant element. No further input or suggestions have been received on this point.

47. In light of the reduced time allocated to the meeting of 17 February 2022 meeting, the Co-Chairs propose to postpone the discussion of this agenda item for the next meeting in the CSP8 cycle. All participants are invited to provide suggestions and comments, in writing, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat or via the information exchange platform itself by 15 April 2022.

Agenda item 5: Reporting and transparency functionalities of the IT platform

Recurring task 1: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to flag any problems or inconveniences concerning the IT platform

48. The area of the ATT website that is restricted to States Parties includes the information exchange platform and the online reporting functionality. States Parties have had the opportunity to experience online reporting for three years already, to submit their reports about their exports and imports in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Also, the information exchange platform is fully operational. During the 06 February 2020 meeting the ATT Secretariat provided very comprehensive and clear [instructions on the use of the platform](#) and the WGTR Co-Chairs posted announcements on which States Parties had the opportunity to comment. **In this context, during the 17 February 2022 meeting the Co-Chairs will invite State Parties to flag any problems or inconveniences they have experienced in using the IT platform.**

Recurring task 2: The WGTR will give participants the opportunity to propose and discuss improvements to the IT platform to enhance transparency and facilitate the implementation of the reporting and information exchange obligations of the Treaty, including proposals to harness information from the initial and annual reports in a manner that allows follow-up on these reports

49. This is a recurring task to allow WGTR participants to suggest any changes or improvements to the IT platform in general – including the online reporting tool and the information exchange platform – based on their use. In light of the reduced time allocated to the meeting of 17 February 2022 meeting, the Co-Chairs propose to postpone the discussion of this agenda item for the next meeting in the CSP8 cycle.

All participants are invited to provide suggestions and comments, in writing, via e-mail to the Co-Chairs and the ATT Secretariat or via the information exchange platform itself by 15 April 2022.

Recurring task 3: The WGTR will monitor and assess the use of the online reporting functionality and the information exchange platform on the ATT website

50. During the meeting of 06 February 2020, the ATT Secretariat briefed the WGTR about the use of the online reporting tool located in the restricted area of the ATT webpage and presented instructions on the use of the information exchange platform. The Secretariat reported that only 12 States Parties used the online reporting tool to submit their annual report. In light of the limited use of the said online reporting tool, the Co-Chairs encouraged States Parties and signatory States to: 1) [register online](#) for access to the restricted area of the ATT website; 2) consider using the online reporting tool for submitting the annual reports; and 3) engage in the discussions on the announcements posted on the information exchange platform.

51. During the 17 February 2022 meeting, the Co-Chairs will invite all participants to provide suggestions and comments to improve the functionality and use of the online reporting functionality and the information exchange platform on the ATT website.

Specific task 4: The WGTR will work towards the consideration of a functionality that makes the information in annual reports available in a searchable database that allows for queries and extracting data.

52. Conventional arms covered by the Treaty have an indispensable role in the preservation of security, freedom and peace, provided they are used in accordance with the principles and criteria enshrined in the Treaty. States Parties must ensure that they are traded and used in a responsible and accountable way, and prevent their diversion to unauthorized users or for unauthorized end-uses. Accountability for arms export decisions can only take place when authorities are transparent. The development of a searchable online database that allows for queries and extracting data will be a substantial step in increasing transparency, which is one of the primary purposes of the Treaty. While it will provide information that can already be found in States Parties annual reports, it will better inform the public on the global arms trade in a user-friendly manner.

53. In this regard, the Co-Chairs recall the overwhelming consensus among participants of the WGTR's 08 March 2018 meeting that the information generated through the annual reports should be available in a searchable database.

54. The Co-Chairs also point out that any progress in the development of the searchable database also requires decisions on other WGTR issues, such as the reporting templates, and on more general issues, such as the IT budget. In this regard, the Co-Chairs consider that a long-term approach is needed to ensure that careful consideration is given to States Parties' expectations and needs with respect to a 'searchable online database', and to assess the cost-benefit of investing in such an instrument. It is important that States Parties firstly discuss and decide on the parameters and features of such a database, and only afterwards a cost-benefit analysis could be possible.

55. During the 28-29 April 2021 meeting, the ATT Secretariat presented a background paper outlining questions that could be put to States Parties to ascertain what they want and expect from a searchable online database. Co-chairs invite participants to provide further comments to the said approach as well as to the background paper.

56. In order to inform further discussion, Co-chairs have invited the EU External Action Service to provide a presentation of the COARM searchable online database which was introduced in October 2020.

Agenda item 6: WGTR mandate in the period between CSP8 and CSP9

Recurring task: the WGTR will review the relevance of the aforementioned standing agenda items and recurrent tasks in the light of the state of play of ATT transparency and reporting, with a view to preparing a proposal for consideration by CSP8.

57. The Co-Chairs will present a draft proposal for the mandate of the WGTR during the next meeting in the CSP8 cycle.

ANNEX A

PROPOSAL TO UPDATE THE 'FAQ' - TYPE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON THE ANNUAL REPORTING OBLIGATION IN LIGHT OF THE REVISIONS TO THE REPORTING TEMPLATE ENDORSED BY CSP7