

ARMS TRADE TREATY

Eleventh Conference of States Parties Geneva, 25 – 29 August 2025

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

Mr President,

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 her team as well as all the facilitators for their excellent work in preparing this meeting.

Austria aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union and its member states throughout this week.

Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

The Arms Trade Treaty remains a key instrument for regulating international trade in conventional arms and for preventing and eradicating their illicit trade. By addressing and discussing challenges in the implementation of the Treaty in an open and inclusive manner, Austria is convinced that the ATT has and will continue to play an important role in contributing to international peace and security as well as in reducing human suffering as stated in Art. 1 of the Treaty.

Having used the treaty's 10th anniversary last year as a moment of reflection, we find ourselves at a crucial moment and our Treaty 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.

In this context, the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty is an important objective of States Parties and the wider stakeholder community. Let me congratulate The Gambia, Malawi, and Colombia for joining the Treaty since the 10th CSP. While this is evidence of positive dynamics and momentum, significant effort remains necessary to reinvigorate universalization. We commend you for your efforts on making universalization a priority for your Presidency.

Mr. President,

For the sake of the ensuing debate this week, we would like to make three points:

- First, the proliferation and escalation of conflicts with extensive conflict-related sexual violence is alarming. Research by UNIDIR shows 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. In this regard, we welcomed Mexico's initiative in mainstreaming gender considerations in the ATT by proposing the establishment of a Gender Focal Points. We commend the thorough preparation and consultations that have gone into presenting a decision to this CSP that we fully support.

- Second, no one can do it alone and we shouldn't have to. The ATT is complementary to a number of instruments that share a common ambition of effectively regulating international transfer of conventional arms such as the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the UN Firearms Protocol, the Wassenaar Arrangement or the Global Framework on Through-Life Conventional Ammunition Management. We welcome continued exchanges by the CSP and the Secretariat with these instruments to leverage synergies and learn from each other.
- Third, we underline the multidisciplinary character of the ATT across all pillars of the UN's work and its contribution to the SDGs and Agenda 2030. This unique character makes it relevant for a plethora of UN discussions. In this regard, the ATT can also draw from a wide range of expertise in the fields of export controls, crime prevention, and human rights both from States Parties as well as a wide range of stakeholders. Austria welcomes the open and inclusive format of discussions within the ATT to exchange views on substantive issues, which have proven useful to foster implementation and strengthen the treaty as a whole.

Mr. President,

We look forward to this week's discussions on various proposals in relation to the future method of work and structure of the ATT and in this regard took note of the proposal of a multiyear strategy. We will engage in these discussions in a constructive manner.

Thank you for your attention.