

**EU Statement**

**Treaty Implementation**

**Arms Trade Treaty**

**Tenth Conference of States Parties**

**Geneva, 19-23 August 2024**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

**The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina[[1]](#footnote-1) and Georgia as well as the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.**

The EU reiterates its strong conviction that the Arms Trade Treaty must be implemented in its entirety to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and ammunition and prevent their diversion. EU Member States are legally bound under the EU Common Position 2008/944 on arms exports to assess licence applications for the export of conventional arms against eight criteria. They are in line with the ATT, and ATT compliance is specifically mentioned in the very first of these criteria. Among other cases, EU Member States deny licences whenever there is a clear risk that the export of military technology and equipment might be used for internal repression,in the commission of serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian lawor might affect regional peace, security and stability[[2]](#footnote-2). A number of tools support the application of these eight criteria: an online system for exchanging information about denials and for queries about national policies or destinations, as well as a confidential database only accessible to licensing officers from EU Member States. The EU is continuously reflecting on ways to develop convergence among arms export policies, which are national prerogatives. To this end, a review of the EU Common Position on arms exports was launched in 2022 and is scheduled to conclude with the adoption of updated documents by the end of 2024.

The EU would like to express appreciation to Ambassador Christian Guillermet Fernández of Costa Rica for chairing the Working Group, and to Ms. Grisselle Rodriguez of Panama and the ATT Secretariat for facilitating the work of WGETI sub-working groups.

With regard to Sub-Working group on articles 6 and 7, the EU commends the completion of chapter 3 and thereby completion of the Voluntary Guide to implement Articles 6 and 7, and supports the adoption of the Guide by this CSP as a living document of a voluntary nature. Practical implementation and application of Articles 6 and 7 should continue to be covered in the WGETI Sub-working Groups, as appropriate.

With regard to Sub-Working Group on Exchange of National Implementation Practices, the EU considers the current draft multi-year working plan a realistic base for future engagements, with national control systems on import and national control lists as valid topics to be addressed first. We reiterate our call to aim for practical deliverables, in the spirit of re-orientation of the entire Working Group, to ultimately constitute a focussed guidance to supplement the existing Voluntary Basic Guide to Establishing a National Control System, and designed to serve the aim andpurpose of the ATT. Specifically, risk assessment in the context of Articles 6 and 7, which is a national prerogative, will benefit from exchanges on national practices.

With regard to Sub-working Group on Current and Emerging Implementation Issues, we welcomethat the role of industry in responsible international arms transfers, as well as the role of conventional arms in gender-based violence (GBV),were identified as topics to be explored further. Industry hasbroad relationships both with governments for licensing of arms transfers, and with end users throughout the life cycle of arms and ammunition. WhileonlyStatesare legally bound by Treaty provisions and free to regulate their arms trade internally, industryalso hasa distinct and complementary role regarding responsible business conduct including through the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Recognising the role of industry and the private sector in the arms trade is important to pursue discussion within the Treaty and ensure its effective implementation. The European Union calls for a structured involvement of industry stakeholders in ATT discussions, and recalls the value of clear guidance from States in the facilitation of industrial due diligence and most efficient observation of national legal norms. While inter-agency cooperation is complex, and governmental-industrial cooperation adds to that complexity, the exercise launched by the Republic of Korea CSP9 Presidency needs to continue and to deliver.

Protecting women and girls from gender-based violence has long been a vital priority for the EU in all disarmament fora. Sharing national practices in GBV risk assessment and prevention will facilitate knowledge exchange and spark initiative for other States and groups to engage in similar practices, hopefullysetting strengthened common standards for the future. In this regard, we welcome efforts to develop a guide for good practices in arms control for the prevention of GBV.

Lastly, the EU expresses its appreciation for convening an ad hoc discussion under the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation, even though this year it was prompted by a terrible development causing immense human suffering in the Middle East. We hope that the discussion will continue in a constructive and professional manner, with a view to ensuring the ATT’s effective implementation.

I would like to conclude by expressing support of the European Union to all recommendations within the remit of WGETI as presented in the Chair’s report.

Thank you, Mr. President.

1. **North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Please refer to the exact wording of the criteria listed in art. 2 of the *Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment (*[*https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32008E0944*](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32008E0944) *)* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)