

**EU General Statement**

**Arms Trade Treaty**

**Eleventh Conference of State Parties**

**Geneva, 25-29 August 2025**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

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

Eleven years after the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, the EU reaffirms its unwavering support for the Treaty, as a key international instrument that aims to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating trade in conventional arms.

We recognize the complementary role of the Treaty to other international instruments, such as the UN Programme of Action on SALW, the International Tracing Instrument, the UN Register of Conventional Arms, and the Global Framework on Through-Life Conventional Ammunition Management. At the same time, the ATT is unique in being the only cross-regional legally binding source of standards to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade, as well as to prevent misuse and diversion of arms.

We are all bound to ensure and maintain the effectiveness of the ATT,supported and advised by the ATT community, bringing together States Parties and other stakeholders: international and regional organizations, industry and business, academia, and, above all, civil society.

The EU is aware of its Member States’ global responsibilities in thearms trade, with over 33,700 licences issued in 2023 for a combined value of almost 300 billion EUR, and actual exports accounting for a quarter of the global arms trade.

We are proud to keep the ATT high on the political agenda, supporting it in international fora, funding support for its universalization and implementation, and keeping the Treaty as a centrepiece of the EU Common Position on arms export and the legal frameworks of Member States, thereby developing a collective approach to the implementation of the Treaty. The EU Common Position on arms exports was updated in April this year. One of the priorities of its review process was to embed more closely the ATT obligations in the day-to-day licensing practices of Member States. Core provisions, concepts and understandings from the ATT, such as the relation between conventional arms and gender-based violence (GBV), or the use of military equipment to commit or facilitate serious violations of human rightslawand IHL, have become part of the denial criteria of the EU Common Position. These are also now applicable even beyond the scope of the Treaty, to cover the entire EU Common Military List, also applicable in certain cases to dual-use goods, by all EU Member States. The EU also continues to exercise and promote transparency in arms trade, publishing its own annual report in an accessible online form, in compliance with ATT reporting obligations.

Mr. President,

As regards the ATT implementation and adherence progresses, an impressive, rigorous effort has been made within the framework of CSP cycles to support it, but a significant amount of work remains to be done. All States Parties need to become capable of delivering on their legal obligations, including measures against diversion, reporting and financial contributions, and export assessment. To achieve this, a multi-year strategy would be a promising initiative if goals are clear and measurable. We look forward to discussing it further during this Conference and hopefully beyond.

But, above all, we cannot stay silent about ongoing tragic developments linked to the ATT’s subject matter and we must work to ensure the Treaty is fully and effectively implemented.

Now in its fourth year of unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, Russia continues to blatantly violate international law, including the UN Charter and international humanitarian law. In this light,the EU condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia’s use of various types of conventional weapons against civilians in its war of aggression against Ukraine. Military support to Ukraine as necessary for the exercise of its right to self-defence is consistent with the Treaty. On the contrary, contribution towards Russia’s military effort by diversion or supply of parts and components, including items which are turned in Russia, on an industrial scale, into components of missiles and drones used for strikes against civilians and civilian objects of Ukraine, is a violation of Article 6 of the Treaty. No actor involved in such support for an aggressor State can call itself impartial and supportive of peace.

The EU calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the unconditional release of all hostages, leading to a permanent end to hostilities. It deplores the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, the unacceptable number of civilian casualties and the levels of starvation. Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude by underlining the EU’s full support for the Argentinian Presidency, including on its focus topic of universalization, and our commitment to working together towards its successful outcome.

Thank you.

1. **North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)