

11th Conference of States Parties (CSP11) of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Agenda Item: General Statements

Geneva, August 26, 2025

Speaker: Ivan Marques, Secretary of Multidimensional Security of the OAS

General Statement – PACAM and connections with ATT

Thank you, Mister Chair.

On behalf of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, it is a great pleasure to participate in this 11th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

As this is my first intervention on the floor, I would like to begin by congratulating the chair, Ambassador Carlos Foradori, as well as the ATT Secretariat, for the excellent organization of this event. It is always an honor to see representatives from our region leading important international efforts to address the illicit flows of firearms and ammunition.

The illicit trade in firearms remains a priority on the security agenda of the Americas. For many years, our region has been among the most affected by armed violence, registering the highest regional homicide rate in the world. One in every three homicides worldwide occurs in our hemisphere, and the vast majority of these are committed with a firearm. This problem carries severe economic, social, and human costs, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations.

To address this issue effectively, we must continue working within multilateral spaces. This is a cross-border challenge that demands coordinated responses; no single country can solve it alone. For this reason, we must continue striving for the **universalization and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty**, a key instrument to **prevent arms diversion, enhance transparency, and strengthen responsible trade practices**.

The Americas remain politically committed to this agenda. An overwhelming majority of our countries have ratified the ATT. We also have a notable example of complementarity between international and regional instruments. In 1997, OAS Member States adopted the **Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA)**—the first legally binding international instrument to address this issue. CIFTA has been ratified by 31 of the 35 independent States of the Americas. Importantly, many of CIFTA's obligations are complementary to those of the ATT, and we can achieve more effective results by promoting the joint implementation of both instruments at the regional level.

Recognizing that our Member States continue to face significant challenges in meeting the commitments of these conventions—including limited institutional capacity, insufficient resources,

and technical gaps—the OAS provides direct support through the **Program of Assistance on Control of Arms and Ammunition (PACAM)**.

PACAM is a comprehensive strategy to assist our Member States in reducing armed violence through a multi-layered approach:

1. **Strengthening legal frameworks** for firearms and ammunition by aligning national laws with international standards.
2. **Building institutional capacity** through training, technical support, infrastructure improvements, and digital tools for managing firearms and ammunition.
3. **Reducing risk factors** in high-violence communities via prevention programs and voluntary surrender campaigns.
4. **Enhancing regional coordination by implementing information-sharing mechanisms, including on trade control, and subregional roadmaps, such as the recently adopted Central American and Dominican Republic Firearms Roadmap**

Between 2019 and 2025, with funding from the European Union, PACAM has had a significant impact in the Latin America and Caribbean region, benefiting **28 countries** through a comprehensive strategy for arms control and violence prevention. During this period:

- More than **4,000 officials were trained**, strengthening institutional capacities in security and arms control.
- More than **5,500 individuals** have been supported through various prevention initiatives, with special focus on vulnerable communities.
- More than **95,000 weapons** and **219 tons of ammunition** were destroyed, reducing the risk of diversion to the illicit market and improving citizen security.

Two months ago, the OAS actively participated in the 4th Arms and Gender Meeting, a regional ATT seminar held in Brazil, and contributed to the Fortaleza Action Plan, which consolidates key proposals and consensus to strengthen ATT implementation in Latin America.

The OAS stands ready to support Member States in several priority areas that were identified in the plan, including:

- Providing training and awareness programs on small arms control and gender-based violence involving firearms.
- Providing IT tools, such as the inventory control software and the national licensing system, to improve record-keeping and information sharing.
- Donating marking machines to enhance arms traceability.
- Assisting with stockpile management, including depot assessments, destruction processes, and international certification.
- Supporting gap analysis of legislation, and developing institutional protocols to strengthen national frameworks.

Through these initiatives, the OAS **reaffirms its commitment** to advancing the implementation of the ATT and supporting regional efforts to reduce armed violence and enhance citizen security. We **remain dedicated to working in close coordination** with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, international and subregional organizations, and, of course, national authorities.

Thank you.