



EU Statement

Arms Trade Treaty

Second Informal Preparatory Meeting for the Ninth Conference of States Parties (CSP9)

Geneva, 12 May 2023

Madam President,

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

Presidency theme: the role of industry

The EU supports the proposals put forward by CSP9 President for measures to raise awareness of the industry in responsible arms trade and build its capacities to support implementation of the ATT, and encourages States Parties to endorse such proposals at the 9th CSP. At the same time, the EU would like to emphasize the need for a holistic approach to awareness-raising on the risks of arms proliferation, diversion and weaponization of new and emerging technologies. Such approach should also include extensive structured approach to academia and involve shaping academic teaching curricula of future scientists, engineers, traders, and state officials. The EU is committed to addressing such issues through the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium and encourages States Parties to address such issues in the ATT framework.

Review of ATT Programme of Work

The EU thanks the Management Committee for its extensive preparatory work. Adjusting the ATT programme of work can be a tool to increase efficiency and effectiveness of ATT. Improving the financial situation of ATT is an important objective but it should not happen to the detriment of effectiveness. As possible measures in this regard we see the following:

- In-person meetings of working groups can be held only once per year, to be supplemented by *ad hoc* virtual intersessional consultations. This will allow for increased participation of all stake holders and for a more substantive discussion with meaningful results. In the same

vein, it will provide incentive to States Parties to travel and to use the opportunity to network. COVID-19 restrictions have shown certain value of virtual meetings, not least by allowing capitals to provide focused expertise and by increasing the number of stakeholders. In this context, such measures can also bring increased participation of industry and academia.

- The EU supports the changes to adapt the efforts of universalisation as proposed in the Working paper entitled ‘Enhancing the Work of the ATT Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)’. The EU is committed to take its active part to achieve a universal Treaty.
- Dief should continue and develop its work as required for an efficient and confidential exchange of operational information on diversion as well as for confidence-building among States Parties. The EU looks forward to its inclusion into Dief works as an observer at a later stage as this framework matures, having in mind the EU’s significant political and financial commitment to fighting diversion.

Financial situation of ATT

The EU would like to reiterate its deep concern over the increasingly unfavourable financial situation of the ATT. While we note a number of proposals of the Management Committee to maintain efficiency of work, we believe that this can be best addressed by payment of duties of States Parties in full and encourage all those States, especially those benefitting from the EU-financed technical support related to their obligations under ATT, to settle their outstanding arrears without further delay. During previous CSP sessions we discussed a derogation from rule 8.1.d, allowing States in arrears to make a financial arrangement with the Secretariat. It is disappointing that no country has used this possibility. The EU encourages States Parties in arrears to make best use of the established financial mechanism that was adopted at CSP7 as it provides for the necessary flexibility in settling financial obligations over a period of time.

Other issues:

Supporting and promoting gender equality and the full empowerment of women is at the heart of the European Union’s policies, internally and externally. The EU supports the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The ATT is the first arms-regulation treaty to recognise the link between conventional arms transfers and gender-based violence, mandating that gender

based violence be considered in the course of export risk assessments. Its effective implementation can contribute to eliminating violence against women and girls, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 5.2.

[The EU feels its duty to reiterate its well-known position regarding the assessment of Russian Federation's illegal war of aggression in Ukraine. The export of the military equipment from the EU Member States in support of Ukraine's self-defence is fully in line with the legal obligations stemming from the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms export and with obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as with the Wassenaar Arrangement Initial Elements. The EU also strongly believes that any transfer of conventional arms to Russia would be in breach of Article 6 para 3 of the Arms Trade Treaty which prohibits transfer if such arms would be used to commit genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, or other war crimes. We call on all States Parties to refrain from any transfers to Russia in line with Article 6 para 3 of the ATT. At the same time the EU reiterates its support to Ukraine's wish for a just peace in line with the UN Charter, and reiterates its full support to territorial integrity of Ukraine.] – ***not to be delivered unless necessary***

Thank you, Madam President.