
WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING CO-CHAIRS' REPORT OF 17 FEBRUARY 2022 MEETING

INTRODUCTION

1. On 17 February 2022, the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR) held its first of two intended meetings of the preparatory process towards the Eighth Conference of States Parties (CSP8) to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).
2. The WGTR adopted the [draft annotated agenda for the meeting](#), which was based on the standing agenda items and the recurring and specific tasks for the WGTR endorsed by States Parties at CSP7. The WGTR also considered the [introductory paper of the Co-chairs](#), which provided the background of the given tasks, summarized past proposals and discussions, set out elements for discussion and put a number of proposals for consideration by WGTR participants.
3. In their report below, the Co-chairs included a detailed overview of the discussions per each agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 1: STATE OF PLAY OF COMPLIANCE WITH REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

4. Under this recurring agenda item, the ATT Secretariat gave a [general overview of the status of reporting](#), and of the progress made in comparison to the previous status update.
5. The presentation demonstrated that despite some progress made since the last update on the status of reporting (for example on more timely reporting and in updating initial reports), many States Parties are not in compliance with their reporting obligations under article 13 of the ATT. The decrease in annual reporting continues and remains a serious cause for concern. In addition, the growing trend of making reports available only to States Parties does not fully support the Treaty's objective of transparency.
6. The Co-chairs as well as a number of participants reaffirmed the importance of transparency and reporting as key elements for confidence-building among States Parties and acknowledged the need to ensure the quality of the reporting. Several participants expressed concerns regarding the low rates of reporting and there were various calls to States Parties to submit missing reports and to make reports publicly available. Some participants also drew attention to the lack of updated initial reports given the obligations that States Parties have to report to the ATT on any new measures to implement the treaty under Article 13(1).
7. Further calls were made by participants for the timely submission of reports and the use of the online reporting tool. One State Party informed the working group about the submission of its initial report and the upcoming submission of its first annual report, and welcomed the timely translation of the reporting templates which facilitated these efforts. Several delegations urged the working group to explore further synergies between ATT reporting and reporting to the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

8. One participant also informed the working group about national efforts to improve the quality of its national reporting. Another participant informed the working group about the reasons for the delay in the submission of its annual reports over the last two years and confirmed that these outstanding reports will be submitted.

9. The Co-chairs pointed to the deadline for submitting the annual report on the 31st of May and called on all States Parties to make the appropriate efforts to fulfil their reporting obligations, to do so publicly and by using the [revised reporting templates](#) endorsed at CSP7.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CHALLENGES CONCERNING REPORTING

10. Under the second item on the agenda, challenges concerning reporting, the Co-chairs invited participants to share any challenges they are facing in submitting timely and accurate initial and annual reports. Furthermore, the Co-chairs acknowledged the efforts of the previous CSP presidencies to engage bilaterally with States Parties that are in arrears with reporting obligations. Thirdly, participants were asked to share events and activities regarding reporting that they had organized. Finally, the ATT Secretariat presented a set of proposed amendments to the FAQ-type guidance document which resulted, *inter alia*, from the new reporting templates which were endorsed by CSP7. These amendments are contained in [Annex A of the draft introductory Paper for 17 February 2022](#) (ATT/CSP8.WGTR/2022/CHAIR/715/M1.IntroPaper). Participants were also given the opportunity to suggest additional questions and answers to the guidance document.

11. The proposed amendments put forward by the Co-chairs to the FAQ-type guidance document enjoyed broad support among participants of the working group. Several participants offered further suggestions and amendments which will be considered in the next draft of the document. One participant recalled its reservations voiced at CSP7 to the revised reporting templates.

12. Several participants expressed their hope that the peer-to-peer project of voluntary practical bilateral and regional assistance with reporting would be taken up again as COVID restrictions are gradually being relaxed. Another delegation welcomed the ongoing project of the ATT Secretariat, financed by the EU, to provide capacity building support to the ATT national points of contact in order to, *inter alia*, fulfil their reporting obligations.

AGENDA ITEM 3: SUBSTANTIVE REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY ISSUES

13. Under the agenda item substantive reporting and transparency issues, the Co-chairs invited the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) to share its views on [how gender considerations could be incorporated in the reporting practices by states parties](#). In addition, participants were given the general opportunity to raise any substantive issues regarding reporting that could benefit from consideration by the WGTR.

14. Several participants supported the efforts of the Co-Chairs to integrate a gender perspective and welcomed the opportunity to exchange views on how gender and transparency can be further included in the work of the WGTR. One participant welcomed the efforts of the WGTR to put in evidence the correlation between illicit trafficking and diversion of arms and the rates of armed violence, in particular gender-based violence, and to adopt a holistic approach in the reports. Another participant recalled that gender was identified as a priority issue in past CSPs which deserves follow-up. Another participant considered that more work is needed on data collection regarding gender and gender-based violence at the national level, and that this information can contribute to the discussions on including GBV in ATT reports. One participant encourages States Parties to include information on gender aspects even if it is not formally requested within the templates and shared information about

efforts and projects to implement the commitments on GBV made at CSP5.

15. One delegation urged the working group to continue and to expedite the work on introducing specific customs codes under the harmonized system of the World Customs Organization.

16. The Co-chairs will consider how to take this topic further and invited all States Parties to explore ways and options to include gender considerations in their ATT reports.

AGENDA ITEM 4: ORGANIZATIONAL MEANS FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE

17. Under the agenda item related to organizational means for information exchange, participants were provided the opportunity to propose and discuss structured mechanisms, processes or formats for facilitating the information exchanges that are required or encouraged by the Treaty, both on the policy level, as well as on the operational level.

18. The Co-Chairs strongly encouraged States Parties and signatory States to [register online](#) for access to the restricted area of the ATT website and for access to the IT platform.

19. Secondly, the Chair of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) provided an update on the organization of the inaugural meeting of the Forum. The Chair voiced regret that the DIEF has not been able to take place due to COVID pandemic. The Chair informed participants that the first meeting of the Forum will take place as soon as a meeting in person and with broad participation of States Parties' experts can be accommodated.

20. Several participants voiced their support for the DIEF as a useful tool to exchange information on the diversion of conventional arms and expressed their hopes that the first meeting of the DIEF will take place soon.

21. One delegation called on the Co-chairs and participants to make more intensive use of the IT platform to prepare for meetings and have more exchanges between the meetings in the CSP-cycle. Another delegation made a proposal to facilitate the use of the [IT-platform](#).

AGENDA ITEM 5: IT PLATFORM: REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY FUNCTIONALITIES

22. Under this agenda item, participants discussed the reporting and transparency functionalities of the IT platform. States Parties were given the opportunity to address any problems and/or inconveniences that they experience using the information exchange platform or using the online reporting tool. The Co-chairs noted that the use of the IT-platform for information exchange remained modest and encouraged States Parties to use it more widely for the exchange of information.

23. A representative of the European External Action Service presented the [COARM searchable online database](#) in order to inform the discussion regarding such a database in the ATT context.

24. The Co-chairs noted that the establishment of such a database requires a long-term approach with careful consideration to stakeholders' expectations and of course also to the costs and benefits of investing in such an instrument. To this end, participants of the working group were encouraged to reflect on the questions posed in the non-paper prepared by the ATT Secretariat¹ for the April meetings

¹ See *Background paper: Considerations for a Searchable Online Database* (Annex C of the [WGTR Introductory Paper for the Meeting of 28-29 April 2021](#)).

in 2021 on the scope and parameters for such a database in the ATT context and share their views in writing or through the online information exchange system.

25. Several delegations offered support to the idea of establishing an online database as a way of enhancing transparency in the ATT and provided feedback concerning the desired parameters of such a database. For example, one delegation noted that this project should not lead to an obligation on States Parties to use the reporting templates agreed in previous CSPs. Delegations also called for further discussions on the cost-benefit of such a database and its differentiation from existing databases on arms exports.

26. The Co-chairs will reflect on how to take this topic further and will report back in due course.
