

## **Food for thought joint paper about the organisation of the Arms Trade Treaty Working Group meetings**

Following the conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Working Group meetings and thematic discussions that took place on 20-23 February 2024, we would like to offer some general comments about their organisation on behalf of Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

We offer these reflections with the goal of making the most efficient and productive use of Working Group meetings going forward and would invite consideration of these issues at the CSP Preparatory Meeting in May.

To ensure orderly conduct of meetings, it is important that ATT Rules of Procedure are applied fully and consistently, including at Working Group meetings, as indicated at the opening of the meetings by the CSP10 President and the Chair of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation. In particular we noted some inconsistencies with regards to the speaking order across some of the sessions of the February 2024 WGETI.

We need to use the time available for substantive discussion efficiently, starting sessions promptly and minimising additional breaks should be encouraged.

We also encourage greater flexibility in how we allocate our time. We welcomed the decision to have a rolling agenda, for the first time, in the context of the WGETI. This allowed us to move swiftly to new agenda items when the facilitators had exhausted their list of speakers. Going forward we see value in applying this to all Working Group meetings, not just the WGETI, while recognising that some elements such as the Diversion Information Exchange Forum do need a clearly defined time slot.

We appreciate that meeting documents were circulated several weeks in advance of the Working Groups meetings, which assisted delegations to prepare for the topics under discussion. The volume of documentation circulated ahead of the February session – and number of issues delegations are asked to engage on - was extensive. Moving forward, we would encourage more targeted identification of questions and streamlining our agenda and documentation, to allow for more meaningful engagement.

To this end, we would also request greater transparency around the organisation of ATT meetings. Firstly, we would welcome more clarity about how decisions about time allocation and the agenda are made. Secondly, we would welcome advance notice of the composition of panels and topics for discussion. An appropriate balance should be struck between panel presentations and interactive discussion.

The ATT Working Groups provide an important forum for technical, expert-level exchange on practical treaty implementation. We must use this forum to discuss our joint efforts to ensure the highest possible standards in the international trade in conventional arms. We believe that a more efficient and effective use of our time, coupled with maintaining a balanced and manageable agenda, will be more conducive to this endeavour.

We stand ready to discuss these issues at the Preparatory Meeting taking place on 16-17 May 2024.