

# **Informal Explanatory Note<sup>1</sup> prepared by Mexico on the Draft Decision for the Establishment of Gender Focal Points (GFP) under the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**

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**I. Introduction.** This note provides the rationale for establishing Gender Focal Points (GFPs) under the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Developed through inclusive consultations and broad cross-regional support, this proposal is a strategic step to move from long-standing commitments to concrete action, ensuring the Treaty effectively reduces human suffering. It consolidates discussions and clarifies that the GFP model is consensual, efficient, and State-led.

## **II. Why are Gender Focal Points necessary? A legal obligation and lived reality.**

- **A Groundbreaking Legal Mandate:** The ATT is a pioneering instrument, being the first legally binding treaty to require States to assess the risk of arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence (GBV) under its Article 7.4. This is a core obligation, and the GFPs are a practical mechanism to support its implementation, along with related articles like Article 6 (Prohibitions).
- **Responding to Human Suffering:** The data shared during consultations confirms the urgency of this measure. Firearms remain the leading method of intentional femicide globally, and in armed conflict, 70% to 90% of reported sexual violence incidents involve a weapon. This reality makes integrating a gender perspective not just a legal requirement, but a moral and political imperative to protect persons in situations of vulnerabilities.

**III. Is this a new initiative?** No. This initiative institutionalizes a long-standing collective will. It is the culmination of years of deliberations adopted by consensus, providing it with both legitimacy and continuity: The path began with foundational decisions at the CSP5 (2019) and has been consistently reinforced since, culminating in a clear political mandate at the CSP10 (2024).

## **IV. How will the GFPs be selected and what are the procedural implications?**

- **Why the Management Committee (MC)?**
  - **Legal Authority:** The CSP, as the supreme authority, has the prerogative (Art. 17.4f and Rule 42.2) to delegate a coordinating function to the MC. It is not a mandate

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<sup>1</sup> This is an informal, non-binding document, conceived as a useful companion to the formal Draft Decision. Its objective is to provide the underlying rationale for the proposal by consolidating the discussions from the consultations and addressing the main questions that arose during the process. Mexico trusts that this explanatory note will serve as a valuable resource, promoting transparency and facilitating a common understanding of the proposal ahead of its formal consideration for adoption at CSP11.

overreach, but a legitimate exercise of the CSP's authority to ensure institutional efficiency.

- **Operational Efficiency:** After exploring other options, leveraging the MC was identified as the most streamlined path forward, as it uses an existing, State-led body with established regional representation and avoids creating new bureaucratic layers or overburdening.
  - **Facilitative Mandate:** The MC's role is one of coordination. The final decision-making authority remains at all times with the CSP.
- **Why is this not an additional burden?**
    - Instead of creating a new bureaucratic structure, the model is designed to integrate the MC's coordination function into its existing workflows, and the voluntary and flexible nature of the GFP role allows for share responsibilities, distributing the workload effectively.

**V. How will the GFPs report on their work? A Dedicated Agenda Item:** To ensure direct visibility and accountability to all States Parties, the work of the GFPs will be reported through a standing agenda item during the annual CSP cycle. This dedicated space is not intended to prioritize one theme over others, but to provide a transparent and predictable forum for the GFPs to share key achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. This mechanism allows all States Parties to benefit directly from the GFPs' insights and review their work. To mitigate concerns about workload, the reporting format is designed to be flexible, following a "less is more" approach that ensures accountability without generating unnecessary documentation.

**VI. Does this model align with other disarmament treaties?** Yes. The establishment of GFPs is consistent with proven best practices in other key international disarmament fora, demonstrating the model's viability and effectiveness. Adopting this mechanism aligns the ATT with recognized and effective structures, harnessing an established, State-driven approach to strengthen the Treaty's implementation.

**VII. Conclusion.** The proposal for GFPs is a mature, well-founded, and practical initiative. Legally grounded in the Treaty and historically rooted in consensus, it is designed to be operationally flexible and efficient. It addresses all procedural concerns raised by leveraging existing structures while respecting the mandates of all bodies and the authority of the CSP. Endorsing this proposal is a decisive step to translate long-standing commitments into tangible action, strengthening the credibility and impact of the ATT.