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**ATT WORKING GROUP ON TREATY UNIVERSALIZATION
CO-CHAIRS' DRAFT REPORT TO CSP9**

INTRODUCTION

1. This draft report to the Ninth Conference of States Parties (CSP9) to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is presented by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU), Ambassador Seong-mee YOON of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Ambassador Thomas GÖBEL of Germany, and is intended to reflect the work undertaken by the WGTU in promoting Treaty universalization since CSP8 of August 2022. The report also proposes recommendations on possible steps to be taken with regard to ATT universalization beyond CSP9.

BACKGROUND

2. The Working Group was established by the Third Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP3) with the objective of leading the process of harmonizing thoughts and ideas on the issue of Treaty universalization with a view to determining the best approaches for taking the issue forward. The work of the WGTU is guided by its Terms of Reference as well as the Working Group's initial Work Plan¹ endorsed by CSP3.

3. The Eighth Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP8) considered the WGTU Co-Chairs' Draft Report to CSP8, contained in document ATT/CSP8.WGTU/2022/CHAIR/735/Conf.Rep, and welcomed the draft paper "Enhancing the work of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization" (Annex A to the Co-Chairs' report), and requested Germany to further work on this issue as WGTU Co-chair during the next CSP cycle and to present recommendations to CSP9. In addition, CSP8 encouraged continued regular exchanges of views between the CSP President, WGTU Co-Chairs, Chairs and Facilitators of the various ATT subsidiary bodies, states and civil society on the promotion of Treaty universalization.

APPOINTMENT OF WGTU CO-CHAIRS

4. CSP8 mandated the CSP9 President with the responsibility of facilitating the work of the Working Group until the next annual ordinary session of the Conference (CSP9). On 24 November 2022, the CSP9 President appointed Ambassador Thomas GÖBEL of Germany (CSP8 President) as the Co-Chair of the WGTU with a view to building on the work of previous Co-Chairs of the WGTU.

¹ ATT/CSP3.WGTU/2017/CHAIR/160/Conf.Rep

FIRST MEETING OF THE WGTU

5. The WGTU held its first meeting on 15 February 2023 in-person with a livestreaming option. The following points were discussed during the meeting:
- a. The CSP9 President outlined the universalization activities the ROK Presidency had taken thus far. The ROK Presidency facilitated the preparation and processing of the 2022 ATT Resolution during the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, which was voted in favor by 159 states, with no votes against. The CSP9 President announced that the ROK Presidency would continue the focus on the Asia-Pacific region vis-a-vis its ATT universalization outreach efforts. The ROK has undertaken the project to translate the “ATT Universalization Toolkit and the Welcome Pack” into additional languages, aiming at completion of the Toolkit and Welcome Pack in all the ASEAN languages.
 - b. The Head of the ATT Secretariat provided an update on Treaty universalization including the status of ratifications of the Treaty. Since CSP8, Gabon and Andorra became new States Parties to the Treaty, bringing the total of States Parties to 113. Notwithstanding, the rate of ATT universalization has decreased in the recent years and he called for joint effort to be undertaken by all ATT stakeholders to change the pattern.
 - c. Representatives of some States Parties provided updates on their universalization activities since CSP8 to date. They shared their efforts on domestic legislative processes and status, bilateral outreach meetings, regional workshops, as well as assistance received and provided.
 - d. Gambia informed the meeting that it was on the verge of ratification while trying to identify potential gaps between its national laws and the Treaty implementation. Comoros also informed the meeting that it would ratify the Treaty as soon as conditions are met.
 - e. Civil society presented its efforts to promote ATT universalization in different regions through awareness programs, workshops and other events. Some delegations highlighted the important role of civil society in ATT universalization.
 - f. The CSP8 President presented the draft paper “Enhancing the Work of the ATT Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)” and elaborated the elements for consideration with a set of possible recommendations. He stressed that regional outreach efforts need to incorporate long-standing context and experience within respective regions. He explained that the paper proposed to adopt a regional lens and introduces regional champions as a new supporting link between the Treaty and the regions. Most intervening delegations supported the proposed way ahead based on the draft paper, including the multi-year approach, improved coordination within the various entities and the establishment of regional champions. Several delegations made concrete inquiries on the availability of resources to support the implementation of the proposal. The CSP8 President appreciated all the feedbacks and assured that he would incorporate them and present a revised paper in the next meeting.

SECOND MEETING OF THE WGTU

6. The WGTU held its second meeting on 10 May 2023 in-person with a livestreaming option. Building on the exchange of views and discussions during the WGTU’s first meeting, the second meeting of the WGTU had the discussions on the following points:

- a. The CSP9 President stated that the ROK had completed the initial translation of the “ATT Universalization Toolkit and the Welcome Pack” in Cambodian and Myanmar. In addition, the CSP9 President informed the meeting that the ROK Presidency would organize an outreach workshop in the ASEAN region on 31 May in Jakarta, Indonesia to further promote Treaty universalization.
- b. The Head of the ATT Secretariat provided an overview of the current status of ATT participation in terms of the number of State Parties and Signatory States as well as the regional distribution of States Parties.
- c. Representatives of some States Parties provided updates on their universalization activities and shared information on national efforts.
- d. The CSP8 President explained the draft proposal which was restructured to accommodate the comments received during the first meeting in February. Aiming at addressing concerns on financial implications, a new element was added in the paper to elaborate the resources needed to implement the proposed approach.
- e. A number of delegations expressed support for the revised paper and highlighted the necessity of more coordinated and continued approach as well as the concept of creating a network of regional champions. A few States Parties expressed their interest to serve as potential regional champions. Several delegations expressed concerns that prioritization of target countries might lead to paying less attention to states which are not included in the multi-year plan. One delegation expressed its concern that vice-Presidents would automatically become regional champions regardless of their resources. The CSP8 President indicated that he would accommodate the comments into the final draft proposal to be further discussed in CSP9.

INTERSESSIONAL WORK OF THE WGTU

7. Following the two WGTU meetings in the CSP9 cycle, the WGTU Co-Chairs have finalized the proposal on “Enhancing the Work of the ATT Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)” and expressed their intention to present the paper to CSP9.

WGTU RECOMMENDATION

8. On the basis of the WGTU mandate and the exchange of views and discussions during the two WGTU meetings, the WGTU recommends the following to CSP9 for decision:
- a. Adoption of the proposal on “Enhancing the Work of the ATT Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)” (Annex A), and taking the proposed decisions as laid out in the proposal.
 - b. Further elaboration of details regarding universalization efforts, including a possible role of industry, and their ties to Treaty implementation during the CSP10 cycle.
 - c. Continuation of regular exchanges of views between the CSP President, WGTU Co-Chair, Chairs and Facilitators of the ATT subsidiary bodies, states and civil society on the promotion of ATT universalization.

ANNEX A TO WGTU REPORT TO CSP9**DRAFT PROPOSAL****ENHANCING THE WORK OF THE ATT WORKING GROUP ON TREATY UNIVERSALIZATION (WGTU)**

1. Supporting the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has been a standing task for CSP Presidents since the Treaty came into force in December 2014. The Third Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP3) formally established the “Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)”, which is co-chaired by the current and previous CSP Presidents.
2. Since then, the WGTU Co-chairs have coordinated efforts to promote the ATT with a view to enlarge the number of ATT States Parties. Currently, the WGTU guides the focus of Treaty universalization efforts based on stakeholders’ inputs without the benefit of a medium to long-term view of how Treaty universalization could be advanced. Therefore, the work of WGTU is based on a short-term perspective only as each CSP Presidency has two years within which to undertake its universalization efforts.
3. Current assessment demonstrates that national processes to ratify or accede to the Treaty can take several years. The extended nature of time required to ratify or accede to the Treaty stems from the unique national circumstances of each State. Those States who can benefit from assistance to support their domestic ATT ratification² or accession processes often indicate a need for an individually tailored approach. Due to the current lack of improved coordination within the various ATT bodies, such support cannot be rendered as required.
4. The Eighth Conference of States Parties (CSP8) requested Germany, in its capacity as the WGTU Co-chair, to further work on this issue and present recommendations to CSP9, based on the following elements:
 - a. Mid-term planning and coordination
 - b. Stepped approach
 - c. Regional champions
 - d. Demand driven vs. support oriented
 - e. Coordination of efforts inside the ATT
 - f. Coordination with other entities
5. This paper seeks to unpack these elements, map out initial thoughts on how they could be realized, provide initial proposals for the distribution of work among ATT role players, and put forward recommendations for CSP9 regarding an improved process for Treaty universalization.
6. All elements of this paper are interlinked and build upon each other. Although not in a strict sequence, the concept of a multi-year approach needs to be endorsed first as it serves as the foundation of the other elements.

² The use of the term “ratification” in this paper also encompasses Treaty acceptance, accession, and approval.

Elements for further discussion (as per CSP8):

Mid-term planning and coordination	
Status	<p>Recent experience demonstrates that it usually takes a longer period for States to finalize national political processes necessary to ratify or accede to the Treaty. In order to establish and sustain continuity in providing support to States during the entire process, it would be beneficial to develop a mid- or long-term work-plan, which would enable the WGTU to provide ongoing support to national ATT ratification or accession processes over an extended period.</p> <p>To support States in this phase, more information on the status of national ratification/accession process including potential challenges in national decision making processes would be necessary as no two states share the same challenges. With this information at hand, individual assistance, tailored to national circumstances, could be possible.</p>
Rationale behind	<p>While the yearly rotation of regional focus was a logical approach in the early years of the Treaty, the reality today shows that the process of ratification or accession needs a lot more time and specific attention. Therefore, a more focused and strategically directed approach would be beneficial in directing the universalization efforts towards geographical regions of less ATT participation. With this approach, the WGTU will be in a far better position to provide recommendations, inter alia, on the regional focus of the universalization efforts, to the following CSP.</p>
Realization	<p>WGTU will focus its efforts on (a) dedicated region/s for a period of time (initial recommendation three years), and assess progress made. This does by no means preclude States from other regions to proceed with their ratification/accession to the Treaty.</p>
Resources needed	<p>This approach will not require additional resources. There may, however, be support needed in compiling the necessary information on the States considering to join the Treaty or States in their national processes towards ratification of the Treaty.</p>
Recommendation to CSP9	<p>CSP9 endorses the proposed approach of undertaking Treaty universalization efforts in a multi-year format.</p>

Stepped approach	
Status	<p>In order to better utilize available resources, the WGTU should consider developing a structured, stepped approach that may focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signatory States, 2. States ready to join the Treaty within a short time , and 3. Other States, including those inclined towards joining the Treaty in the coming years. <p>Information pertaining to States will be managed in a sensitive manner and not be open to public discussion.</p>
Rationale behind	<p>As universalization of the Treaty proves to be not as easy as during the first years, a focused approach on a smaller group of States would allow for better support and, ultimately, more likely positive results. This will also make best and focused use of available resources within the ATT.</p>
Realization	<p>WGTU will take stock of the situation / status of ratification in the Signatory States within the previously agreed region of focus. States that are in a position to join the Treaty within a short timeframe are not excluded through this stepped approach, irrespective of their regional affiliation.</p>
Resources needed	<p>This element will not require additional resources as the evaluation of data made available to the WGTU Co-chairs falls within the original tasking. The aggregation of the necessary data may generate a need for (temporary) support.</p>
Recommendation to CSP9	<p>WGTU should focus its efforts primarily on Signatory States as they have already demonstrated political commitment to the Treaty, while remaining open and welcoming to other States interested in joining the Treaty at any time.</p>

Regional champions	
Status	<p>States considering to ratify or accede to the Treaty often require support in initiating the necessary steps required. To provide support from within their region, a regional roadmap or approach may be helpful in fostering exchanges and cooperation among states operating in the same regional context. Whilst this is outside the original scope of the Treaty, the ATT, through the CSP President and supported by the ATT Secretariat, might seek to establish new or consolidate existing contacts with Regional and Sub-regional Organizations to improve coordination of activities and programs, where applicable.</p> <p>In addition to existing work streams, the establishment of a “Network of Regional Champions” could be considered. It is suggested that the ATT vice-Presidents act as facilitators for their respective regions³ and that States Parties can serve as “Regional Champions” on a voluntary basis. This would serve two purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. support the universalization efforts of the CSP President, and 2. enable interested States Parties to share information regarding their own experience with the national ATT ratification/accession process with those States of the same region, that are still in earlier stages of their accession to the Treaty.
Rationale behind	<p>Regional organizations have supported universalization efforts through their established networks in the past and continue to do so. Their access to Parliamentarians and Governments creates the necessary internal support towards and awareness of the Treaty. In addition, the opportunity to share information or experiences within the respective region may have a positive impact on those states hesitant to join. Beyond these established avenues, it may be very helpful to create a network of States Parties to act as “Regional Champions”. As States in a geographical region may face the same challenges, it seems logical that a direct exchange within their region will result in approaches to a more focused support.</p>
Realization	<p>The ATT Secretariat should approach the National Points of Contact to explore possibilities to act as “Regional Champions” and hold regular briefings to WGTU on contacts with Regional Organizations and their possible contribution to universalization efforts.</p>
Resources needed	<p>Current estimation does not indicate a requirement for additional resources as the support for this element relies on voluntary participation of States.</p>
Recommendation to CSP9	<p>CSP9 endorses the additional role for the vice-Presidents as regional facilitators, supported by States Parties that wish, on a voluntary basis, to act as “Regional Champions” and share their experience in joining the Treaty.</p>

³ VPs may serve as initial points of contact for States from their region when trying to establish contacts with the ATT Secretariat. This may not include active outreach within their respective regions as it should be possible to undertake this activity from/in Geneva.

Demand driven vs. support oriented	
	<p>To date, only the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)⁴ and the ATT Sponsorship Programme serve as an internal support mechanisms, which, inter alia, assists States in their efforts to join the ATT. However, these programs can provide support only after a State has applied for funding. Applications for projects funding and sponsorship to participate in meetings need to be submitted by the States that may have only limited information about available programs or their optimal sequencing.</p> <p>With more information about national processes, it may be possible to supplement the current approach and offer tailored assistance that directly responds to individual needs of states, taking into account national circumstances. Through this approach, the WGTU can support the coordination of work of the well-established assistance facilities, without duplicating them.</p>
Rationale behind	<p>Experience gained through the past VTF cycles indicates a certain pattern and sequence of activities to support Treaty ratification/accession and implementation. To render assistance during the early phases of accession, a more proactive approach by the ATT Secretariat may provide guidance to Signatory States in applying for VTF project funding in advance of their application. The necessary administrative training on the completion of said applications is already available.</p>
Realization	<p>The ATT Secretariat provides advice to States seeking to utilise the ATT internal support mechanisms (VTF and Sponsorship Programme) to move forward their efforts to join the Treaty.</p> <p>This should be supplemented by a more proactive approach <i>vis-à-vis</i> interested States in order to provide them with advice on available programs and their sequencing ahead of the actual application. This could be supported by the ATT database to match needs and resources for ATT assistance.⁵</p>
Resources needed	<p>This element will need to draw support from the work of the VTF and the ATT SP and therefore may create an additional task for the ATT Secretariat.</p>
Recommendation to CSP9	<p>CSP9 endorses the proactive approach of the ATT Secretariat to make best use of established ATT supporting mechanisms.</p>

⁴ This paper does not detract from the VTF Terms of Reference but merely points to potential areas of improvement that could be explored by the VTF, as appropriate, to further support Treaty universalization efforts (e.g. through the VTF Outreach Program).

⁵ This database is being established under the ATT Secretariat project (supported by the EU) with a view to matching needs and resources for ATT implementation assistance.

Coordination of efforts inside the ATT	
Status	WGTU needs to decide on the information required to support the intended individual approaches and then take stock of the information available within the ATT and its subsidiary bodies. Improved compilation, coordination, and dissemination of the available information will enhance the collaboration within the ATT framework and avoid duplication of work.
Rationale behind	Compilation of already available data will enable the WGTU to approach States in a more targeted manner.
Realization	Compilation of data already available; e.g. VTF data and other information available within the ATT. Regional Champions, once established, can provide supplementary data or information. A regular exchange between the ATT Office Holders is highly encouraged.
Resources needed	The aggregation / compilation of data from various sources will need, at least in the initial phase of the work, support. This support may be rendered through a dedicated working group or external support (e.g. scholarship, interns).
Recommendation to CSP9	CSP takes note of this approach.

Cooperation with other entities	
Status	<p>Various entities, operating at national and regional levels, support Treaty universalization and its implementation.</p> <p>Beyond the scope of the ATT there are entities working on other projects with a similar tasking, in the same regions, at times within the very same State. Based on the established cooperation with the International Organizations or Civil Society, it would be beneficial to exchange, to the extent possible, data or information to establish a common database to support the above-mentioned tailored approach and make best use of available resources. A possible contribution or role of academia / industry / media has not been high on the agenda in the past and could be explored in future.</p>
Rationale behind	<p>Civil society provides valuable support to universalization efforts through established contacts and targeted activities at national and regional levels. This support allows for raising of general awareness vis-à-vis the Treaty, policy development, implementation of legislative processes, and other support during the process of accession and beyond. This experience can enhance universalization efforts and avoid the duplication of effort.</p>
Realization	<p>CSP Presidents, with the help of the ATT Secretariat, should establish a regular exchange with all stakeholders in a position to support universalization of the Treaty to explore possible ways to establish or intensify the cooperation, within given mandates and without creating financial obligations.</p>
Resources needed	<p>The exchange and outreach may require travelling that would need to be financed (either nationally or through existing ATT programs); preparatory meetings (main focus) and CSPs (secondary focus) should make provisions for an intensified exchange with the various stakeholders, building, for example, on the thematic focus of the presidency.</p>
Recommendation to CSP9	<p>CSP9 takes note of and supports an intensified outreach of CSP Presidents to make best use of the experience available in International Organizations, Civil Society, academia, industry, and other stakeholders that may support the further operationalization of the Treaty.</p>

7. In conclusion, the WGTU recommends that CSP9 may take the following decisions:

CSP 9 endorses the following proposals:

- Treaty universalization efforts will be undertaken in a multi-year format.
- Focus will be on Signatory States, without excluding other States from joining the Treaty at any time.
- Vice-Presidents will also serve as regional facilitators, supported by States Parties that wish, on a voluntary basis, to act as “Regional Champions”.
- ATT Secretariat will approach interested States proactively to make best use of the ATT supporting mechanisms.

CSP 9 takes note of

- Activities to coordinate universalization efforts within all ATT bodies, and
- An intensified outreach of CSP Presidents to make best use of the experience available in International Organizations, Civil Society, Academia, Industry, and other stakeholders that may support the further operationalization of the Treaty.

8. Based on these decisions, the aforementioned elements will be further operationalized during the upcoming CSP10 cycle to best support the efforts to universalize the Treaty and synchronize efforts with the WGETI. This will, once established, allow for a seamless transition from Treaty universalization to implementation.
