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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 ratification¹ 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.

¹ 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 being 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 that have demonstrated a strong likelihood to join the Treaty in the immediate future, 2. Signatory states that may join the Treaty in the coming years or States ready to join the Treaty within a short time , and 3. other States inclined towards joining the Treaty in the coming years; and 4. All other States thereafter. <p>Information pertaining to States will be managed in a sensitive manner and not open to a 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 small 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.</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 the Treaty.</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 intensify 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 program of “Regional Champions” should be considered. It is proposed that the ATT vice-Presidents take up this role in their respective regions 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 accede. Beyond this 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 will result in 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 champions, supported by States that wish to share their experience on a voluntary basis.</p>

Demand driven vs. support oriented	
	<p>To date, only the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) 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, at times based on limited information about available programs or their optimal sequencing.</p> <p>With a more information about national processes, it may be possible to reverse the current approach and offer tailored assistance that directly addresses the 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 of activities that could be sequenced to support Treaty ratification/accession and implementation, This will allow for a more proactive approach by the ATT Secretariat to 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 vis-à-vis interested States in order to provide them with advice on available programs and their sequencing. This could be supported by the envisaged needs and resources database within the ATT Secretariat.</p>
Resources needed	<p>This element will need to draw support from the work of the VTF and the ATT SP and therefore creates 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>

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 / 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 Champions, supplemented by States that wish to share their experience on a voluntary basis.
- 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.
