



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Arms Trade Treaty
General Debate statement at CSP8 – FINAL

Mr President, I wish to thank you and your team for your commendable efforts in organising this meeting. We also thank the ATT Secretariat, the Management Committee, and the Working Group Facilitators for their commitment to supporting ATT implementation.

Australia is proud to have been a strong and consistent supporter of the ATT from its inception. The ATT's objectives are intrinsically linked with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, along with the UN Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. Our efforts are amplified when we acknowledge synergies between these key initiatives.

We commend Germany for the bilateral outreach it has conducted in the lead up to CSP8 to promote ATT universalisation. Australia was pleased to support a number of these activities through our overseas posts. In 2022, we were also pleased to fund a virtual course run by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for delegates around the world on effective ATT implementation.

Mr President, allow me to offer some brief thoughts on your priority themes for CSP8, beginning with universalisation.

One of Australia's priorities is to advance dialogue on benefits of ATT membership among our Indo-Pacific neighbours, who remain under-represented in this forum. These conversations must begin with clearly explaining the ATT's aims: halting the flow of illicit arms while safeguarding legitimate trade. We look forward to continuing to promote the ATT in our bilateral engagements and in other fora.

Australia joins others in warmly welcoming the Philippines as the newest State Party to our ATT family. We hope other States in our region will follow its lead.

Australia also continues to call on all major arms importers and exporters to join the ATT.

On post-shipment controls, I wish to register our thanks for the insightful panel discussion on Monday. Post-delivery cooperation and inspections is a complex area, with feasibility and resourcing implications. So we have listened to these discussions with interest. While we fully support discussion of good practices to prevent diversion, we would echo comments made by several delegations yesterday in cautioning against new standards or expectations that are overly prescriptive or that would unintentionally create barriers to universalisation.

Finally Mr President

We welcome your focus on 'Taking Stock of the Arms Trade Treaty'. Eight years after the ATT's entry-into-force, it is timely to reflect, consolidate, and consider what can be done better.

The first meeting of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) will be held tomorrow. This is a valuable opportunity for frank and transparent dialogue on this salient issue.

Like other delegations, Australia remains deeply concerned by non-payment of contributions by a significant number of States Parties. This simply is not sustainable. We call on all States Parties who are yet to do so to settle their dues on time and in full, or to make payment arrangements using the agreed procedures.

International assistance also remains vital for effective ATT implementation. We must continue striving to improve coordination, avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that assistance is needs-driven.

Central to these efforts is the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF), to which Australia is proud to be a contributor. We have been honoured to serve as a member of the VTF Selection Committee over the last two years and are pleased to stand for re-election for the period leading up to CSP9. Promoting awareness of the VTF and enhancing the quality and number of applications is a priority for Australia.

The ATT remains an exemplar of multilateral collaboration in the protection and strengthening of international rules and norms. We look forward to continuing the progress made since the ATT's entry-into-force during this Eighth Conference of States Parties.

Thank you.