**ATT Working Group Meetings**

**Geneva February 2025**

**Australia - Interventions for Working Group on Treaty Universalisation (WGTU)**

*Agenda item 4: Update on efforts by States to promote the universalization of ATT:*

Facilitator,

Thank you for the floor.

Universalisation is crucial to achieving the object and purpose of our Treaty.

We thank the Presidency for bringing focus to the issue of Universalisation. We also welcome the ideas on refreshed approaches to how to achieve universalisation set out in the President’s food-for-thought Paper.

Together with the United Kingdom, Last year we supported the Stimson Centre to produce an independent report, the Arms Trade Treaty at 10, reflecting on the first 10 years of ATT implementation and making recommendations to assure its continued success over the coming decade.

The ATT@10 report rightly recognises that despite the efforts made on universalisation, there continue to be barriers to participation. These are illustrated by the still less-than-complete participation in the treaty and the regional disparities in membership.

The ATT at 10 report recommends tailoring universalisation efforts to appeal to the individual priorities of potential States Parties, including focusing on the positive impacts that treaty compliance and assistance with implementation could have, such as improving border control, strengthening law enforcement and preventing crime. The report further recommends creative partnerships such as ‘regional champions’ and a cross-regional ‘Group of Friends’. We were pleased to support the report and continue to commend its analysis and relevant recommendations on this subject for the consideration of delegations.

Australia has supported the Voluntary Trust Fund and encourages its use for outreach and to support ratification and accession. The Voluntary Trust Fund is an essential mechanism to address the technical and legislative matters that may pose obstacles to accession.

The sponsorship program is also an important mechanism, to which Australia is a longstanding contributor, to enable representatives from signatory states and states not party that would not ordinarily have the resources to do so, to travel to participate in our meetings. We encourage its continued use to support universalisation.

Turning now to the implementation of the WGTU workplan for ATT universalisation efforts, which puts the focus on Asia-Pacific states.

Australia welcomes the workplan as a practical means of moving towards greater universalisation.

Our region has experienced its share of arms-related violence, insecurity and instability. Commendably, States have taken their own regional and national initiatives in an effort to address the root causes of illicit trafficking in conventional weapons. These efforts can be further strengthened and reinforced through joining the Arms Trade Treaty.

Australia supports universalisation of the ATT. Since the First Conference of States Parties in Cancun, Australia has been involved in extensive regional universalisation activities. This has included the sponsorship of and/or participation in ATT universalisation workshops in regional locations such as Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Cambodia, and Thailand, as well as hosting in our own country. We commend the efforts by the UNRCPD for their workshops on the ATT and other conventional arms control instruments. Last year we were pleased to support delegates from Fiji and Samoa to attend such a workshop.

We believe the ATT VTF is an important mechanism in advancing universalisation, and that it should continue to support projects in our region. Australia is also proud to be a founding donor of the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, or UNSCAR, which has done considerable work partnering with civil society and UN Organisations to promote universalisation of arms control instruments in the region and globally, including the ATT.

Australia supports the concept of regional universalization champions as set out in the WGTU workplan. We will continue to cooperate with the ATT Secretariat, States, civil society and other organisations to advance universalisation in our region.

Finally, we would like to thank the civil society for their important work promoting universalisation and helping States to understand the value and impact of the Treaty. Civil society organisations bring thoughtful insights, knowledge, and experience that benefit our discussions by contributing to a comprehensive understanding of complex issues and ensuring informed debate.

Australia looks forward to supporting continued and new efforts to promote universalisation.

I thank you.