

## Remarks by the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States

Mr President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

This is our delegation's first intervention and so I bring you greetings from the President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E Marcel Alain de SOUZA and wish to proceed to render the following statement on his behalf.

I congratulate Your Excellency, Amb Klaus Korhonen for the successful preparations towards this Third Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. In doing so, I also congratulate the team of vice-presidents, the troika, the chair of the Working Group and the numerous friends of the President who worked over the last one year to prepare us all for this conference.

We love also to congratulate the ATT Secretariat for the organisation of all aspects of this conference which it has taken in its strides. We recall with pride the successful CSP2 Presided over by Nigeria, one of the ECOWAS Member States, represented by H.E Ambassador Emmanuel IMOHE

It did not escape us, the information from the Secretariat, that we have more participants at this conference than we had in the previous one. This

bit of information is encouraging since we prefer to analyse it as a sign of heightened interest in the ATT and by extension a good point in the efforts towards universalisation of the treaty. The challenge for all will be to translate these numbers into increments in State Parties soon.

Over the years, ECOWAS has cultivated an image of a determined campaigner for the promotion of peace and security through its various instruments, the most germane to this conference being its Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials. The commitment of ECOWAS was seen at play with the entry into force of its Convention in 2009 less than three years after its adoption, the fastest and the most ratified of all ECOWAS instruments. Again the commitment to peace and security came to the fore with the ratification by 13 of its member states within one year of its adoption.

Since CSP 2, ECOWAS has expanded its five-year priority activity plan originally developed for the implementation of the Convention to take into account the articles of the ATT so that it can implement both instruments (i.e the ECOWAS Convention and the ATT) simultaneously to ensure effective, efficient and faithful implementation. ECOWAS will like to acknowledge, with warm

gratitude, all its partners which has stood with it in its efforts to ensure a better governed space with regards to the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons. Here, we list the EU, its MS, BICC, GIZ, ICRC, Safer World, Small Arms Survey and of course West African Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA) among others.

On implementation of the ATT, the immediate future will be busier for the whole world and thus for the ECOWAS region. So we wish to indicate that we shall be looking forward to greater assistance in due course as we get ready to move into the implementation phase

At this point, we think it worthwhile to recall the fact that ECOWAS comes to the ATT with 10 years of experience implementing its own Convention. We have learnt many lessons in this journey, we are still learning and we are open to keep sharing our experiences at every platform when desired.

Mr President, Your Excellencies, we wish to state that ECOWAS has always linked peace and security with development through its 'Security First' paradigm in its effort to promote sustainable development in the region in line with Art 26 of the UN Charter. I wish to remind this distinguished audience that this linkage is also in the kernel of Africa Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want

and its programme of Silencing the Guns by 2020. And so ECOWAS welcomes the acknowledgment of the nexus between control of Conventional weapons, peace and security and development at this Conference.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates ECOWAS seizes the opportunity of this platform to acknowledge, with gratitude, the support of partners which have provided resources to ensure our arrival at this point. We thank them even more for the promises that we get of their intent to contribute more resources to continued efforts towards universalisation of the treaty and beyond that, its faithful implementation. Towards this end, ECOWAS remains steadfast in its engagement with the broad spectrum of stakeholders.

In closing, Mr President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, I want to wish this conference incremental but substantial success at this meeting. In this regard, we join our voices to make a strong appeal to States that are yet to accede or ratify the ATT to do so. This is because we believe that the extent of the success of the ATT will depend on the extent, not only of the universalisation of States' by accession and

ratification, but also on the extent of its effective, efficient and fidel implementation.

Mr President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, I thank you