

CSP4 Transparency and Reporting: UK Statement

Mr Co-Chair,

I would like to align myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and offer a few comments in a national capacity.

I should register my thanks to you for your efforts in the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting.

Transparency and reporting are key to the success of the ATT. We encourage all states to report fully, transparently and on time. We therefore welcome the proposals made by the Working Group focussing on: outreach to States Parties; on updated guidance on annual reporting; and establishing a consultative group on the development and enhancement of the IT platform.

There are a number risks to achieving full reporting by States that need to be addressed. The first risk is that the Treaty becomes a court of inquiry that could further deter states from moving towards greater transparency. The UK firmly believes that issues of concern or questions about the policies and practises of particular countries should be addressed, but in a constructive way.

The second risk is reporting fatigue. We welcome the continued development of the online reporting platform to facilitate annual reporting. Anything which can simplify the reporting process, will not only improve transparency but also remove one of the disincentives to countries contemplating joining the ATT. We take note of proposals to use the platform for voluntary exchanges of information, but we must ensure that this does not add to the reporting burden.

Finally, a word on the proposal to review the 'effectiveness and clarity' of the templates. We recognise that there will always be things that could be improved, but there needs to be a period of 'bedding in' before any further adjustments are made. For now, focus on making the reporting process simpler.

Mr Co-Chair, we stand ready to support further work in this area.