

General Statement by Canada
Sixth Conference of the States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty

Mr. President,

I wish to express our gratitude to you, your team and the Secretariat for organizing this meeting despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 situation. Canada is pleased that the Arms Trade Treaty community, including States Parties, civil society, the private sector and international organizations, has found a way to convene in order to maintain progress in implementation of the Treaty.

Canada sees the ATT as a core piece of the multilateral disarmament architecture. The Treaty sets an important global standard, and helps prevent human rights abuses and protect lives. Canada was pleased to formally become a State Party to the ATT last year. We look forward to playing an active and constructive role in this forum, working with other States Parties to strengthen this Treaty and advance our common goals. We wish to reiterate our desire to work with all stakeholders in support of the Treaty, its objectives and purposes.

To begin, we would like to welcome new ratifications of the ATT in the past year. These new ratifications confirm increasing international support and acceptance of the Treaty. Canada is committed to join efforts towards the universalization of the ATT by supporting promotion and outreach efforts in regions where the membership rate remains low. It is essential to encourage the major arms exporters and importer states to join the ATT in order to achieve our common global goals. In a separate statement to this Conference we will outline some of the key steps taken by Canada over this last year to implement the Treaty. We hope this will be helpful for the purposes of other new ATT States Parties, or those considering joining.

Looking to the future, we believe the following issues are priorities:

- Renewing our focus on diversion, including further discussion on post-delivery verification and other mitigation measures. In this regard, we

appreciate efforts this year to enhance transparency and information sharing to prevent diversion. We also see the Diversion Information Exchange Forum as a key tool for this purpose.

- Furthering discussions on mitigating measures in complex contexts to prevent the negative consequences established in article 7 of the ATT.
- Mainstreaming practical work on gender across the ATT. To this end, we welcome the significant work done last year under the Latvian Presidency.
- Improving the reporting rate in the Treaty, which is essential to strengthening transparency – a key attribute and benefit of the Treaty. Canada is in the process of finalizing our Initial Report, which we will be submitting in advance of our one-year anniversary of becoming a State Party to the ATT.

Canada has provided its input to the “Unpacking Key Concepts” initiative of the Sub-working Group on Articles 6 and 7 with the understanding that States have the sovereign right to regulate and control conventional arms within their territory according to their own legal or constitutional system, and have the primary responsibility for establishing and implementing national control systems. We encourage all States Parties to also provide their input. In the same spirit, we support the development of “Elements of a voluntary guide to implementing Articles 6 & 7” and invite States Parties to contribute to this process.

We also see merit in the Voluntary Trust Fund and Sponsorship Programme as means to improve Treaty implementation. This is why Canada contributed CAD 100,000 to these initiatives this year through our Weapons Threat Reduction Program. We encourage all States in a position to do so to make a contribution to these important initiatives.

As we look at the scope for advancing the ATT, we are troubled by its financial situation. Too many States Parties are not meeting their financial obligations. We urge all States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time, and we fully support the implementation of Financial Rule 8.1(d), which was agreed by all

States Parties and effectively contributes to addressing financial challenges. This is crucial to our activities and to achieving our common goals.

Mr. President,

As a new State Party, we wish to affirm that Canada stands ready to build on the foundations that have already been soundly laid by the ATT community. We hope that together we can continue to strengthen ATT implementation.