

The Arms Trade Treaty
Avenue de France 23
CH-1202 Geneva
23 March 2022

To : Representatives of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of Signatory States to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of Observer States to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of International and Regional Organizations.
: Representatives of Civil Society, NGOs and Industry.

Dear Distinguished Representatives,

PROPOSAL: FORMAT OF SECOND SERIES OF MEETINGS FOR THE EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES

1. On 22 November 2021, I announced dates and venues of the Working Group and informal preparatory meetings for the CSP8 cycle, as well as CSP8 itself. I also indicated that the intention was to hold the meetings in-person in Geneva, but that the format of the meetings may be subject to change as the situation regarding the COVID-19 outbreak evolves. You will recall that the first series of meetings that took place from 15-18 February 2022 was held in hybrid format, following a consultation process to determine the preferred/optimal format of the meetings.
2. In anticipation of the second series of meetings scheduled to take place from 26-29 April 2022, the Presidency and the ATT Secretariat have been closely monitoring the situation with respect to the Swiss Government's restrictions on the holding of meetings and the measures that have been adopted that will (likely) govern our meeting.
3. In terms of travel to Switzerland for the meeting, there are currently no countries on Switzerland's [list of countries with variants of concern](#). This means that there is no test or quarantine requirement at present for [entering Switzerland](#), and also that people entering do not have to fill out an entry (passenger locator) form.
4. Furthermore, 03 November 2021, the "[Swiss Covid certificate](#)" introduced by the Swiss Government (Federal Council) in November 2021, is no longer required to enter indoor facilities including bars and restaurants. The wearing of masks in Switzerland is now only required on public transport and in hospitals, clinics, retirement and care homes, and the holding of international conferences is no longer subject to restrictions on access, distance, hygiene, the obligation to wear a mask or data collection.
5. While, of course, COVID-related restrictions may change at any time and new measures may be introduced, for now, I am pleased to confirm that the measures in place regarding entry into Switzerland and the holding of indoor events permit the holding of the April meetings in person as contemplated in the announcement of 22 November 2021.

6. However, the Presidency and the ATT Secretariat are conscious that the situation with respect to the virus in some parts of the world and travel restrictions imposed by some governments around the world mean that not all delegates will be able to attend an in-person meeting in April at the International Conference Center Geneva (CICG).

7. Accordingly, in order to ensure participation by the broadest range and number of States Parties and other stakeholders in the April meetings, I am proposing that the April meetings be held in person with an option for those who cannot attend in person to participate remotely via the Zoom platform.

8. The ATT Secretariat has determined that any costs incurred by the ATT Secretariat associated with facilitating remote participation in the April meetings, including making interpretation available to remote participants, can be covered by the funds allocated to or earmarked for the April meetings. However, as the ATT community is aware and has experienced during CSP7 held in August 2021 and the meetings held in February 2022, allowing/facilitating remote participation in the April meetings by some delegates necessitates consideration of geographical time differences in many states, part of the meeting planning. This would have the following consequences for the April meetings:

Meeting times

9. Allowing remote participation would necessitate an adjustment of time to accommodate all regions to some extent. For example, the CSP8 preparatory meetings held in February 2022 ran from 13:00 – 16:00 (Geneva local time).

Agenda for the meeting

10. The agenda for the April meetings would need to be adapted to the reduced time allocated to the meeting (as discussed above). The number of items on the agenda or the time allocated to each item will need to be reduced. A similar approach was adopted for the CSP7 preparatory meetings held in April 2021, and the CSP8 preparatory meetings held in February 2022, where the time allocated to the meetings was reduced from the usual six hours per day to three hours and the agenda was adapted accordingly.

11. In light of the adjustments to the meeting times and agenda necessitated by allowing remote participation to the April meetings, I have requested the vice-Presidents to hold consultations with their regional groups on the proposal to hold the April meetings in-person with a possibility for remote participation, to gauge their views and preferences. I will then hold a virtual meeting with all ATT Office Holders to give the vice-Presidents an opportunity to share feedback from their consultations and discuss and agree to allow remote participation in the April meetings. Thereafter, I will announce the outcome of the vice-Presidents' meeting with States Parties.

Timeline

12. In summary, the timeline of steps towards agreeing on the proposed format of the April meetings is as follows:

23 March	Circulate the proposal to all ATT stakeholders for their information
24 – 31 March	vice-Presidents to hold consultations with their regional groups on the proposal to gauge their views and preferences
	Other stakeholders invited to submit written comments on the proposal to the President via the ATT Secretariat, (by 31 March) to gauge their views and preferences

01 April Virtual meeting of all ATT Office Holders to hear feedback from the vice-Presidents on their consultations and to discuss and agree the proposed format of the April meetings

04 April Announce the outcome of the vice-Presidents' consultations and the format of the April meetings

13. Through this process, I hope to be in a position to communicate the format of the April meetings by 04 April 2022.

14. In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support to and active participation in the ATT process, and I look forward to engaging with you in person in the second series of CSP8 meetings in April.

15. I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours faithfully,



Ambassador Thomas GÖBEL
President: Eighth Conference of States Parties to the ATT