



CROATIA

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Statement by

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New York**

at the

**First Conference of States Parties of the
Arms Trade Treaty
Cancun, Mexico, 24-27 August 2015**

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Muchas gracias, señor Presidente,
Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by thanking Mexico, in its capacity as the Provisional Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty, and for its hospitality in hosting this Conference, as well as the Facilitators and Co-Facilitators of all working groups, for their commitment and expertise shown throughout the preparatory work.

Croatia also aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered by the European Union, and wishes to add the following in its national capacity.

The importance of the Arms Trade Treaty lies in preventing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the use of arms against civilians. This Treaty fosters peace, security and development. It also gives us means to curb irresponsible transfers of conventional arms, which affect security in different states and regions and lead to human rights violations, especially those of women and children.

On the occasion of the First Conference of States Parties we need to intensify our work and cooperation in order to implement the Treaty and make it as universal and as effective as possible.

Mr. Chair,

From the very start, Croatia has been a firm supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty and was privileged to be among the first countries to ratify it. We deposited the instrument of our ratification on 2 April 2014 - exactly one year after its adoption.

Croatia attaches the highest priority to the Treaty's full implementation. We have a functioning national export and import control systems, harmonized with the EU norms and standards. Croatia publishes detailed annual arms export and import reports that are publicly available. This data is fed to the EU report, UN and OSCE questionnaires, as well as to the regional report of the Southeast Europe.

Croatia considers itself a lead nation in the efforts of the Southeast Europe to continuously strengthen and harmonize the arms trade control. Our expertise and lessons learnt in the implementation of the legislation are shared with our regional partners. In 2010 our experience in dealing with SALW surplus through a public collection campaign entitled "Less Arms, Less Tragedies" has been voted the most successful campaign globally. We believe these are the areas where Croatia can offer unique expertise to our global partners.

Our dedication to arms control and disarmament has resulted in hosting and presiding over the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions taking place in Dubrovnik in two weeks from today, for which we are very proud. We sincerely hope to see many of you again there.

Mr. Chair,

We have indisputably a common goal. Today's First Conference of States Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty is a milestone in the global arms control. The international community finally has a legally-binding instrument that regulates the trade in conventional arms and makes a major contribution to international peace and stability.

Having the Arms Trade Treaty is something to celebrate. Nevertheless, the real work is starting only now. Uncontrolled transit and transshipment of arms inflames horrible conflicts that we witness around the world today. Therefore we have to promote legal frameworks for the import and export of arms; we must work on raising awareness of states about the importance of arms control; and we need to work hard on the universal adherence to the ATT.

In conclusion, we would also like to use this opportunity to thank the civil society for their valuable inputs to the ATT process.

Simply put, if effectively implemented, the ATT will reduce human suffering and save lives. Croatia stands ready to fully contribute to this goal.

Thank you.