



EU Key Messages

Working Group on Transparency and Reporting Arms Trade Treaty

Geneva, 11 May 2023

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. [Alignment clause]

The EU once again calls on all States Parties to fulfil their reporting obligations in a timely and transparent manner. We are concerned about the low number of reports submitted. We encourage all States Parties to report publicly since public reporting increases the relevance of the reports and facilitates information-sharing on transfer decisions.

The EU is aware of considerations regarding national security that could pose challenges to transparency in the context of legitimate transfers of arms and ammunition from its Member States under the European Peace Facility to Ukraine, which aim to help Ukraine exercise its inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. In this context, EU Member States assessed that the export of the military equipment in support of Ukraine's self-defence is fully in line with the legal obligations stemming from the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms export and with obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as with the Wassenaar Arrangement Initial Elements.

The EU supports a more focused mandate of WGTR which should enable WGTR to generate tangible impact on the fulfilment of ATT reporting obligations by States Parties. The agenda could only focus on reporting and how to assist countries with reporting obligations. The Group can explore focus on training sessions how to use the platform (similarly to UNIDIR's training on UNROCA) and how to make further synergies with UNROCA. There may be discussions on how to simplify the reporting. The digital platform should be operational as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the benefits of using online tools to reduce burdens on States and on the Secretariat should be emphasized as the Information Exchange Platform remains underutilized and the online reporting tool remains underappreciated (its use could be increased by raising awareness for its burden-lessening abilities through the UNROCA-synergizing tick-box). A searchable database of annual reports, with a possible public part, would be a valuable addition to these online tools, and the EU supports finalizing discussions on this issue, building on its

own positive experiences from the operations of the EU Working Party on Conventional Arms Exports internal and EU public databases.

At our previous session in February, several States Parties indicated that reporting challenges stem from data collection and a lack of capacity and awareness in relevant agencies. The ATT could improve this situation by facilitating information exchange between those involved in specific transfers to provide participants with more data about transfers and by building capacity through exchange of good practices.

In this context, the EU, having itself substantial achievements in creating a framework of public reporting on arms export licensing by its Member States, supports the idea of certain States Parties taking the role of regional champions on reporting as a promising measure for decentralized, cost-effective capacity building, well suited to regional circumstances. The EU encourages States Parties to assume such duties, and the ATT Secretariat to put forward concrete initiatives and ways for structured approach and assistance, and can consider supporting such actions in programming of its future ATT-related assistance, subject to appropriate decisions of EU Member States.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.