



European Union

Third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty Geneva, 11-15 September 2017 Statement on International Assistance

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Having presented the EU's assistance activities during our debate on Tuesday, I would like to take the opportunity to address two other issues, namely the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) and the ATT Sponsorship Programme.

The EU considers that the VTF is a key instrument supporting national implementation of the Treaty. In doing so, this makes the Treaty more attractive for States to join, thus contributing to universalisation of the Treaty. We welcome the financial contributions already made to the Fund, including by EU Member States, and would like to invite all States Parties to consider further support, in order to keep the current momentum of this distinctive process ongoing.

Over the past year, important progress has been made to operationalise the VTF, thanks to the efforts of the Selection Committee and its Chair, Ambassador Michael Biontino. The lessons learnt should be used during the next selection round to ensure that projects enabled by the VTF allow recipient States to meet the challenges they are facing and to make progress on priorities identified in the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation. We also attach importance to efforts to ensure complementarity and to avoid duplication with projects funded by other instruments, such as the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR).

The EU would like to encourage all current and potential donors to keep contributing to the Sponsorship Programme to enable the participation of experts from developing countries to relevant ATT meetings. They should be able to contribute to our work and benefit from the exchange of information, experience and good practices. Several EU Member States have already contributed to the Sponsorship Programme. Furthermore, the new EU Outreach Programme in support of the ATT foresees financial assistance to cover the travel expenses of up to three experts from the Programme's partner countries to participate in EU-funded side

events taking place in the margins of Conferences of ATT States Parties over the next three years.

Thank you, Mr. President

*The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.