

STATEMENT BY GHANA AT THE EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES (CSP8)
OF THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (ATT) ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND
ASSISTANCE
DELIVERED ON THE 25TH AUGUST 2022 IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
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ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Mr. President,

Our Delegation wishes to express our gratitude to Ambassador Dell Higgie of New Zealand for courage and for acknowledging the times that we live in. We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute this agenda item on International Cooperation and Assistance. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by Niger on behalf of the African Group and would proceed to make these remarks in our national capacity.

Mr. President,

We are deeply concerned about the call and the attempt by some State Parties particularly the well-endowed ones to exclude the weaker, least developed and lower middle-income States from equally participating in this process and accessing the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) on the basis of their inability to pay their access contribution for a number of years.

Mr. President,

Do we need to remind ourselves that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted economies, taken away people's livelihoods, with inflation sky-rocketing and prices of life-essentials hitting the rafters with nations struggling to hold their economies together making the poor even poorer?

For two years, we have not been able to meet together in-person to take decisions and the first time we are meeting, we have rather chosen to attempt exclude others from this process.

Let us remember that the voices of conscience in 2013 that loudly stood behind our colleagues to get this Treaty passed when it mattered most are the same voices we seek alienate today. Let us not by our action give the naysays the room to say ***"we told you so"***. Because if we went on the trajectory of excluding some States it would become a club for the rich.

Mr. President,

Data presented by the ATT Secretariat on Treaty Universalization and Reporting all show a downward spiral, with the status of reporting by states taking a nose-dive from 84% in 2015

to 57% in 2021 and this in our view is principally because States are struggling with implementation hence their inability to report. If a State has not implemented, what would that State report anyway?

We reiterate the position of CSP5 that “No State shall be prejudiced by financial rule 8(1)d in applying for support from the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund or the ATT Sponsorship Program. Since that decision of CSP5, no decision has been taken regarding the impact of Financial Rule 8(1)d on the VTF and the Sponsorship Program and we strongly urge this Conference not to roll back the clock of progress by taking any decision that would run counter to the CSP5 decision and discriminate against States on the basis of their financial situations in accessing support for their implementation from the VTF.

The States that need the support most are the ones being denied.

Mr. President,

We wish call on States who are privileged to serve on the VTF Selection Committee to refrain from using punitive measures like preventing access to the VTF to those in financial arrears. Such measures will not achieve the intended effect of the VTF but would only succeed in widening the implementation gap and limit progress towards treaty universalization.

Mr. President

We have come to learn through the report of the Chair of the VTF Selection Committee, Her Excellency Ambassador Dell Higgie of New Zealand that of the Fifteen (15) applications by some Thirteen (13) States submitted for support in this current cycle, only Six (6) have been provisionally approved.

Any attempt by the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) Selection Committee to use the financial consideration aspect of its guidance for the selection process in its consideration of projects would be regrettable and most unfortunate.

Finally, Mr. President,

Let us remember that it is only when the Treaty is effectively implemented across States, and across Continents that we would achieve the intended objective of regulating the global trade in conventional arms and restricting access to unauthorized recipients who use the weapons manufactured in richer States to maim, kill, destroy and rape the innocent ones in the poorer States.

I thank you very much for your attention.