

## **IHLI Statement Risk assessment (covering Articles 6&7)**

Mr. Chair, honourable delegations,

At the outset, I would like to thank the facilitators for organizing this important discussion on the various dimensions of implementing the Arms Trade Treaty, particularly with regard to risk assessment and the prevention of diversion.

Mr Chair, honourable delegations, we would like to thank Mexico, Spain and Togo for their presentation and for stressing the importance of incorporating different perspectives on Gender Focal Point under the ATT.

From the perspective of IHLI, the real-world contexts illustrate how illicit arms transfers through maritime routes can have serious humanitarian consequences. For example, various international reports have indicated that the continued illicit flow of arms by sea into conflict-affected regions, including Yemen and Gaza, has contributed to the prolongation of conflict and the deterioration of humanitarian conditions.

**The impact of such transfers is not limited to military dynamics. The widespread availability of weapons can also contribute to increased levels of armed violence, organized crime, and gender-based violence, which disproportionately affects women and girls.**

In this regard, **it is essential that risk assessments conducted under Article 7 systematically consider the likelihood that arms transfers may contribute to serious acts of gender-based violence, particularly in contexts affected by armed conflict and widespread armed violence.**

In this context, the IHLI has launched the campaign “For Her Peace and Health,” which highlights the relationship between the proliferation of weapons and their impact on the safety and health of women in conflict-affected communities.

The campaign aims to promote the integration of gender perspectives and community health considerations into discussions on arms control and into risk assessment processes related to arms transfers, in line with the provisions of Article 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty. It also encourages the development of practical indicators to better assess the relationship between arms flows, rising levels of gender-based violence, and their broader impacts on local communities.

Strengthening the effectiveness of risk assessments under the Treaty requires a broader understanding of how arms are transferred in practice, including through maritime routes, which represent one of the principal channels for the global movement of goods, including arms.

For this reason, when conducting risk assessments in accordance with Article 7 of the Treaty, States Parties should take into account risks associated with maritime routes, including the potential diversion of arms during transit or trans-shipment at sea, as well as the role of organized criminal networks that may exploit these routes.

Maritime transport continues to present significant challenges within the arms transfer control system. Networks involved in illicit trafficking frequently rely on maritime shipping to move large quantities of weapons, taking advantage of the complexity of maritime supply chains and the scale of global trade. These practices may include concealing weapons within commercial shipping containers, using falsified or misleading shipping documentation, or moving arms through transit and trans-shipment operations, which may represent critical points where diversion can occur away from the authorized end-user.

In order to strengthen the effective implementation of the Treaty in this area, we would like to highlight several practical steps that States Parties may wish to consider.

First, strengthening the involvement of maritime actors, including port authorities, coast guards, and customs authorities, within national frameworks for implementing the Arms Trade Treaty.

Second, enhancing oversight of transit and trans-shipment activities, in line with Article 9 of the Treaty, as these stages may represent critical points where diversion could occur.

Third, promoting international cooperation and information-sharing among States Parties, consistent with Article 11 of the Treaty, in order to identify patterns of diversion within maritime supply chains.

Finally, we encourage the development of practical tools to support risk assessments, including indicators related to illicit trafficking routes, high-risk maritime areas, and the potential humanitarian impacts of illicit arms flows.

Mr. Chair,

Integrating the maritime dimension into discussions on the implementation of the Treaty does not seek to expand its scope, but rather to ensure the full and effective application of its existing provisions.

Looking at the Treaty from a maritime perspective—particularly with regard to Articles 6, 7, 9, and 11—can significantly help close existing gaps in risk assessment, strengthen efforts to prevent diversion, and ultimately reduce the human suffering caused by the misuse and illicit transfer of conventional arms.

Thank you.