

Statement by the Government of Japan on Treaty Implementation
The Sixth Conference of the State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
August 17-21, 2020

Mr. President,

To begin with, Japan would like to express its sincere appreciation to Ambassador LEE Jang-keun and his successor Ambassador LIM Sang-beom, Chair of the Working Group for leading the discussion on Effective Treaty Implementation, which is critical to the Treaty, and to Ambassador Ignacio SÁNCHEZ DE LERÍN, Mr. Rob WENSLEY, and Ms. Stela PETROVIĆ, who have graciously served as facilitators of the sub-working groups during the CSP6 cycle.

The formulation of multi-year work plans, submitted to CSP6 for adoption, is certainly beneficial in order to anticipate the activities of the sub-working groups. Japan supports the proposed conference documents with multi-year work plans.

Given the dynamism of the international community, however, it is necessary for the ATT, as with other treaty bodies, to adjust and respond appropriately to the priorities and concerns of the time, ensuring agility and flexibility. We must also recall that the terms of office holders last only for twelve months. In this context, the expected activities after CSP7 in the proposed multi-year work plans are better considered tentative and would preferably be reviewed at CSP7 in order to address current circumstances and evolving priorities.

Mr. President,

Japan values the work of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation as it can promote treaty implementation, especially among those States that are new to the community and still in the early stages of trade regulation. We thank the Chair and the facilitators for their efforts in this regard.

Japan would like to express its concern, however, that the multi-year work plans again include discussion on unpacking key concepts and texts that are not defined in the Treaty. The interpretation of these key concepts is not something that can be easily agreed on by consensus. Furthermore, a written interpretation of such key concepts would have serious legal implications.

Japan would like to emphasize that States Parties are necessarily bound by their treaty obligations and that difficulties in agreeing on a unified interpretation could in no

way signify waiver of treaty obligations. Creating room for such a misunderstanding should be avoided at all cost.

Moreover, the exercise of unpacking key concepts should not be perceived as attempting to establish new norms.

Given this serious consideration, Japan believes that, rather than the exercise of unpacking key concepts of the Treaty, information exchange on good practices related to each Article of the Treaty would be more suitable and effective to advance our common objective of enhancing treaty implementation.

Mr. President,

Japan would like to reaffirm that it will continue its treaty implementation efforts in accordance with domestic law, and to actively participate in the discussions of the Working Group to contribute to the promotion of effective treaty implementation.

Thank you, Mr. President.