



**Statement delivered by Japan**  
**The Ninth Conference of the States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty**  
**First Working Group and Preparatory Meetings**  
**Working Group on Treaty Universalization**  
**15 February 2023**

Dear Co-Chairs, thank you for giving me the floor.

At the outset, Japan would like to express its full support for the Presidency of the Republic of Korea and appreciation for the dedication of Ambassador Yoon and Ambassador Göbel to the work of this Working Group. We share the view expressed in the draft paper prepared by Germany that universalization efforts require mid-term planning and a step-by-step approach. Japan also appreciates the role and ongoing significant contributions of civil society organizations.

Dear Co-Chairs,

Japan warmly welcomes the Philippines, Gabon and Andorra which have joined as States Parties to the ATT. We are also pleased to hear about the progress made by Gambia and look forward to their early accession to the Treaty.

Japan understands that more progress is needed towards universalization in order to prevent illicit trade and diversion in conventional weapons and to strengthen the effectiveness of the ATT.

Universalization of the ATT is of particular importance to Japan, especially within the Asia Pacific region from a regional security perspective.

ATT universalization efforts would contribute to enhancing export control systems and we believe it is vital to strengthen these systems across the Asian region, which has recently played a leading role within the global supply chain. From this standpoint, Japan has hosted the Asian Export Control Seminar (AECS) in Tokyo since 1993 in order to exchange views and foster a common understanding on ongoing international and regional efforts, as well as new challenges.

Japan also believes that the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) can be better utilized as an invaluable tool for universalization. Although it can support non-State Parties in facilitating their national processes and help build the necessary capacity to join the Treaty, the number of VTF applications from Asia-Pacific states unfortunately remains relatively low. In this regard, Japan will work on promoting the value and benefits of the VTF where possible.

As part of our ongoing outreach activity, Japan, together with Australia, New Zealand and Control Arms, co-hosted the Universalization Roundtable for the Asia-Pacific region in Geneva last June. In fact, it was a great opportunity for non-State Parties in the region to learn from the efforts and experiences of states that have recently joined the Treaty. It was also helpful for us to understand the challenges states might face in completing the process. We would like to continue this initiative this year and will work together with our partners towards further universalization.

Lastly, I would like to conclude my statement by encouraging all non-State Parties, including Signatory States, to join the Treaty. Japan is committed to intensifying our collective efforts to achieve tangible progress.

I thank you, Co-Chairs.