

## Oral Intervention

### Universality of Conventional Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)-item 6

**Thank you, Mr. President,**

Today, I represent both Maat for Peace, Development, Human Rights and the Global Coalition for Limitation of Armaments (GCLA) in this important discussion talking about the universality of the ATT.

**Mr. President,**

Promoting the universality of the Treaty means increasing the number of its state parties and ensuring their obligations thereto.<sup>1</sup> The Fifth Review Conference of High Contracting Parties of 2016 has recognized that universality is very important to the spread of the treaty and its protocols, given its role as a key treaty for IHL.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is the first of its kind that helps countries start making a real difference in their exports and reserves of weapons to ensure their compatibility with the development goals.

To achieve this, the ATT needs to be universally adopted, so that it can positively contribute to the well-being of everyone, starting from supporting the responsible defensive capabilities to protecting poor sectors against the atrocities committed by illegal or irresponsible weapons.

Based on this, both Maat and the GCLA appreciate the efforts of the United Nations and its relevant bodies in order to support the efforts made by a large group of actors, regional initiatives and civil society to implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA), as well as to enhance global treaties by providing assistance to member states involved in the field of establishing national coordination bodies, developing national capabilities, managing or destroying stocks and enacting national legislation.

However, more efforts must be made to ensure the universality of the treaty, so that the standards and rules related to the international weapons trade are developed and effectively activated on the ground.

Therefore, it is necessary to work to eliminate bureaucracy and procedural obstacles that discourage countries from joining the treaty and to address the geographical gaps to its membership.

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel Stohl, Taking stock of the arms trade treaty, SIPRI, August 2021, link, [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/att\\_first\\_six\\_4\\_universalization\\_stohl\\_0.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/att_first_six_4_universalization_stohl_0.pdf)

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One of the areas of focus, in order to ensure the universality of the ATT, has to do with adding more members from the weapons importing countries to prove that the arms trade treaty has benefits for all stakeholders in the process of transporting weapons.

Here comes the role of civil society and regional organizations that should work to encourage new countries to join the arms trade treaty. Today, on behalf of the GCLA, we pledge to do our best to fulfill our share of responsibility, aiming to help reduce the proliferation of arms. It is worth noting that the GCLA, launched in February 2022 on the sidelines of the first preparatory series of the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of States Parties (CSP8) to the ATT, now includes 26 civil organizations, and has developed a specific PoA to help achieve the universality of the treaty, especially in the Arab region and the Middle East, despite the various restrictions imposed by some countries on the work of civil society, and their policies preventing civil society from attending some meetings and making them limited to countries only.

Despite the clear recognition of the importance of the knowledge and expertise shared by civil society organizations, starting with their efforts to establish the treaty or urge and encourage countries to join them, some countries continue to undermine their work with their repressive actions and arbitrary decisions that only seek to prevent CSOs from attending some meetings and allow them to participate only in international conferences. Countries continue non-stop to suppress civil society organizations and human rights defenders, especially those calling and promoting for a reformation in the security sector.

**Mr. President,**

**So that this Treaty becomes universal, both Maat for Peace, Development, Human Rights and the Global Coalition for the Limitation of Armaments recommend the following:**

- **The need to stop the proliferation of weapons;**
- **The need to address some of its shortcomings, such as the need to take into account the adoption of strict international rules on brokerage and the criminalization of parties held accountable for violations;**
- **The need to distinguish between the trade of weapons and the transportation of weapons in the form of gifts and aid and the need to develop practical measures to prevent these weapons from reaching the black market;**
- **The necessity of establishing a provision that requires the supply of these weapons only to government agencies delegated to fill any gaps that may allow delivering weapons to the hands of terrorist and armed groups and organizations;**

***Finally, Mr. President***

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ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان  
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***Today, the world is in desperate need for this Treaty to be publicized, in order to save millions of lives protect livelihoods, and preserve human rights for all. It is time that the Treaty becomes***

***THE UNIVERSAL ARMS TRADE TREATY.***



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