

JOINT STATEMENT

Gender Mainstreaming and Addressing Gender-Based Violence under the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Thank you, Madam President,

I have the honour of taking the floor on behalf of 36 States Parties, including Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

As we meet today, we must reckon with the reality that we are facing unprecedented levels of conflict globally. In addition to massive increases in military spending worldwide, we are also seeing rising challenges to global arms control and disarmament efforts. The environment and climate are also suffering the impacts of armed violence near and far.

Armed violence is pervasive and impacts everyone. While the vast majority of users of small arms are men and boys and represent the majority of casualties, we must document, recognize and work to mitigate the differentiated impacts of armed violence on women, girls, and those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) recognizes that gender-based violence can and should be addressed through the measures required under Article 7.4 of the Treaty.

Madam President,

Globally, 1 in 3 women and girls experience gender-based violence in their lifetimes. For many, this statistic is exacerbated by additional risk factors, such as income, age, disability, food insecurity, climate change, and sexual orientation and gender identity. The severity of the violence is largely dependent on whether a weapon was used to perpetrate said violence.

In nearly 50% of all instances of femicide, the perpetrator uses a firearm. While countering arms proliferation does not address the root causes of gender-based violence, it indeed can address a contributing factor for the perpetuation of gender-based violence, and thus can play a significant role in making it more difficult to commit acts of gender-based violence. It also increases awareness about the ferocity of the problem.

Article 7.4 of the ATT requires that, *“The exporting State Party, in making this assessment, shall take into account the risk of the conventional arms... being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.”*

On this basis, we call on States Parties to consider the following in the context of the ATT:

- 1) *recognize* that advancing gender equality is crucial in countering gender-based violence;
- 2) *encourage* reporting on victims of armed violence to be disaggregated by gender and include intersectional factors such as sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI), age, and type of weapon used, while ensuring confidentiality and safety of survivors;

- 3) *continue* tracking and reporting gender-disaggregated data on CSP delegates and civil society attendees as mandated at CSP5, unto a goal of equitable gender representation among all delegations;
- 4) *encourage* States Parties to expand their domestic interpretations of gender-based violence to include those who experience violence as a result of SOGI, unto greater application of Article 7.4 to better protect victims of gender-based violence; and
- 5) *encourage* States Parties to share best practices for recognizing and investigating risks of gender-based violence, and following the due process that the ATT requires.

We additionally call on all States Parties to mainstream Article 7.4 commitments into their Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans. The Women, Peace and Security Agenda is one of the most successful ongoing international security measures that highlights the differentiated impact of weapons on women and girls and the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in every level of the conflict prevention and peaceful resolution process.

Finally, States Parties must acknowledge the indisputable fact that groups that are more diverse create better outcomes. Individually, States Parties should strive to diversify their delegations. At the last three CSPs, the percentage of female delegates has decreased. It went from 40% in 2019 to 34% in 2022, while the percentage of female heads of delegation has also decreased from 30% to 27% in the same period. We must proactively address and reverse this regrettable trend. We should all reflect on and address these shortcomings.

We thank UNIDIR, Reaching Critical Will, Small Arms Survey, Control Arms, the ATT Secretariat, and a number of States Parties for providing data, conducting studies, and leading conversations on gender mainstreaming and preventing gender-based violence via the ATT.

In conclusion, we look forward to continuing these conversations throughout the intersessional period, including at CSP10, to make the world a more peaceful, safe, and prosperous home for all.

Thank you, Madam President.