

## **Disarmament and Arms Control Statement for CSP5 29 Aug 2019:**

### **International Assistance (Part II ATT Sponsorship Programme)**

Mr President, thank you for the opportunity.

Mr President, my organisation has been closely involved in supporting the establishment of the Arms Trade Treaty since 2000. We continue to support the universalization and the implementation of the Treaty globally, especially in critical regions where attention, representation and assistance are most required.

We welcome the wonderful work done during the preparation of the CSP 5 by the ATT Secretariat and the Management Committee (MC) to elaborate the necessary protocols governing the administration of the ATT sponsorship programme. This work has included (and I quote), “a protocol to guide the selection process of the ATT sponsorship programme in order to ensure transparency, efficiency and impartiality in the work of the programme.”

It has been stated multiple times in past Conferences of the ATT State Parties that civil society participation is instrumental in universalization and implementation efforts. In fact, civil society actors have long been actively working in a constructive way to support their governments to strengthen their export control laws and systems. Our participation has enabled us to gain insights into the unique challenges faced by governments and to contribute to the CSP discussions from the point of view of our communities experiences and our research into the problems. This has allowed government representatives and civil society organisations, especially those working with communities severely affected by armed violence to discuss ways to end the unregulated trade by ratifying and implementing the various provisions of the Treaty.

Unfortunately, the current draft protocol for the ATT sponsorship programme will undermine these important exchanges by, in effect, excluding the representatives of important civil society organisations and regional bodies from the Conferences.

Mr President, as we agreed in the final report of the CSP4, the ATT sponsorship programme is important in facilitating (and I quote) “broad participation in Conferences of States Parties and meetings of the Working Groups.” It is this *broad participation* that is the crux of the matter. If the formal sponsorship programme is open to all civil society actors irrespective of their status or affiliation to international coalitions, it can facilitate the participation of a diverse range of civil society expertise to enrich the CSP process. In past CSPs, formal sponsorship funds were made available to support the participation of civil society representatives: 2 were sponsored in 2016, 5 in 2017 and 8 in 2018. We believe that this sponsorship program for civil society representatives who are otherwise unable to afford to travel CSP meetings should continue.

Mr President, we also need to reiterate that the criteria used for the selection of civil society applicants should be clarified to ensure participation by a diverse range of relevant civil society experts from countries on the OECD DAC country list. The balance of geographical and gender representation should be achieved. There must also be a selection criterion that takes into account the candidate’s prior commitment and work on the ATT and their experience and knowledge on the ground, especially in the area of conventional arms trade controls and the prevention of armed violence. Moreover, we firmly believe that the ATT Secretariat should be authorised to initiate a process that will bring about a transparent mechanism for the sponsorship programme which allows applicants to have clear

understanding of the criteria for eligibility. We are prepared to provide more detailed proposals for such a mechanism as part of the necessary protocols governing the administration of the ATT sponsorship programme.

Mr President, IANSA promotes an approach to facilitate civil society participation in the UN Programme of Action conferences on the principles of fairness, diversity, commitment and impartiality, and we hope these principles can be applied in the CSP process. We remain committed to supporting this approach as a way to maximise the endeavours of the State Parties to universalize and implement the ATT, especially in the most challenging regions.

I thank you.