



## **EU Statement on International Assistance**

### **Arms Trade Treaty**

#### **Fifth Conference of States Parties**

**Geneva, 26-30 August 2019**

Mr. President

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The EU reiterates its commitment to international cooperation and assistance which play an important role in the achievement of the objectives of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The EU has a long track record in capacity-building activities aimed at the overall strengthening of national export control systems worldwide. The EU and Member States' outreach activities in third countries contribute both to the effective implementation of all provisions of the ATT, including enhancing capacities for effective trade regulation, reporting obligations, and to Treaty universalisation. Strengthening regional and sub-regional cooperation and national ownership remain central to our efforts.

We have entered the midterm of the second EU Outreach Programme on the ATT, which was adopted in May 2017, with the budget of more than 8 million Euros. We are grateful to the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) and Expertise France (EF) for their continued professional implementation of the EU-funded assistance activities in support of implementation and universalisation of the Treaty. 17 countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Georgia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Malaysia, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Togo and Zambia – have benefited from tailored roadmap assistance to establish and strengthen national control systems, national control lists, the legislative and regulatory framework and institutional capacities, including inter-agency cooperation and operational procedures. Furthermore, 7 countries - Albania, Chile, Madagascar, Mali, Panama, Sierra Leone and Thailand - have benefited from ad-hoc

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\* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

assistance to raise awareness, improve legislative and regulatory frameworks as well as reporting capacities, and strengthen institutional capacities.

In addition, the EU is supporting 16 countries in South East Europe, North Africa, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East to promote effective arms export controls, in accordance with the EU Common Position on arms exports. These activities focus on regulatory assistance, training of relevant officials, the exchange of best practices, and conduct of case studies. The latest EU Council Decision in this regard was adopted in January 2018, with the budget of 1.3 million Euros.

Furthermore, a number of EU-funded projects in the area of small arms and light weapons (SALW) control are most relevant for ATT implementation, as they aim at preventing the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition, and improving trade regulations. Many projects have a regional scope and are implemented in cooperation with the UN and other relevant international and regional organisations. Since 2013, the EU has been supporting iTrace, a global reporting mechanism on illicit SALW and other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition in conflict affected areas, implemented by Conflict Armament Research. The patterns of trafficking and diversion that are identified by iTrace serve to increase the effectiveness of arms control measures such as export control and stockpile management.

The ATT Voluntary Trust Fund remains a key tool in assisting States Parties to improve national capacities for effective Treaty implementation. We are delighted to see that application numbers are increasing, indicating broad acceptance of and trust in this vital instrument. We invite States Parties and those aspiring to accede to the ATT to make even better use of this instrument. We welcome the recent generous contributions to the VTF by donors, including EU Member States, and encourage further contributions. We invite all stakeholders to share information about their respective assistance activities with a view to ensuring coordinated efforts. To maximise high quality support in future cycles, it would be beneficial to provide further assistance to States in producing quality bids, in line with the objectives of the current VTF Outreach Strategy.

We are mindful of maximising synergies with other relevant instruments, such as the UN Programme of Action on illicit SALW that contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, notably Target 16.4 on reducing illicit arms flows and Target 5.2. on eliminating gender-based violence.

The EU looks forward to further cooperation with interested partner countries, donors, international and regional organisations, civil society and industry in order to promote universal adherence to the ATT and advance its effective implementation.

Thank you, Mr. President