



PHILIPPINES

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

**Delivered by Special Envoy Bruce S. Concepcion,
Office of the Special Envoy on Transnational Crime,
Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines
during the
Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Geneva, Switzerland, 26-30 August 2019**

General Debate

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, good day.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Philippines, let me reiterate our government's clear and unambiguous commitment to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty as shown in our efforts to conduct activities aimed at capacitating and informing our relevant government agencies and other stakeholders of the benefits of the treaty.

Mr. President, allow me to gladly provide an update that the Foreign Relations Committee of the Philippine Senate has now appointed a new Chairperson who will continue the discussions of all international agreements, obligations and contracts, among others, to include the Arms Trade Treaty. It is in this regard that we are expecting the resumption of meetings and discussions on the accession to the treaty.

While we are still waiting for the concurrence of the Philippine Senate, our Government, with the assistance of international partners, continuously conducts activities in preparation for the implementation of the ATT. Further, the government has been making efforts to reach out to industry stakeholders to ensure understanding of the treaty and to clarify their concerns and queries. Mostly recently, the Office of the Special Envoy on Transnational Crime, which I head, organized a workshop among stakeholders last 22 August to thresh out issues regarding future treaty implementation.

Engagement and cooperation with partner States, international and civil society organizations have also allowed our law enforcement and strategic trade officials as primary implementers to benefit from capacity-building activities and opportunities for exchange of best practices, highlighting the critical importance of the pillar of International Assistance in the ATT, most especially for developing States.

Relatedly, with the generous help and assistance of our partners, Expertise France and the German Federal Office of Economics and Export Control, Philippine officials from law enforcement, strategic trade and legislative agencies will be visiting the Netherlands on 09-11 September 2019 to learn about good practices in the implementation of arms transfer control processes by the Dutch governments/agencies, from decision making to enforcement of policies, as part of a series of European Union P2P projects.

Mr. President, allow us to commend you for your commitment and hard work in highlighting the very relevant theme of gender-based violence for this year's CSP. We acknowledge that women and children bear a disproportionate brunt of suffering caused by the illicit proliferation of weapons, especially in conflict areas. We likewise acknowledge the critical role that women play in conflict resolution and peace building, underscoring that their empowerment in these fields should continue to be upheld and promoted.

We are proud that the Philippines is globally recognized for advancing the agenda of women, peace and security, hallmarked by such landmark pieces of national legislation as the Magna Carta of Women and the Anti-Violence against Women and Children Act. Through these laws, all agencies of our Government as primary duty-bearer are mandated to mainstream gender in all aspects of their work. We strive both at the policy and operational levels to ensure effective implementation of gender-responsive and non-discriminatory mechanisms that protect and promote the rights of women, especially the most marginalized.

More particularly, the Philippines implements a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security which seeks to operationalized UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. The latest version of this plan runs from 2017 to 2022, and features a multi-stakeholder approach involving the Government, the private sector, civil society and communities on the ground. This plan reflects our government's commitment to ensuring the security of women and girls during armed

conflict and advancing their active and direct participation in conflict prevention, peace building and post-conflict rehabilitation.

We welcome the efforts of all ATT stakeholders, including civil society, in further analysing the issue of gender-based violence in relation to arms control, hopeful that this will lead to more effective national implementation and increased cooperation among ATT States Parties.

Mr. President, we join other States in expressing concern over financial issues that affects the ATT's work, and call on all relevant Parties to ensure full and timely payment of their assessed contributions. We acknowledge your tireless initiatives, Mr. President, to pro-actively address the matter at hand, and wish to manifest our full support towards your efforts at reaching consensus by finding innovative and practical solutions.

In conclusion, Mr. President, in behalf of our Government, I would like to call on states, partner countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to support the present Philippine administration in its efforts and initiatives to provide the Filipino people, that much deserved peace and order, development and good governance, by fighting criminality – most especially those perpetuated by organized groups.

Thank you very much.