

Statement by the Czech Republic on the Arms Trade Treaty at the Fifth Conference of State Parties

Mr President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your Presidency and on your transparent and efficient leadership in the course of preparations for the Fifth Conference of State Parties. We appreciate your efforts to make the Treaty more visible and to increase the number of States Parties. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for its tireless support not only in organizing the Conference but throughout the whole year.

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add a few remarks in the national capacity.

The universalization of the Treaty remains one of our main objectives. Our annual meetings thus provide an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the Treaty and to gain attention of potential candidates for fully fledged membership. The number of State Parties has indeed been increasing. We remain convinced that a broader universal adherence to the ATT will strengthen global security and will contribute to the regulation of trade in conventional weapons. Nevertheless, some of the important arms producers, who export weapons following their commercial interests, still remain outside the ATT.

For each and every new State Party it is indispensable to implement the Treaty in its entirety and to meet the core requirements of establishing national arms control systems and national control lists. It could be quite a demanding task for many of them, that is why we should offer assistance to them. The creation of the Voluntary Trust Fund proved to be an excellent idea. We consider the Fund to be an important instrument for supporting the national implementation and for strengthening the implementation of the Treaty. The Czech Republic has financially supported the VTF in previous years and we want to do so next year again.

Our common goal is to achieve greater responsibility and transparency in the international arms trade. The ATT requires each State Party to take measures to eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and prevent their diversion to the illicit market. Such transparency should be achieved by the strengthening of reporting capabilities of the States Parties so that they are able to fulfil their reporting obligations. Therefore, we welcome the launching of on-line reporting which is comprehensive and easily understandable. Further compilation of the

obtained data will help the States Parties and their national authorities in the risk assessment while evaluating individual requests on national level.

However, we are concerned by the report of the ATT Secretariat that the reporting rate remains low and has not improved over time. This is contrary to our joint objective. If we want to possess a strong and efficient arms control tool, it is indispensable for each State Party to comply with its reporting obligations. As regards the new on-line system, we would appreciate its interconnection (link) with the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Since both systems require the same data, it could lower an administrative burden for the State Parties and simplify reporting for all participants.

As regards the ATT Sponsorship Programme, we are convinced that it was a timely decision of the CSP 4 to transfer its administration from the UNDP to the ATT Secretariat. In our view, this decision enabled to increase its cost-effectiveness and better use of donor contributions. The ATT Secretariat is able to best assess the needs of States Parties and assist them accordingly. I hope that the evaluation of the Management Committee, which was tasked to deliver it at the CSP 6, will confirm this view.

Mr President,

The Czech Republic has had the opportunity to participate actively in the work of the Management Committee as a member since its very beginning. Our term in the Committee will have expired by the end of this Conference of State Parties. Nevertheless, I can assure you that the Czech Republic will continue to be an active State Party and support the achievement of the goals of the Treaty.

Mr President,

Let me conclude by wishing you and the Secretariat every success in steering this session to a fruitful outcome.

Thank you for your attention.