



IRELAND

General Debate

Statement by

Ambassador Michael Gaffey

Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations and Other
International Organisations in Geneva

at the

Fifth Conference of States Parties to the

Arms Trade Treaty

Geneva, 27 August 2018

President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement to be/delivered by the European Union and would like to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your Presidency and offer to you Ireland's full cooperation and support. I would also like to acknowledge the work undertaken by the working groups throughout the Fifth Conference of States Parties preparatory process, and commend the Chairs for their dedication and commitment, including in the development of a variety of guidance documents and tools to support States Parties in our implementation of the Treaty.

Ireland was also delighted to assume the role of Vice-President for the CSP5 cycle and would like to thank the Bureau members for the excellent cooperation throughout. We would also like to thank the Management Committee and the Secretariat for their work and dedication throughout the past year.

President,

The illegal and unregulated trade in conventional arms continues to fuel conflict, human rights abuses and economic instability across the globe. The vast majority of casualties from armed violence involve conventional weapons. Conflict-affected, post-conflict and other fragile settings are particularly impacted. Many of these weapons find their way into the hands of perpetrators through illicit channels, helped by inadequate (or inadequately enforced) laws and weak control mechanisms at national and local levels.

Ireland has been a strong and consistent supporter of the ATT since its inception. The Treaty, when properly implemented, represents a major step forward in the international community's efforts to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons. Our efforts are amplified by recognising and supporting the Treaty's interlinkages with other key international frameworks. Ireland regards the ATT as a vital instrument in the international community's efforts to realise a safer and more secure world, as envisaged in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The most direct link of

course is SDG target 16.4 to significantly reduce illicit flows of arms by 2030, but our work under the Treaty also contributes across a range of goals, including health and wellbeing, gender equality, sustainable cities, and peace and justice. The Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament challenges us to address the excessive accumulation and illicit trade in conventional arms and ammunition, and Ireland is proud to champion action 21 of this Agenda to build understanding on the impact of arms on conflict management. At the national level, our new policy for development, entitled *A Better World*, has chosen reducing humanitarian need as one of its four priorities, and supporting the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty will make an important contribution to reducing the root causes of humanitarian need.

President,

Ireland would like to congratulate Botswana, Canada, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, Mozambique, Palau and Suriname for their accessions to or ratifications of the Treaty this year. There are now over 100 States Parties to the ATT. And still, it is incumbent upon States Parties to redouble our efforts to promote the universalisation of this Treaty. International standards are strongest when they are universally applied. We would like to commend you President, and the Working Group on Effective Treaty Universalization (WGTU), for your efforts in promoting the Treaty, and express our support for the ATT Universalisation Toolkit and 'Welcome Pack'.

For Ireland, diverse representation at the Conference of States Parties is a priority. Different voices and experiences will help guide our work and ensure that implementation of the Treaty effectively meets the many challenges posed by the illegal arms trade. To this end, Ireland is pleased to be making a contribution to the ATT Sponsorship Programme again this year and supports the related draft administrative guidelines.

President,

Promoting transparency in the international trade of conventional arms through timely, accurate and public reporting is one of the main purposes of the ATT. We continue to be concerned with the findings of the WGTR that the level of compliance with mandatory reporting remains too low. The destruction and suffering caused by arms transfers that do not meet the Treaty's strong human

rights and conflict prevention criteria, will continue, unless this Treaty is implemented by every State Party as effectively and as transparently as possible. Ireland recognises the importance of transparency in the context of the ATT and we support public reporting and the standardisation of reporting templates for all States Parties. We also welcome the online version of the annual reporting template and further discussion on its use.

We also consider the Voluntary Trust Fund to be a vital mechanism which can assist States in the effective implementation of the Treaty. Ireland, like many States present here today, is pleased to once again be in a position to provide financial support to the VTF.

President,

Ireland welcomes your efforts to address problems related to financial liquidity in the ATT. The only sustainable solution to the current financial situation is that all States comply with their financial obligations. Ireland strongly urges those States who have not yet done so to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time and settle any outstanding arrears as soon as possible.

President,

The ATT forms part of a comprehensive legal framework which, when fully universalised and implemented, will support peace, stability human security and sustainable development. It must therefore be a priority for us all to ensure that the Treaty lives up to its humanitarian mandate, to guarantee its full and effective implementation, and to commit to the universalisation of the Treaty. Ireland stands ready to assist in these efforts and hopes that the outcome of this Conference will agree concrete measures to advance the implementation and application of the treaty and realise its potential to help create a more secure and peaceful world.

Thank You.

ENDS.

Check against delivery.