



Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Statement of the Netherlands**

**delivered by**

**H.E. Robbert Jan Gabriëlse, Permanent Representative to the  
Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador-at-large for Disarmament**

**at**

**Fifth Conference of States Parties to  
the Arms Trade Treaty**

**General Debate**

**Geneva, 26 August 2019**

Thank you Mr. Vice-President.

Let me start by thanking ambassador Kārklīnš and his team for the excellent work done in preparation of this Conference. I am confident that under your leadership, we will have fruitful and productive discussions this week on how to enhance the functioning of the ATT. You can count on my delegation's full support.

The Netherlands aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to make some remarks in our national capacity.

Firstly, we would like to welcome Suriname, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Lebanon, Palau, Botswana and Canada into the ATT-family. Your accession is an important proof of the increasing international acceptance and support of the Arms Trade Treaty. We look forward to working with you in promoting the objectives of the ATT.

We are, of course, like others, disappointed by the announcement of the United States regarding the US position on the ATT. It does not contribute to the ongoing efforts to encourage transparency in the international arms trade, to prevent illicit trafficking and to combat the diversion of conventional arms. We do hope that this will not dissuade other countries, especially the major arms exporters, importers and transit countries, from joining the ATT-community.

Secondly, we are delighted to see so many members of the wider ATT-family represented today and welcome our colleagues from NGO's and businesses. This will certainly lead to a diverse and interesting exchange on arms export control policies and on how to improve the functioning of the ATT. In order to promote the inclusiveness of the discussions, the Netherlands is happy to contribute to the ATT Sponsorship Program in order to enable as many representatives as possible to attend the ATT meetings. The program received 30+ applications for support this year, signaling its added value. We would like to encourage other parties, in a position to do so, to contribute.

Mr. Vice-President,

Nearing the fifth anniversary of the ATT's entry into force, provides a natural point to look back and forward. In the last five years we've made great strides. The ATT now has a firm institutional foundation on which we can build. We would like to express our gratitude to all those who actively contributed to this. Now, the times comes to build on that foundation.

Unfortunately we see some important challenges to further progress:

Firstly: transparency of arms exports and imports is one of the central tenants of the Treaty. To have an informed discussion, we need the complete picture. We therefore strongly urge those countries who have not yet submitted their reports to do so. Preferably publicly.

Secondly: money. Money makes the world go round. It is also essential to the proper functioning of the Treaty and its secretariat. Too many of our ATT partners have not fulfilled their financial obligations. We urge you to do so post-haste.

Mr. President,

To end on a positive note. The Netherlands stands ready to work on the ATT and build on the foundations that have been successfully laid. We are committed and convinced that together we can successfully further the ATT's objectives by focusing on the effective implementation and universalisation of the Arms Trade Treaty. We trust that this Conference of States Parties will greatly contribute to that objective.

I thank you.