

**STATEMENT BY SIERRA LEONE TO THE TENTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES (CSP10) TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (ATT) HELD IN GENEVA, SWITAERLAND, ON 19TH – 23RD AUGUST 2024**

**DELIVERED BY COL. (RTD.) BINNEH KONDEH CONTEH (OOR) COMMISSIONER, SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SMALL ARMS (SLeNCSA)**

**Mr. President,**

Sierra Leone extends its heartfelt congratulations to you on your Presidency of the Tenth Conference of States Parties (CSP10) to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We commend you and your team for your able leadership of the successful preparatory work leading up to this important meeting.

Sierra Leone welcomes the theme of CSP10, "The role of inter-agency cooperation in the effective implementation of the provisions of the ATT." We align ourselves with the statement of the African Group to be/presented by Burkina Faso. We support the "Political Declaration for the Next Decade of the ATT" presented by the United Kingdom. We believe that promoting the full and effective participation of women in decision-making and implementation processes related to the ATT will greatly support national efforts to raise public awareness and community engagement as we strive to universalise the Treaty.

**Mr. President**,

We congratulate The Gambia and Malawi on their accession to the Arms Trade Treaty and look forward to effective regional engagement.

As a post conflict country, Sierra Leone strongly supports the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty, which provide a protective envelope for the hard-earned and deeply cherished peace we enjoy today. We embrace the spirit and objectives of the ATT, which seek to regulate the international trade in conventional arms and prevent their illicit trafficking. We believe that the achievement of these objectives requires robust national systems of inter-agency cooperation to ensure effective implementation and compliance. We therefore welcome the theme of the CSP10 as critical to the maintenance of international peace and security, and to enhancing the effectiveness and universalisation of the treaty.

Sierra Leone was one of the first 50 states to ratify the ATT before it entered into force in December 2014, and we are recognised as a regional leader in ATT reporting and other related activities. We have given responsibility for ATT implementation to the Sierra Leone Commission on Arms and Ammunition (SLeCAA), which is chaired by a retired senior military officer and overseen by the Office of the President. This streamlined arrangement has enabled the SLeCAA to embrace inter-agency cooperation as the most effective mechanism for addressing ATT issues, an approach that has received much recognition.

**Mr. President**,

We have successfully addressed the various facets of arms control, particularly the regulation of imports and transit, craft production and brokering activities, through cooperation with national agencies such as Customs and Immigration, Law Enforcement, the Military, the Office of National Security (ONS), the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. This coordination has allowed us to take a holistic approach, ensuring that all aspects of arms control are addressed and reducing the risk of gaps that could be exploited for illicit transactions.

**Mr. President,**

To ensure compliance with the implementation of the ATT, we have undertaken a range of activities, including reviewing our national laws to cover conventional arms, building the capacity of security personnel at border crossings to monitor arms movements, and conducting public awareness and community engagement initiatives. We are particularly grateful to the ATT's Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) for the financial support that has made these efforts possible. We also appreciate the VTF's approval of two project proposals submitted during the 2024 funding cycle, which we believe will further enhance Sierra Leone's compliance with the provisions of the ATT.

Interagency cooperation has also expanded our ability to work with international partners, including states and organisations, in the implementation of ATT activities. Through the Organised Crime: West African Response to Trafficking in Human Beings Project, co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Foreign Office and coordinated by the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the SLeCAA, Sierra Leone has received support to train the security sector, the military, the police, including civil society and the media on legal instruments such as the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the UNPoA and the ATT. As I speak, the ECOWAS Commission is conducting an in country training in Freetown on “Physical Security and Stockpile Management”.

In conclusion, I assure you that Sierra Leone will continue to do its utmost to ensure effective implementation of and compliance with the ATT at the national level. We will continue to cooperate with the ATT Secretariat and other partners, and we offer our full support for a successful CSP10.

**Thank you.**