

## **Sixth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty**

### **Statement by the States Parties of the African Group to the ATT**

The States Parties of the Africa Group to the Arms Trade Treaty congratulates the President, Vice-Presidents, Members of the Management Committee and the Secretariat for organising the Sixth Conference of States Parties (CSP6) taking into consideration the unprecedented disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We would also like to thank Mr Dladla and his team in the Secretariat for hard work and support they provide to States Parties throughout the year.

We welcome the new States Parties who have joined the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) over the last year, namely Afghanistan, Niue, Sao Tome and Principe, China, the Maldives and Namibia, now taking our membership 110 States Parties. The Group reiterates the importance of the universalisation of the ATT and its effective implementation at a national level.

Our common objective is to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate their illicit trade and diversion. The Group recalls the African Union's theme for the year 2020: "Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development". The ATT is one of the important instruments that will help us achieve our common objective, contribute towards socio-economic development and reduce human suffering thereby providing a firm basis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the African Union's Agenda 2063, which includes the Resolution to "Silence the Guns". The illicit proliferation of arms destabilises communities, negatively impacts security and compromises developments. Gender equality and women empowerment is central to the achievement of "Silencing of the Guns". The ATT complements the regional initiatives, efforts and instruments to combat the illicit flow of arms to the region and beyond.

The Group regrets that substantive discussions could not be held due to the outbreak and the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic which affected the convening of in-person meetings. Nonetheless, we are confident that the multi-year work plans adopted by the Conference and the mandates issued to subsidiary bodies will guide the critical work of the ATT towards a successful Seventh Conference of States Parties.

We welcome the operationalisation of the Voluntary Trust Fund as an ATT internal mechanism to give effect to international assistance and to support states in their national effort to implement their obligations under the ATT. We also welcome the ATT Sponsorship Programme for making a contribution towards a representative and

participatory discourse within the framework of the ATT. The Group supports the decision that no State should be prejudiced by Financial Rule 8 (1) d in applying for support from the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund or the ATT Sponsorship Programme until CSP7 and the task mandating the Management Committee to prepare a report on the application of Financial Rule 8 (1) d on decisions to be taken by the VTF Selection Committee and the ATT Sponsorship Programme.

The Group supports the endorsement of the decision of the Management Committee to support the continuation of the contract of the current Head of the ATT Secretariat, Mr. Dumisani DLADLA, for a second term.

The Group once again reiterates its consideration that the ATT is important in our joint efforts to realize international peace, security and stability, and to reduce human suffering. States Parties to the ATT can be assured of the continued support and commitment of the African Group.