



UK Mission
Geneva

**ARMS TRADE TREATY
7TH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES**

**AGENDA ITEM 4: THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT
WEAPONS, AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT**

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM

H.E. Mr Aidan Liddle, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 30 August 2021

As this is the first time the United Kingdom delegation takes the floor, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the 7th Conference of States Parties, and assure you and your team of my delegation's full support.

My delegation warmly welcomes your Presidency's focus on strengthening efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ensure efficient stockpile management, and your revised working paper.

Full and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty is essential in supporting these efforts. As the paper sets out, a strong export licensing system, with a comprehensive risk assessment prior to the transfer of small arms and light weapons, is critical. We must ensure however that we do not create unnecessary barriers and unrealistic requirements for States Parties. This would be to the detriment of effective implementation of the Treaty, and the reinforcement of international security safeguards that full adherence can achieve.

The UK welcomes the paper's focus on gender, and the call for the full, equal and effective participation of women in all aspects of the implementation of the ATT. The UK supports this objective, and the recognition of the differing effects on women, men, girls and boys of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

We were pleased to support similar language on gender in the recent UNPoA Biennial Meeting of States report, an example of the synergies between our work here and discussions in other fora which His Excellency Mr Ebrard mentioned earlier. The UK is also leading a review of OSCE Best Practice Guidance on small arms and light weapons stockpile management, and is a committed participant in the Group of Government Experts on ammunition stockpiles.

Finally, I would like to join His Excellency Professor Francis in stressing the importance of international cooperation. The UK provides a range of capacity building programmes, as part of defence and security reform projects, counter-proliferation initiatives and conflict prevention and resolution interventions. The UK was pleased to support an Ammunition Management Advisory Team project last year which created a comprehensive training programme on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. We are supporting a further project this year which will digitalise the Guidelines, allowing States to easily access and apply best practice processes to the safe management of ammunition stockpiles.

Once again, let me express my delegation's gratitude for the important work the Presidency has done, and leadership you have shown, on this crucial issue.

Thank you Mr President.

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