

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on behalf of AUSTRALIA, CANADA, FRANCE, ITALY, JAPAN and the UK**

**BEGINS**

Mr President, thank you for giving me the floor again. I deliver this statement on behalf of AUSTRALIA, CANADA, FRANCE, ITALY, JAPAN and the UK.

As we approach 10 years since Treaty conception we believe it is prudent to use this juncture to reflect on the overall efficiency of the Treaty, to include the allocation of Treaty resources and programme of works. Our continued focus on universalisation has helped to establish the ATT, and it now enjoys a wide, and growing, membership. Consequently, we believe that the ATT no longer needs the level of preparatory time it did as a new Treaty and, with the conclusion of work on the voluntary guide at the coming Conference of State Parties, **we recommend reducing the number of preparatory meetings from two to one by CSP10**. This will bring the structure in line with other Treaties and programmes of work on disarmament. It will enable us to continue our important work on the ATT but, by streamlining, we can also allow more time for other emerging disarmament issues, such as ammunition, and avoid calendar saturation.

We have proved during the COVID-19 pandemic that with focus and concerted engagement we can deliver in a more concentrated timeframe. There have been occasions, while working to the pandemic forced reduced timetable that we have failed to fill allotted time. Once the voluntary guide is completed, it isn't clear how we could usefully fill the ATT calendar of meetings, and we must be alert to other pressing issues in wider disarmament that this time could be devoted to.

Furthermore, as we move from policy creation to practical implementation of the ATT, for example, with the creation and inaugural meeting of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum, a longer timeframe between meetings will be essential to make tangible progress towards full Treaty implementation. The window between preparatory meetings in February and April seems especially short to enable valuable follow up discussions. We should also consider the Secretariat. Reducing the burden of organising meetings will enable more of their time, skills and expertise to be devoted to supporting State implementation of the ATT.

We should consider the practicalities of travel as we return to the in-person format. Fewer meetings relieves the pressure on delegations that have to travel long

distances. Additionally the environmental impact of this travel should not be overlooked – we should be considering any opportunity to reduce the ATT’s environmental footprint. Finally, while we do not believe that this should be the primary incentive, streamlining our meeting schedule will result in financial savings for the ATT. In these difficult financial times, and given the reality of the Treaty’s financial status, this would be a positive additional benefit.

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with the Secretariat and other States to agree a suitable way forward for the future.

**ENDS**