



United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Mr President, distinguished fellow ATT States Parties,

Firstly, our thoughts are with those who have suffered loss through the pandemic. The current, tragic, circumstances have affected us all in many ways. We commend the Argentinian Presidency for demonstrating its commitment to the ATT by guiding us through this period when our work has been so curtailed. We are also grateful for its action on transparency and information-sharing. We likewise thank the Working Groups, Management Committee and Secretariat for their work to sustain core Treaty activities despite the challenging circumstances. The UK is pleased that solutions have been found to allow key procedural decisions to be agreed and we are grateful for the flexibility shown by all States Parties in finding a format for CSP6. One of the lessons drawn from this extraordinary year is the ongoing importance of holding appropriate consultations on substantive matters.

During these uncertain times, we should not forget the importance of international security, stability and sustainable development, and the contribution the ATT can make: diversion and the illicit trade in conventional arms remain global problems,

requiring global solutions. Put simply, a universal, effective and well-regulated legal trade in conventional arms will help prevent the wrong things ending up in the wrong hands.

International co-operation is crucial to the detection and prevention of diversion. Practical steps that can tangibly improve operational implementation are particularly critical. The UK therefore appreciated the focus this Presidency placed on transparency and information-sharing, and welcomes the further steps that have been taken toward the establishment of the diversion information exchange forum. However, for this forum to realise its potential, it is crucial that participants engage meaningfully. To do this, States Parties and Signatories must have the confidence that the forum gives them a suitably confidential platform for frank, transparent discussion.

The UK recognises that full and effective implementation of the Treaty is bolstered by the work enabled by the VTF. We welcome the efforts of VTF Selection Committee and ATT Secretariat that have allowed this to continue and look forward to seeing the positive impact of the 12 projects provisionally approved for funding in this cycle. Looking to the future, we must ensure that the VTF continues to deliver meaningful outputs by funding credible projects, which can enhance Treaty implementation. The UK has been honoured to serve as a member of the VTF Selection Committee for the last four years and will continue to support the work of the VTF in future. We are therefore pleased to stand for re-selection to the Committee for the period up to CSP8.

The Treaty is strengthened by each new ratification, and we warmly welcome all new States Parties to the ATT: Afghanistan, China, the Maldives, Namibia, Niue, and Sao Tome and Principe. We must keep promoting the Treaty and its values, and continue our outreach to potential States Parties. In particular, bringing major arms exporters and importers into the Treaty will not only ensure its long-term success but also send an important message that membership does more to help than harm.

It is also crucial that we understand what prevents states from participating. We should use all means to engage with potential state parties to communicate our messages, working through Governments, industry and civil society. Within the Treaty, we must ensure that we do not build unnecessary barriers to the Treaty fully realising its object and purpose – high common standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and preventing their illicit trade and diversion. Requirements, including fixed reporting templates or overly prescriptive definitions of Treaty concepts, must not become onerous and thus detrimental to effective implementation, timely reporting or future progress.

Finally, we remain deeply concerned by the continuing non-payment of contributions by certain states. We must be clear that the future success of the Treaty is dependent on financial stability. While we welcome the efforts by the Management Committee to create a clear process for States in arrears to enter into an arrangement with the Secretariat to discharge their financial obligations, it is important to ensure that this process is only used where absolutely necessary and as a last resort. Ultimately, the only way to improve the current financial situation and ensure the long-term stability

of the ATT is for all states to fully pay their contributions on time each year, and for those states in arrears to pay what they owe, in full, as soon as possible.

The UK reiterates its unwavering support to the ATT and commitment to implementing its Treaty obligations. We look forward to constructive discussions in the period up to CSP7 and to supporting the next Presidency in their efforts to further the important work of the Treaty. We believe that consolidation and fulfilment of the robust existing provisions should be the priority for the immediate future. We urge all states to work towards tangibly improving implementation and those supporting tools, such as the VTF, which aim to improve national application of the Treaty.