



Statement by the United States of America

Mr. President,

I am taking the floor today under the Agenda Item ‘Treaty Universalization’ to underscore the continuing commitment of the United States to the responsible international trade in conventional arms. The United States has long supported strong and effective national controls on the international transfer of conventional arms, and the Arms Trade Treaty is an important tool for promoting those controls internationally.

For the United States, our approach to arms transfers is laid out in our Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy. The Biden-Harris Administration recognizes conventional arms transfers have significant implications for U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, and the CAT Policy establishes the United States priorities and criteria used for adjudicating arms transfer decisions. The 2018 CAT Policy reflected the previous Administration’s priorities as did its decision in 2019 that it was not in the United States’ national interest to become a State Party to the ATT.

President Biden has made clear that diplomacy and human rights are at the center of U.S. foreign policy. We believe it’s important to publicly reflect these changes in a new CAT Policy, so we have been working to revise the policy to reflect the new Administration’s priorities.

This revised CAT Policy will help us build and maintain strategic partnerships that reflect the values and interests of the United States. The revised policy will more clearly highlight the connection between respect for international law and human rights and U.S. national security interests in arms transfers. It will reflect this Administration’s priorities to strengthen alliances, lead with diplomacy, and elevate respect for international law and human rights. The new CAT Policy will better frame the intent and priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration and formalize the approach that the Administration has adopted on arms transfer decisions that has been in effect since the President entered the White House in January.

The revised CAT Policy should be finalized shortly and released as a public document. When it is, the United States will then use that policy framework to review specific arms transfer issues, including determining the proper relationship of the United States to the Arms Trade Treaty. I look forward to being able to announce the results of that review at a future ATT meeting.

Thank you.