

ATT Working Group on Transparency and Reporting
Issues Paper for the Group's Second Meeting

At the first meeting of the ATT Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR), participants identified their priority topics for work in the period leading up to CSP3. Current plans for at a maximum two more meetings necessitated such a selection. Below, topics are listed in the order of priority that - in the co-chairs' view - participants indicated at that first meeting. By presenting an order of priority but not excluding any topics, the paper also serves as a reminder of topics for longer-term work, or possible inclusion in the WGTR's mandate for the period between CSP3 and CSP4.

For some of the topics listed below, forms of implementation support under consideration in the WGETI must be taken into account to ensure coherence of effort and avoid duplication. Studies and reports from civil society organisations and the academic community should also be part of the Group's consideration. Both to ensure coordination between the various efforts undertaken to support reporting and transparency under the ATT, and to avoid duplication of effort.

For the reader's convenience, the listing below re-uses the numbering of topics introduced in the Issues Paper for the first meeting of the WGTR.

Mandatory work and priority topics identified by the WGTR

- C In line with the Group's Terms of Reference, prepare a proposal for consideration by CSP3 mandating work to be carried out by the Group in the period between CSP3 and CSP4.

- A3 Explore means of improving compliance with mandatory reporting obligations (Art 5.6 Points of Contact; Art 13.1 Initial Report; Art 13.3 Annual Report). Since the ATT is legally binding, this was assigned a high priority by many participants. Among the measures mentioned were active follow-up with POCs, web-based tutorials or written guides, and exchanges of lessons learned and good practices in fulfilling the ATT reporting obligations.

- A4 Develop proposals for broader measures to strengthen reporting capabilities, in the light of multiple reporting obligations in different international fora and the resulting 'reporting fatigue'. At the national level, organizational measures could be put in place that harness similarities or 'synergies' between different reporting requirements in order to improve reporting consistency, make reporting work more efficient, and minimise resource requirements. The alternative approach of encouraging different international bodies to align their reporting requirements to a greater extent was considered less promising. Document

ATT/CSP2/2016/OP.3 was mentioned by the Co-chairs as a possible starting point for the Group's work on this topic.

- B1 Developing more structured means of exchanging information on treaty-related topics. Information exchange was considered at the heart of the Treaty, and exchanges related to diversion risks and combating diversion was particularly emphasised by some. Both agenda-defined exchanges at Conferences of States Parties and intersessional exchanges were mentioned. The potential role of POCs was emphasised in the latter case, as was the role of informal face-to-face exchanges between experts in the Working Group format.

IT-related issues prioritized by the WGTR, where the Secretariat has the primary responsibility

- A2 Follow the Secretariat's development of a new web-based format for reporting, with a view to ensuring consistency between this format and the paper-based templates, which will continue to be held available as an alternative to web-based reporting.
- A5 Ensure that the development of an on-line platform to coordinate technical assistance (in order to facilitate the matching of demand for- and supply of implementation assistance), which the WGTR deems advisable, adequately reflects assistance needs in the area of reporting.
- The important contribution that the ATT's IT platform can make to information exchange and transparency was stressed in several contexts. WGTR participants should have the possibility to suggest useful features or functionalities for the IT platform now being developed by the ATT Secretariat, drawing also upon experience from the IT platforms of other international instruments. The Co-chairs underlined that the contribution of the WGTR can only be a starting point, since the Secretariat then needs to assess the feasibility and cost of including such a feature/functionality in the IT platform, and the CSP ultimately needs to allocate the necessary funds for implementing such new features/functionalities.

Topics that were supported but not as highly prioritized by the WGTR

- A6 Addressing issues related to the quality and completeness of reports. Capacity building and assistance were emphasised by some as a means of assuring the quality and completeness of mandatory reports. At the same time other participants stressed that the Treaty allows for national interpretation of what is needed in a report, and that work on the quality and completeness of reports could have the undesirable side effect of limiting the flexibility inherent in the Treaty. In the view of the Co-chairs, these views are not necessarily incompatible but that care needs to be exercised by the WGTR when generating recommendations in this area, in order not to prejudice that flexibility.
- B3 Consider structured ways in which the information generated by mandatory reporting (or voluntary exchanges) could be used. Possible ways mentioned at the first meeting were trend analysis and analysis of the content of initial reports using a 'matrix' approach. It was judged by some that Treaty implementation could benefit from the output of such work, and that reporting obligations were meaningless unless the information gathered was put to some use.

Others emphasised that it was important not to let the analysis of template-based information become a straightjacket for the definition of assistance needs.

Topics that were not actively discussed by the WGTR, or considered to be relevant mainly in the longer run

- A1 Examine possible further adjustments to the reporting templates endorsed by CSP2, on the basis of practical experience. One participant stressed the need to better adapt the templates to the different needs of different States Parties, and to better define certain terms. Another participant indicated a readiness to propose changes to both the initial and annual templates in order to highlight the importance of human rights as an assessment criterion. However, a large number of participants emphasised the need to leave the templates unchanged for a period of 3-4 years before revisiting them, in order to provide a measure of stability for reporting efforts.
- B2 Develop a template for the voluntary reporting tasks outlined in Art 13.2 of the Treaty, regarding *“measures taken that have been proven effective in addressing the diversion of transferred conventional arms covered under Article 2 (1)”*. It was broadly accepted that information exchange in the area of diversion prevention was an important element of the Treaty. At the same time, most felt that this area was too diverse for a template approach. The topic should instead be considered an integral part of B1.
- B4 Assess the utility of using the Working Group as a platform for generating information useful for treaty work by means of separate intersessional events focusing on topics relevant to different aspects of the Treaty. This possible approach attracted no clear reactions at the first meeting of the Group.

Other possible topics

The listing above represents an attempt to focus the work of the Group, but does not exclude the possibility of participants introducing other topics **by means of a written contribution** before the second meeting. Having such suggestions in writing will help the WGTR to quickly make a collective assessment of their priority in relation to topics already on the table. The Co-chairs will not allow the introduction of entirely new themes orally at the Group’s next meeting, as meeting time is barely sufficient for an in-depth discussion of the tasks already identified.
