



**STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA ON BEHALF OF THE
AFRICAN GROUP DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE AT THE
ELEVENTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**25 TO 29 AUGUST 2025
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

DRAFT

Thank you, Mr President

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. We extend our sincere appreciation to you, your team, and the ATT Secretariat for your dedication and timely preparations for this Conference.

Mr President,

CSP11 convenes at a pivotal moment. Africa, like many regions, is navigating a shifting geopolitical landscape marked by rising tensions, contested norms, and economic uncertainty. In this context, we are encouraged by the continued commitment of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Africa remains disproportionately affected by the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons, which devastates communities particularly women and children and undermines peace and development. The African Group therefore strongly supports the theme of Universalisation. We believe it is both timely and essential, especially as multilateralism faces increasing strain.

We reaffirm our commitment to the ATT and advocate for broader participation, informed by national practices, regional cooperation, and voluntary guidance that strengthen global implementation.

We commend the CSP11 Presidency and the Secretariat for their effective coordination and support. The African Group is committed to contributing constructively to CSP11, with the aim of achieving actionable outcomes that promote transparency, accountability, and trust in the international arms trade.

Universalisation of the Treaty is vital to achieving Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. We remain firm in our belief that there is no peace without development, and no development without peace.

Mr President,

We welcome the draft report of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation (WGETI), particularly its focus on practical measures

such as import controls, national control lists, and the integration of Article 7(4) on gender-based violence.

We remain deeply concerned about the diversion of arms to non-State actors, which fuels conflict, terrorism, and organised crime. Effective ATT implementation must include clear guidance on scope, control lists, and regulation of parts and components, supported by robust national systems and border management.

The African Group emphasises the importance of inter-agency cooperation and capacity-building to support African States in fulfilling Treaty obligations, especially under Articles 6 and 7.

We also support the WGETI's continued focus on gender-based violence and welcome efforts to develop voluntary guidance to help States integrate GBV considerations into risk assessments.

Mr President,

On emerging issues, we note with concern the diversion of arms to terrorist groups and urge continued attention to this challenge, including its implications for civilian protection and export controls.

Finally, while recognising the role of industry in responsible arms transfers, we stress that States bear the primary responsibility. Any guidance for industry must be complementary, context-sensitive, and avoid placing undue burdens on importing States.

Mr President,

The African Group wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the ideals of the ATT and remains resolute in its quest to rid the Continent of the scourge of illicit arms transfers. We join other delegations in welcoming Colombia to the ATT family. We especially commend *Malawi* and *The Gambia* for their ratification of the Treaty making them the newest African States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Their commitment to the Treaty's objectives marks a significant step forward in strengthening regional and global efforts to promote responsible arms transfers and prevent illicit trade.

The Group also takes this opportunity to thank Burkina Faso for its dedicated service in the Management Committee and further extend our congratulations to Lesotho for succeeding Burkina Faso in the Management Committee, confident that it will carry forward the collective priorities of our region.

We commend Côte d'Ivoire for assuming a valued role on the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) Selection Committee. This contribution reflects its continued dedication to enhancing Treaty implementation and supporting capacity-building initiatives, particularly among developing countries.

The African Group recognises Ghana's leadership as the current President of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) and support South Africa's candidature to assume the Presidency of CSP12, underscoring Africa's growing and impactful engagement in ATT processes.

Mr President,

These developments send a strong and consistent signal of recognition for the work and commitment of African countries in advancing the Treaty's goals. We encourage continued collaboration and support to ensure that African voices remain central to the ATT's future direction.

The African Group remains fully committed to the ATT's objectives and to ensuring its implementation contributes meaningfully to sustainable peace and security across our continent.

Thank you.