Responsible Business Conduct: The Case of the Arms Trade

Despite the often inherently dangerous nature of its business and products, the arms sector (and companies throughout the arms transfer life cycle) have not been subject to the same level of scrutiny as other industry entities in regards to their human rights responsibilities under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and related frameworks.

While the ATT focuses on the role of States in addressing the human rights impacts of arms transfers, this year’s theme, ‘Role of Industry in Responsible International Transfers of Conventional Arms’, is an opportunity to begin a discussions on how businesses in the arms industry and arms trade both put into practice their own responsibilities and ensure that they have engaged in processes to prevent, mitigate and address the adverse impacts of their business models and trade.

This event will address the following key questions:

- What type of effective practices do businesses already use to prevent or mitigate human rights impacts of transferred arms? How should these practices be further shared and used?
- What human rights due diligence policies and processes should entities involved in and with the arms sector and trade implement to ensure that their business does not contribute to human rights abuses in countries affected by conflict or suffering political upheaval?
- How can the assumption that companies have a separate and distinct responsibility to conduct (enhanced) human rights due diligence help policy coherence and in turn more effective ATT implementation?

PANELLISTS
Anita Ramasastry
Professor of Law, University of Washington School of Law; former UN expert in the Working Group on Business and Human Rights

Diederik Cops
Flemish Peace Institute

Tekloh Maxwell Grigsby
Former Chair of the Liberian National Commission on Arms

MODERATORS
Hine-Wai Loose, Control Arms
Florence Foster, QUNO

Tuesday, 22 August
13:15 – 14:45 CEST
Room C
International Conference Center
Rue de Varembé 17, Geneva