

## THE ATT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME: REVIEW OF THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

### Background

1. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) sponsorship programme is currently administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). UNDP has been managing the ATT sponsorship programme since the Extraordinary Meeting of the Second Conference of States Parties 'decided to request the support of UNDP, on cost recovery basis, and within existing budgetary resources, to assist the Head of Secretariat and the Management Committee until regular staff is in place,... with preparations for CSP2, including conference services, and the necessary procurement and the administration of a sponsorship programme' (see paragraph 26 of the [Final Report](#) of the Second Conference of States Parties Extraordinary Meeting held on 29 February 2016 (ATT/CSP2/2016/EM/6)).

2. The Second Conference of States Parties (CSP2) 'decided to retain the current ATT sponsorship programme arrangements for annual sessions, and any other meetings as decided by the Conference, under UNDP administration with a view to review these arrangements during the Fourth Conference of States Parties' (see paragraph 24 of the [Final Report](#) of CSP2 held from 22-26 August 2016 (ATT/CSP2/2016/5)).

3. In accordance with its mandate set out in the Terms of Reference for the Management Committee, the Management Committee is required to oversee the preparation of the administrative decisions to be taken at Conferences of States Parties. In this context, the Management Committee reviewed the current arrangements regarding the administration of the ATT sponsorship programme with a view to making a recommendation to CSP4 as contemplated in the Final Report of CSP2.

4. The findings of the Management Committee's review of this issue are detailed/outlined below.

### Findings

5. UNDP was requested to assist with administering the ATT sponsorship programme at the Extraordinary Meeting and further at CSP2 because the ATT Secretariat did not have the capacity to administer the ATT sponsorship programme since it had not been fully established, specifically, it did not yet have its full complement of staff. In reviewing the current arrangements with respect to the ATT sponsorship programme, therefore, the Management Committee focused on assessing whether the ATT Secretariat now has the capacity to administer the ATT sponsorship programme – or will do by CSP4. Furthermore, the Management Committee also considered all aspects motivating for the transfer of the role of administrator of the ATT sponsorship programme from UNDP to the ATT Secretariat. Its deliberations regarding each of these elements are elaborated below.

### Capacity of the ATT Secretariat

6. The current ATT Secretariat human resources capacity comprises of three (3) full time staff members (the Head of the Secretariat, the Policy Support Officer, and the Administration Support Officer). As part of the Agreement on Administrative Arrangements between the ATT Secretariat and Switzerland, the ATT Secretariat receives some administrative support from the Democratic Control of Arms Forces (DCAF).

7. In addition, a proposal to address the ATT Secretariat's capacity challenges relating to the administration of the VTF was adopted by States Parties by silence procedure on 17 April 2018. As a consequence, the ATT Secretariat is authorized to recruit a part-time employee at P2 Level to assist in the administration of the VTF. The recruitment process for this position is currently underway. It is anticipated that the person selected for this position will commence employment with the ATT Secretariat by CSP4.

8. In summary, the ATT Secretariat will have the equivalent of four staff members by CSP4. This is substantially more than it had at CSP2, when only the Head of the Secretariat had been appointed.

9. In addition, at the time of CSP2, the ATT Secretariat was a very young organisation with numerous administrative elements of the ATT process yet to be formulated and operationalised. Two years on, the ATT Secretariat has successfully supported the finalisation of the administrative elements required to operationalize the Treaty and the ATT process is established.

10. The combination of these factors leads the Management Committee to assess that the ATT Secretariat has the capacity necessary to administer the ATT sponsorship programme as part of bouquet of support services to States Parties and the ATT process.

### Rationale for transferring the administration of the sponsorship programme

11. During its deliberations, the Management Committee identified the following aspects as arguments for the transfer of the administration of the ATT sponsorship programme from UNDP to the ATT Secretariat:

- a. **Mandate:** The ATT Secretariat was established under Article 18 of the Treaty 'to assist States Parties in the effective implementation of this Treaty.' The ATT Secretariat is the only body designated to provide administrative support to States Parties under the Treaty and administration of the ATT sponsorship programme should form part of its core mandate. In addition, the administration of the sponsorship programme is part of the functions of the ATT Secretariat as originally contemplated in the Directive of States Parties to the ATT Secretariat issued during CSP1.
- b. **Centralisation of Conference support services:** One of the functions of the ATT Secretariat, as mandated by Article 18(d) of the Treaty is to 'Facilitate the work of the Conference of States Parties, including making arrangements and providing the necessary services for meetings under this Treaty'. The ATT sponsorship programme is a vital service for ATT meetings as it helps ensure the broadest participation from the widest range of actors. Ensuring that the ATT Secretariat is the central body responsible

for all Conference-related assistance and information would mean the ATT Secretariat is a 'one stop shop' for all Conference-related queries and assistance. The ATT Secretariat already receives numerous applications for and queries regarding the sponsorship programme, which it refers to UNDP. Transferring the sponsorship programme to the ATT Secretariat would help eliminate confusion regarding who is responsible and improve the efficiency of the process.

- c. **Proximity to the process and stakeholders:** The ATT Secretariat liaises with members of the ATT community – be they States Parties, Signatories, Observer States, International or Regional Organisations, Civil Society or Industry – on a daily basis, and has a growing network of contacts with people engaged in the ATT, including existing and potential donors to the ATT sponsorship programme as well as past and potential recipients. The ATT Secretariat is well placed to establish a selection process with respect to State delegates as well as civil society that ensures broad participation in the ATT process, and also ensures continuity of attendance, which will build the capacity of sponsored attendees to understand and participate in ATT meetings and the process as a whole. Because of its centrality to the process, the ATT Secretariat can better leverage the sponsorship programme as an important facility to support stakeholders' participation.
- d. **Financial considerations:**
  - i. The ATT Secretariat has an established financial infrastructure, including the audit process, to manage the ATT budget as well as the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF), which can be extended to cover the operationalization of the ATT sponsorship programme.
  - ii. In addition, since the ATT Secretariat is a small sized organisation with flexible yet robust financial management processes that will augur well for the efficiency of the sponsorship programme.
- e. **Secretariat capacity to administer the sponsorship programme:**
  - i. The establishment of capacity for the VTF administration will release some ATT Secretariat capacity (an estimated 25 man-hours per week). Part of this 'released' capacity can be deployed towards the administration of the sponsorship programme.
  - ii. Levy an 8% administration costs on funds contributed for running the sponsorship programme. This is equivalent to the current arrangements at UNDP. Since the work of the sponsorship programme is seasonal, the ATT Secretariat will ear-mark the 8% administration costs for a part-time position that will do the logistical and administrative sponsorship programme activities (such as booking flights and hotels for sponsored participants) while the released ATT Secretariat man-hours will be utilized for the development of protocols for the programme, allocation of sponsorship and programme monitoring and oversight.

- iii. The ATT Secretariat has proven its ability to embrace new tasks and challenges, and to establish and manage processes that are more complex than the ATT sponsorship programme (namely the VTF). Accordingly, a lack of experience on the part of the ATT Secretariat in managing a sponsorship programme does not pose an obstacle nor threaten to affect the quality of the sponsorship programme that has been delivered thus far.

### **Recommendation**

12. In light of the findings outlined above – namely the change in circumstances regarding the capacity of the ATT Secretariat and the numerous advantages associated with having the ATT Secretariat administer the ATT sponsorship programme – the Management Committee recommends to CSP4 that **the administration of the ATT sponsorship programme should be transferred from UNDP to the ATT Secretariat at the end of CSP4.**

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