

Arms Trade Treaty – CSP9
General Debate Statement
Australia

President,

I wish to begin by thanking you and your team for guiding our work over the last twelve months. We assure you of Australia's full support, including in my capacity as Vice-President of this CSP cycle.

I also take this opportunity to thank the ATT Secretariat, the Management Committee, and the Working Group Facilitators for their commitment to supporting the ATT's implementation.

Next year the ATT will mark 10 years since its entry into force in 2014. This will be a major milestone for the international community.

While respecting the legitimate interests of states to acquire conventional arms for self-defence, the ATT regulates the arms trade to contribute to international peace and security and reduce human suffering.

Ensuring strict compliance with all ATT provisions is vital for our treaty's integrity and to fulfilling its object and purpose.

Article 6(3) of the ATT requires states parties to refrain from authorising transfers if, inter alia, they would be used in attacks directed at civilians and civilian objects.

Article 7 requires states parties to refrain from authorising an export if, inter alia, there is an overriding risk that the conventional arms or items would be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

Bearing in mind these obligations, Australia is gravely concerned by the flow of arms to Russia. As Russia continues its illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine, in gross violation of international law, including the UN Charter, Australia joins other states in calling for all arms transfers to Russia to cease immediately.

President,

We commend the Republic of Korea for shining a light on the role of industry in responsible transfers of conventional arms. While ATT obligations lie with states, there is much to be gained from more structured information-sharing and outreach to industry to promote compliance with national control systems. We thank you for your paper on re-engaging industry actors in the ATT, which provides valuable recommendations for this CSP.

We also thank Austria, Ireland and Mexico for their paper highlighting synergies between the ATT and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Australia encourages businesses to apply the Guiding Principles in their operations, both in Australia and abroad – that includes arms industry actors.

President,

I want to register my delegation's appreciation to the Management Committee for their diligent work reviewing the ATT's program of work and for their consultative approach. To meaningfully assist states parties, practical implementation issues, including successes and challenges, must take centre stage in our work. The current status of the ATT, in terms of membership, and the congested disarmament calendar, also demand that we streamline our work and maximise efficiency and inclusivity. For that reason, we fully support the recommendations set forth in the Management Committee Proposal, noting this could be further refined and reviewed in the period ahead.

The standards set by the ATT are most effective if they are universally applied – which is why we must also re-double our efforts on ATT universalisation. Australia warmly welcomes Gabon and Andorra as the newest State Parties to our ATT family. We hope other States will follow their lead.

Australia continues to call on all major arms importers and exporters to join the ATT. Increasing engagement with the ATT among our Indo-Pacific neighbours also remains

a key priority for Australia. In May of this year, we participated in an outreach event, generously hosted by Japan, and co-organised with Australia and New Zealand, with colleagues from the Pacific and South-East Asia. These outreach activities are aimed at better understanding what prevents states from joining the ATT and highlighting the role and benefits of the treaty.

There are clear synergies between the ATT and other multilateral agendas, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. We know that illicit flows of small arms and light weapons exacerbate sexual and gender-based violence. In this context, beyond broader international human rights and international humanitarian law considerations, we recall the obligation in Article 7 to take into account risks related to gender-based violence when conducting export assessments.

Australia is committed to ensuring there is practical support available to states to ratify and implement the ATT. That's why we are a longstanding donor to the ATT's Voluntary Trust Fund, which has supported a diverse range of projects, from training to provision of equipment, to legislative review.

Finally President,

Australia is deeply concerned by the continuing non-payment of ATT contributions by some state parties. We call on all states parties to pay their contributions in full and on time. The future success of the Treaty is dependent on its financial stability.

Thank you.