

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Second Conference of States Parties

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Statement by

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Geneva**

Mr Chair, Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first of all commend our chair, Amb. Imoeh, as well as the Head of the Secretariat, Mr. Dla Dla, for the excellent work they have done in preparing the Second Conference of States Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty and the setting up of the ATT Secretariat here in the beautiful city of Geneva. Our thanks also go to the members of the Management Committee and the Facilitator on the Reporting Templates, your work is much appreciated.

You, Amb. Imoeh, are now the latest in a line of distinguished personalities that have shaped the ATT such as Ambassadors Moritan, Woolcott and Lomonaco. Austria certainly hopes that eventually the baton at the helm will be taken up by one of our distinguished female colleagues, and we want to remind that women are especially vulnerable to the irresponsible and illegal transfer of weapons.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria is, of course fully aligned with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and recalls that the Arms Trade Treaty is a milestone for the international community since it sets for the first time ever legally binding standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons on a global level. Furthermore, the Arms Trade Treaty is a success story given the fact that it entered into force so quickly. The tally of ratifications and accessions as well as the number of signatures as just outlined by the representative of the UN Secretary General is indeed impressive. We are encouraged that so many observer states are present and Austria certainly hopes that we will see many more countries accede to the ATT and join the ATT family.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a staunch and traditional supporter of ATT Austria strives to contribute to the successful development of the ATT. Mr. President I would like to give a couple of key considerations which guide the Austrian delegation:

- First of all we believe that implementation and universalisation are mutually reinforcing processes. The national implementation of the ATT that aims at fulfilling the highest possible standards is a measure to build confidence. An environment of international trust will – in our view – encourage more States to accede to the ATT. We certainly are encouraged that so many States are on the way to accede to the ATT. We do hope that other regions will join Africa, Latin America and Europe in embracing the ATT.
- Secondly the role of civil society has been crucial in bringing about and shaping the ATT. Civil society will remain crucial for achieving an effective implementation and universalisation of the ATT. Representatives of civil society, therefore, should have access to all meetings and be able to contribute to all topics. Austria very much welcomes the massive presence of civil society at this Conference of State Parties. We are looking forward to discussing with you and we are grateful that civil society has prepared a whole gamut of interesting side events.

- Thirdly Austria is a champion of transparency. In the ATT paragraph on reporting there is a comma which we read as a commitment to make ATT reports publicly available. We certainly encourage all States to make their reports publicly available for this is a measure of confidence building in an ever interlinked world where there is much information in the public domain anyway. Publicity and the debate it may engender will ultimately contribute towards better implementation and universalisation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.