

*Check against delivery*

## **Arms Trade Treaty Second Conference of States Parties ( Geneva, 22-26 August 2016)**

### **General Debate. Statement of the Kingdom of Belgium**

Mr. President,

Let me start by expressing the full support of my delegation for you, Ambassador Emmanuel E. Imohe, as President of this Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty ( ATT CSP2) and for your vice-Presidents (Costa Rica, Finland, Montenegro and New Zealand).

I would like also to commend the work accomplished by the Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and his first Head, Mr Simeon Dumisani Dladla from South Africa, with the support of UNDP, by the members of the management committee and the evaluation committee and by the different facilitators.

May I also thank our host this week for this Conference.

I wish to align Belgium with the statement made by the Representative of the European Union during this general debate and would like to add these following considerations in a national capacity.

My country considers the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as one of the international community's **most successful achievements** in recent years.

Belgium has been a **strong supporter of the ATT process** during its comprehensive and inclusive negotiations. From the beginning of the negotiations, my country focused on an ambitious Treaty with firm criteria regarding human rights and international humanitarian law. We were particularly active on the definition of the **broadest possible scope** regarding the categories of arms as well as the types of transfers; on more **transparency**; on the implementation of **solid follow-up systems** so as to guarantee the continued relevance of the Treaty in the future and on the integration into the Treaty of a **reference to gender-based violence or serious act of violence against women and children**.

My country signed the Treaty on June 2013 and **ratified** it on the same month in 2014.

Mr President,

Since its entry into force in December 2014, the ATT has the purposes to contribute to international and regional peace, security and stability, to promote cooperation, transparency and responsible action among the international community, to reduce the risk of diversion and protect civilians by reducing the risks of weapons contributing to breaches in international humanitarian and human rights law including the risk of weapons contributing to gender based violence.

The UN Security Council bears major responsibility regarding the maintenance of international peace and security. While campaigning for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the

period 2019-2020, Belgium advocates the relevance of the Arms Trade Treaty for global, regional and subregional security. We will endeavour to explore the full potential of ATT adherence and implementation as an important transparency, confidence and security building measure in Security Council deliberations.

Mr President,

During our work this week , we should always keep in mind the first article 1 of the Treaty and its object. Let me quote it again : *the object of this Treaty is to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the **international trade** in conventional arms and to prevent and **eradicate the illicit trade** and prevent their diversion (...).*

The purpose of a strong and effective ATT have therefore a **clear universal dimension**. 130 States have signed the Treaty. 87 States have already ratified or acceded to the Treaty. The need for further universalization clearly remains one of our priorities. **Arms exporters but also importing, transit and transshipment States** are concerned in the same way. It's the reason why Belgium attaches the greatest importance to the promotion of the **universalization** of the Treaty and encourages States to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.

We look also forward to complete the groundwork necessary for an **effective, robust and transparent implementation** of our Treaty with respect to the broad categories of conventional weapons and associated ammunition, parts and components, which fall within its scope.

In order to give to the Treaty its maximum effect, we are also of the view that States which lack legal, technical, financial or other resource capacity to fully implement the ATT should receive the necessary assistance to do so.

Clarifying notions and obligations of the Treaty, developing guidelines and promoting and exchanging best practices are also of utmost importance to contribute to the universalization of the Treaty. During this second Conference of States Parties, we hope that a **constructive balance** will be found to create a positive interaction between the central issues of "universalisation" and "recommendations concerning effective implementation".

Mr President,

We are confident that this CSP2 will allow to finalize matters pertaining to the organization , the administrative structure and the preparation of the work of the future Conferences of States Parties.

Finally, I would like to stress that the ATT is also a shared success. My country is pleased to recognize the key role played by the civil society with engagement and leadership during the negotiation process but also today for the promotion, implementation and monitoring of this important international instrument.

Thank you, Mr President.