

Arms Trade Treaty  
Fourth Conference of States Parties  
Tokyo, 20 – 24 August 2018  
General Debate

**Statement by Finland**

Mr President,

I would like to begin by thanking you for your commitment and hard work in steering the preparations of this conference and the work of the ATT for the past year.

In addition to the statement by the European Union, allow me to highlight a few key issues from a national point of view.

Mr President, dear colleagues,

Our task over the next five days is clear: To take steps to ensure consistent, concrete progress towards meeting the objectives of the Treaty – a more responsible and transparent legal trade, and improved action to counter the illegal spread of arms and ammunition.

During the Japanese Presidency, further important steps have been taken to move the work of the Treaty in a more substantive direction. The working groups are increasingly focused on practical issues, resulting in concrete recommendations.

The ATT is also starting to find its place in the broader international cooperation related to conventional arms control. At the Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in June, the importance of both regimes, and their mutually reinforcing nature, was emphasised by many delegations – certainly by all of us here.

So we are definitely on the right track, but still only at the very beginning of our joint effort. For the Treaty to reach its full potential, continued efforts are needed in all three key areas of our work: ensuring effective implementation at the national level, strong outreach promoting universalisation, and enhanced transparency and reporting.

On **outreach**, very positive results have been achieved over the past year. We welcome all countries that have recently joined the Treaty. But our work is far from done. A number of the largest arms exporters and importers remain outside of the Treaty, and dialogue with them needs to continue. Participation also varies between regions. We need regional champions to advance the ATT and its universalisation. All States Parties are called to action. Commitment at a high political level is key to success both in international universalisation and in domestic implementation. The civil society provides valuable support in both tasks.





In **implementation**, addressing diversion is crucial. The choice of this topic as our thematic focus this year is therefore very welcome. Diversion is an issue that concerns all Parties – north and south, exporting, importing and transit countries alike – since diversion can take place at any stage of the life cycle of a weapon. The sharing of information and best practices is an important first step in addressing diversion. Exchanges can take place in many forms and fora, and we should remain open to exploring all options for facilitating them.

**Reporting and transparency** are essential since they function as the Treaty's sole verification mechanism. Despite many good efforts, reporting rates for the ATT are still not satisfactory. This needs to change. We need to look more closely at the reasons for non-reporting, and identify possible support mechanisms, as recommended by the WGTR. The potential for assistance to capacity building under the **Voluntary Trust Fund** should also be fully utilised here. Finland has contributed substantively to the Fund during the first two funding cycles, and we aim to do so also in the future.

Finally, Mr President,

Last year's thematic debate on **Sustainable Development Goals** was well received. We should continue this discussion that links the goals of the ATT to broader issues of security, development, poverty, and conflict resolution. As very clearly expressed by the Secretary General in his *Agenda for Disarmament*, effective arms control contributes not only to Goal 16.4 on the illegal transfer of weapons, but much more widely to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 as a whole. The ATT has a pioneering role regarding Goal 5.2 on the prevention of **gender-based violence**. This topic should remain a high priority in our work also in the future.

Thank you, Mr President.