



## **European Union**

### **Arms Trade Treaty**

#### **Seventh Conference of States Parties**

**Geneva, 30 August- 3 September 2021**

#### **EU General Statement**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to submit this general statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>\*</sup>, Montenegro<sup>\*</sup>, Serbia<sup>\*</sup> and Albania<sup>\*</sup>, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States reaffirm their strong support for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT is a key international instrument that aims to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and prevent their diversion. In doing so, the ATT contributes to international and regional peace, security, and stability and reduces human suffering. It complements other international instruments, such as the UN Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and the International Tracing Instrument, and contributes broadly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Target 16.4 on reducing illicit arms flows and Target 5.2 on eliminating gender based violence.

Considerable progress has been made on universalisation in recent years but we must continue our efforts with regard to strengthening the institutional structures and assistance tools of the Treaty, including the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund. Although it is encouraging to see the ATT

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<sup>\*</sup> The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Voluntary Fund growing in terms of contributions and number of assisted States Parties, we note with concern the worsening financial situation of the ATT. It is of crucial importance that the effective functioning of the Treaty and its institutions is preserved and the accumulation of arrears does not put ATT activities at risk. Once again, we urge all States to pay their contributions in full and on time. We continue to support all efforts to enforce the full implementation of the Financial Rules of the Treaty, as well as take all appropriate measures to improve the payment rate and cash flow of the ATT. The EU welcomes the work on the proposed procedure that seeks to establish the necessary arrangements for States in arrears to settle their financial obligations. This should lead to increased financial, and subsequently institutional, stability of the Treaty.

The EU framework governing arms exports revolves around the EU Common Position on arms exports, adopted in 2008. Several third countries have aligned themselves with the EU Common Position, or have adopted similar principles, and the EU's outreach and assistance activities are helping to build capacities for effective national implementation worldwide and attracting new States to adhere to the ATT.

The Treaty's continued success will require the concerted efforts of States, international organisations, industry, and civil society representatives working together in the spirit of openness and transparency.

Thank you, Mr. President