



ROYAL NORWEGIAN
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Statement of the Kingdom of Norway
Seventh Conference of the States Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty
30. August-03. September 2021
General Debate

Mr. President,

First of all, we thank you for your chairmanship of the The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) over the past year despite what the global crises the Covid-19 virus has challenged all of us with. Let me also thank the Government of Switzerland and the Secretariat for organizing and hosting the conference and the working group meetings earlier this year. Mr. President, you have the full support of our delegation, and we look forward to a productive and constructive conference.

Mr. President,

The ATT is an important mechanism contributing to advancing international peace and security. We must strive to uphold the multilateral system and continue to apply the provisions of the Treaty to the broadest range of conventional arms.

Norway takes this opportunity to give thank and give its fullest support to the Sierra Leone Presidency on focusing on the Treaty's articles that call on all state parties in ensuring efficient stockpile management and to implement effective measures to prevent diversion in help preventing the illicit trade of SALW.

For Norway, this is a central part of our efforts to reduce armed conflict and violence across the world. In many regions, large quantities of arms contribute to high levels of conflict and instability.

We also see that sexual and gender-based violence often increases before a conflict erupts and persists after a peace accord has been signed. The prevalence of weapons therefore exposes women to further danger in an already vulnerable situation.

We must continue to have a systematic focus on women, peace and security in our efforts to implement the objectives of the Treaty.

In our view, including women is essential if we are to address the security needs of the whole population.

Mr. President,

International standards are strongest when they are universally applied – which is why we have to push for further universalization of the ATT. We are pleased that the Treaty now has reached 110 States Parties, and we encourage signatory states to speed up their ratification processes.

We must also continue to concentrate our efforts for a more effective implementation. Norway supports efforts to provide technical assistance to Member States – and I am pleased to announce that Norway will contribute NOK 300,000 (approx. 35,000 USD) to the Voluntary Trust Fund this year.

But universalization and implementation is not enough. We must continuously strive for greater transparency and openness within the ATT.

My delegation is pleased to see that many States Parties have submitted their initial and annual reports in 2021 – and made them publicly available. We encourage all States Parties to consider doing the same. Norway believe that transparency and openness are important for the ATT's legitimacy and credibility.

However, we note with concern that several States Parties have still not yet submitted their annual reports under the Treaty obligation. We see a similar situation when it comes to financial obligations.

Norway therefore strongly urges all States Parties to honor their obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty. We appreciate the Secretariat's efforts to follow up this issue with the countries concerned and to provide assistance where needed.

Mr. President,

In our view, the working groups and inclusive processes are important tools for bringing the Treaty forward. The working group structure allows for exchange of ideas, information, and best practices – and will contribute to effective implementation of the Treaty, as well as transparency and timely reporting. We thank the chairs and participants of the working groups – and encourage all States Parties to take active part in these discussions.

Finally, Norway would like to highlight the important role and contributions of the civil society. We encourage NGO's to continue monitoring the implementation of the ATT, raise awareness and to mobilize their regional networks to create further support for the Treaty's norms, principles and standards.

Mr. President,

The ATT is a milestone for the international community. We have established responsible standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons on a global level. However, the ATT rests on a set of common rules and norms that are under increasing pressure. Our work must continue to move ahead. Let us continue our efforts to the best of our ability despite the limitations posed by the pandemic to in making ATT the most effective tool in preventing irresponsible transfer of conventional arms.

Norway is confident that with the growing number of States Parties, stronger implementation, and transparency, and together with civil society, we will continue strengthening the ATT – and through that, preventing proliferation of arms for illicit use. We stand ready to contribute.

Thank you.