

**SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
ARMS TRADE TREATY
(Geneva/Online, 30 August – 3 September 2021)**

General Statement

**Ambassador Philip Griffiths
Head of Secretariat
Wassenaar Arrangement**

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual Use Goods and Technologies, I welcome the opportunity to join you virtually and wish the Conference every success.

Both the WA and the ATT promote greater transparency and responsibility in transfers of conventional arms, thus contributing to international peace and security by preventing destabilising accumulations, as well as their acquisition by terrorists.

2021 marks 25 years since the WA was established as the first global multilateral body on export controls in this area. Since the creation of the ATT, the WA has welcomed opportunities to share its experience and expertise as a relevant intergovernmental information-sharing and standard-setting forum.

The WA's work in defining and strengthening the parameters for legal transfers of conventional arms aligns with the ATT's requirements to implement a strict and effective system of export licensing or authorisation. This is particularly pertinent with respect to the thematic focus of CSP7 - strengthening efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ensure efficient stockpile management.

Consistent with its general purposes, the WA included SALW within the scope of its export controls from its inception in 1996. The WA *Munitions List* includes SALW, as well as specially designed components, accessories and ammunition. Related production equipment and technology are also controlled in order to prevent unauthorised transfers of “know-how”, as well as the possibility of reverse engineering for the purposes of unauthorised manufacturing of these weapons. The WA *Munitions List* is a readily available resource for developing or strengthening national control lists in line with the ATT.

As ATT States Parties continue to refine their implementation of the Treaty, another useful reference is the compendium of non-binding WA best practice guidelines which are regularly reviewed and updated in the light of implementation experience. These cover export risk assessment and other aspects of export control practice which have been under active discussion among ATT States Parties, including within the Working

Group on Effective Treaty Implementation, such as the regulation of transit/trans-shipment and brokering activities, measures to prevent diversion, measures to strengthen effective enforcement, as well as procedures to fulfil national reporting obligations. A number of WA best practice guidelines specifically address export and diversion risks of SALW including the importance of stockpile management and security. Both the *WA Munitions List* and the *Compendium of Best Practice Documents* are available on the WA website (www.wassenaar.org).

WA Participating States expanded their reporting requirements to include exports of SALW in 2003. This transparency is intended to enable them to consider their partners' arms exports when evaluating potential destabilising risks as part of their own export licence decision-making, and to open national transfer decisions to peer scrutiny.

Specific efforts have been dedicated in recent years to strengthening and clarifying the control of firearms, in particular by defining the status of components and accessories having an operational significance and the status of deactivated weapons, including the parameters for safe deactivation. The WA also continues to refine the distinction between firearms having a legitimate sporting use and firearms particularly suitable for military use, and thus at higher risk of illicit trafficking.

The WA pursues an active outreach programme aimed at encouraging effective export control systems around the world. It seeks to foster synergies with other international and regional bodies working in similar areas and recognises the importance of engagement with industry and the research sector.

Supplementing export control outreach undertaken by WA Participating States in their national and/or regional capacities, WA collective outreach includes policy and technical briefings for non-WA states, in which many countries at this Conference already participate. The WA seeks to tailor its outreach to the needs and interests of partners, and is open to considering bilateral dialogue and visits, as well as events with a regional or thematic focus.

I hope that further efforts will be made to build on the shared objectives of the ATT and the WA. The work of both contributes to effective cooperation among states in the regulation of international transfers of conventional arms and the prevention of their diversion to illicit purposes, without impeding legitimate trade.

I and my colleagues stand ready to facilitate any requests for information or assistance that States Parties may wish to refer to us through the ATT Secretariat. Thank you.