

The Arms Trade Treaty
Avenue de France 23
CH-1202 Geneva
19 April 2021

To : Representatives of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of Signatory States to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of Observer States to the Arms Trade Treaty.
: Representatives of International and Regional Organizations.
: Representatives of Civil Society, NGOs and Industry.

Dear Distinguished Representatives,

A CALL FOR PARTICIPATION: ATT WORKING GROUPS' MEETINGS AND CSP7 INFORMAL PREPARATORY MEETING (26-30 APRIL 2021)

I write in my capacity as President of the Seventh Conference of States Parties (CSP7) to strongly encourage all States Parties, signatory States, observer States, international and regional organisations, and civil society, NGOs and industry to engage in the upcoming informal and preparatory meetings of the ATT meetings from 26 to 30 April 2021. I encourage all stakeholders to make meaningful contributions to this process to help shape and strengthen the ATT framework and to ensure it addresses concerns relevant to regulating the international trade in conventional weapons. The April meetings also offer the opportunity to explore cooperation and assistance in support of the ATT and obtain a broader perspective on how the Treaty operates in different regions to inform national implementation efforts and contribute to a successful Seventh Conference of States Parties (CSP7).

I am therefore very much looking forward to the substantive discussions on key topics such as diversion, reporting, and effective Treaty implementation in the upcoming Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) preparatory meetings from 26 to 30 April 2021.

A significant amount of time and energy have been expended by each ATT Working Group Chair and Sub-Working Group Facilitator in providing detailed reports for your review and comment and by the ATT Secretariat in the planning for these meetings. I therefore wish to thank the following for their efforts in keeping the work of the ATT on track and for their support in preparing for the April meetings:

Vice Presidents:

Cyprus, Germany, Latvia and Peru

Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation:

Ambassador Sang-beom LIM of the Republic of Korea as Chair.

Ambassador Ignacio SÁNCHEZ DE LERÍN of Spain as Facilitator on Articles 6 and 7 (Prohibitions and Export, and Export Assessment).

Ms. Stela PETROVIĆ of Serbia as Facilitator on Article 9 (Transit or trans-shipment).

Mr. Rob WENSLEY of South Africa as Facilitator on Article 11 (Diversion).

Working Group on Transparency and Reporting:

Mr. Alejandro Alba FERNÁNDEZ of Mexico and Ms. Iulia VLADESCU of Romania as Co-Chairs.

Diversion Information Exchange Forum:

Mr. Tom NIJS of Belgium as Chair.

Management Committee:

Costa Rica, Estonia, Germany, Japan and South Africa.

Voluntary Trust Fund Members:

Albania, Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

I am looking forward to sharing the ATT universalization activities I have undertaken with all delegations since assuming the Presidency in August 2020. I am also looking forward to sharing the feedback received from the bilateral meetings on ATT universalization that Ambassador Federico Villegas of Argentina and I have conducted this year as Co-chairs of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU). In this regard, I encourage States Parties and all other stakeholders to share updates on their respective efforts to promote the Treaty's universalization at national or regional levels during the WGTU. I welcome statements from States which have yet to join the ATT, highlighting progress towards joining the Treaty, including any challenges that they may encounter. ATT States Parties can share their individual or collective experience to overcome these obstacles and welcome new States to the ATT.

Respectfully, I wish to draw your attention to the thematic focus of my Presidency -- "*strengthening efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and ensuring efficient stockpile management*". On 12 April 2021, the ATT Secretariat circulated my draft working paper. I hope the proposals can contribute to effective ATT implementation and, ultimately, reduce human suffering. I welcome feedback from delegations either during the April Working Group meetings or in writing. While much work has already been carried out on stockpile management, it remains an ongoing challenge, including in my region, Africa. I look forward to working with delegations to further address this issue of critical importance to the ATT.

Once again, I look forward to welcoming delegations to the ATT Working Group meetings and CSP7 Informal Preparatory Meeting. Although the current virtual environment is challenging, together, we can continue to progress toward the ATT's goals even in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lansana GBERIE', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ambassador Lansana GBERIE

President: Seventh Conference of States Parties to the ATT