

 **EU Statement**

 **Arms Trade Treaty**

**Informal Preparatory Meeting for the Eleventh Conference of States Parties (CSP11)**

 **Geneva, 20-21 May 2025**

Mr. President,

**I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.**

**The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina**[[1]](#footnote-1) **and Georgia as well as the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.**

**Agenda item 2: Progress reports of ATT subsidiary bodies**

1. **2a. Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation (WGETI)**

The EU would like to express appreciation to the Philippines for chairing the Group, as well as to Sierra Leone and Ireland for facilitating discussions in the WGETI Sub-working Groups. A well-structured exchange of views over concrete implementation questions serves as a good precedent for future work. We would like to share some of the EU’s comments on the Chair’s report.

Two issues are emerging from the discussions on imports and national control lists. Firstly, the scope of ATT, and specifically, the need to more comprehensively address transfers of parts and components, to which ATT does not fully apply, even though they form a significant part of international trade in arms, and growing discrepancies between categories of items covered by the ATT and UNROCA. Secondly, there are clear benefits from approximation or even unification of national control lists, especially among States of the same regions, in order to eliminate gaps in control and facilitate cooperation between national systems. This is the EU’s own experience, and we promote the application of the EU Common Military List in our outreach to third States. Therefore, the EU supports the recommendation for CSP11 that the issue of scope of the Treaty and national control lists merit further discussion, while the takeaways from the discussions in February are sufficiently clear to establish objectives, describe possible deliverables, and set a timeframe.

Regarding the role of industry, while States are primarily responsible for the implementation of the ATT, industry actors also need clarity and a uniform understanding of Treaty’s provisions. Therefore, the EU supports the continuation of works that may result in a list of reference materials and a voluntary guidance document, while its scope could be extended to address also diversion risk assessment and mitigation, given the unique and significant role of private sector in handling actual transfers. Relevant industry actors should be engaged and involved in these discussions.

Regarding gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against women and children (VAWC), the EU fully supports further works on methodology, data structure and risk assessment. In addition to the obligations of all EU Member States under the ATT, the current update of the EU Common Position defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, which entered into force on 14 April, established a duty to deny an export licence if there is a clear risk that the military technology or equipment to be exported might be used to commit or facilitate, inter alia, serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women or children. We are confident that acquis of the ATT in supporting States Parties in addressing GBV and violence against women and children will also prove beneficial to the application of the EU legal framework on arms export control.

With regard to gender focal points, the EU would support this idea. The establishment of ATT-related focal points could build on resources and solutions developed under other multilateral treaties in non-proliferation and disarmament area, such as Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and Convention on Cluster Munitions.

On inter-agency cooperation, the EU supports the recommendation to discuss useful elements for developing or strengthening such cooperation to be integrated in the Voluntary Basic Guide to Establishing a National Control System and, where relevant, other voluntary guidance documents developed in the WGETI. Similarly to other abovementioned issues, clear objectives and timelines would need to be defined for decision of CSP11, given that the topic has been already extensively covered since CSP10.

Once again we recall the inclusive nature of the ATT from its very beginning, including the negotiation process.The EU wishes to reiterate its commitment to an inclusive formula of deliberations in the ATT, where observers, in particular civil society and industry, are granted proper space to present their valuable insights, and differences between their views and those of States Parties should be respected. The EU itself recognises the value and encourages discussion on arms transfers with civil society, inter alia through the annual COARM-NGO forum.

**2b. Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR)**

The EU would like to thank Ms. Andrea Quezada of Chile for chairing the Working Group’s meetings and guiding the discussion around clear-cut questions. In our view, the report accurately captures the works and issues to address. We support the draft recommendations and would like to comment on the selected ones.

We reiterate our view that effective reporting could be ensured through technical assistance combined with political outreach, to address all possible identified national obstacles, and – potentially – encourage simultaneous reporting by regional States as a confidence-building measure, where lack of confidence in transparency is an issue. The ATT Secretariat is best placed to play a central role in supporting States Parties in reporting, therefore the EU fully supports the recommendation encouraging all assistance providers on reporting to inform the Secretariat well in advance of their anticipated assistance activities to allow the Secretariat to liaise with the relevant actors with a view to seek cooperation and avoid duplication of efforts. The recommendation could also be reinforced by encouraging joint planning of such activities.

The EU supports the potential review of the Information Exchange Platform and the online reporting tool, with a view to reduce the administrative and financial burden on the ATT Secretariat where possible, while continuing to support States Parties in reporting where needed.

The EU also recognises the great value in working on synergies among different reporting resources, such as ATT, UNROCA, national reports of governments for internal purposes, and non-governmental support. The facilitation of cross-referencing all existing sources through approximation in methodology and improvement of search tools is a truly commendable effort. This will result in better quality of available data, and reduce discrepancies among reporting duties by States, thereby reducing the administrative burden on governments, and promoting overall transparency in the arms trade, a core purpose of the ATT. Such a topic could be further developed in discussions within WGTR regarding the sources and means to collect data, and we encourage the involvement of all stakeholders collecting data on arms transfers in such discussions.

**2c. Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU)**

The EU would like to express appreciation to the CSP11 President, Ambassador Foradori of Argentina, and to Ambassador Rusu of Romania for co-chairing the Group, and for the individual outreach efforts carried out by the CSP11 President. We support the recommendations for CSP11 and the two deliverables identified to further work on, for instance the President’s working paper with recommendations and concrete progress in the implementation of the WGTU workplan. The key points, such as a regional approach, multi-dimensional outreach, with appropriate awareness-raising on a political level, the role of regional universalization champions, and visible incentives, including commitment by the ATT community to support future States Parties in domestication and implementation of the Treaty, remain valid and need to be implemented in a tailored way. The EU stands ready to contribute to the work through sharing information regarding the ongoing and planned EU ATT outreach activities, and the joint planning of outreach where appropriate. Let me use this opportunity to inform that the EU Outreach Project in support of the ATT, including its universalization, was extended on 28 February to cover the period of 2025-2028, and with regard to the focus region, the EU will work with signatory States: Comoros, Malaysia, and Thailand.

1. **North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)