

Statement by Finland at ATT Ninth Conference of State Parties (CSP 9)

Geneva, 21-25 August 2023

Madam President,

It is a pleasure to speak on behalf of Finland today here at the Ninth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Let me start by thanking the Presidency for all of your work in preparation of this Conference.

I wish to align myself with the statement of the European Union and add some remarks in my national capacity.

The Arms Trade Treaty remains a key international instrument in regulating the international trade in conventional arms, preventing their illicit trade, as well as preventing their diversion.

We want to thank the Korean Presidency for placing focus on the importance of industry and private sector's participation in the ATT process. It is our experience that efficient export controls require functional and trustful dialogue with the industry. They have the best understanding about the products that controls are exercised over. We also have to develop our practices to correspond to the ways the industry operates – and vice versa, they also have to take into account the regulations and instructions we operate under. It is clear that the participation of the industry and the private sector is crucial to the success of the Treaty.

Let me mention a few other topics that are particularly important for Finland.

The humanitarian dimension of the Arms Trade Treaty is an area in which Finland attaches great importance. We have to address challenges that make civilians, including women and children, increasingly targeted. This includes for example illicit flows of arms and conventional weapons. We also attach great importance to the link between the transfer of arms and gender-based violence in the Arms Trade Treaty. Mainstreaming gender remains very relevant in arms control activities and programmes.

We also welcome the continued work for Treaty Universalisation with an aim for full universalisation. For the ATT to be effective, it should be close to universal. Finland continues to support states in their processes towards adoption, ratification and implementation of the Treaty.

In our view, the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund is a valuable tool to advance Treaty implementation and universalization. Finland contributes a yearly sum of 240 000 euros to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund in the years of 2021 to 2023.

We must continue to pay more attention to conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons. We see that active international cooperation and assistance not only benefit the concerned countries, regions and people. Supporting countries' efforts against illicit flows of small arms and light weapons is also a direct investment into our own security. Finland for instance supports weapons and ammunition management, which is important to prevent diversion, and uncontrolled proliferation.

Finally, we emphasize the importance of transparency and reporting as part of ATT implementation.

Finland has continued the practice to include in 2022 ATT Annual Report a Voluntary Annex on export data covering all categories of the EU Military List. This Annex is based on actual exports as reported by the defense industry (real export data).

In conclusion, let me express our full support to all efforts aiming at strengthening Treaty implementation. The relevance of the Treaty remains high in the current difficult international situation after Russia's illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine.

I thank you Madam President.