

Georgia
Arms Trade Treaty
Ninth Conference of States Parties
General Debate
Geneva, 21 – 25 August 2023

[Georgia fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the European Union. In addition, I would like to make following remarks in our national capacity].

At the outset, we would like to thank you, Ambassador Seong-mee YOON, for an effective preparatory process for the ninth Conference of States Parties. I wish you a fruitful tenure on this important job and assure you of the Georgian delegation's full support. Hereby, I would also like to commend the Secretariat, Mr. Dumisani Dladla for your valuable efforts in organizing our conference.

The ATT is a key international instrument that has the capacity to make the trade in arms and ammunition more responsible and transparent. It serves the global interest to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms, preventing and eradicating the illicit trade and preventing diversion, thus contributing to international and regional peace, security, and stability and reducing human suffering.

The participation of industry representatives in ATT's process is important. Outreach allows the arms trade industry to demonstrate its commitment to human rights, humanitarian principles, and international law. In an ever-changing global landscape, arms trade outreach also provides the industry with an opportunity to adapt to emerging challenges, such as the evolving nature of armed conflicts.

Earlier this year Georgia hosted several workshops for the representatives of the private sector entities, export and import companies and for Officials of the Government on the transfers of the Advanced Conventional Weapons. The workshops and seminars were been funded by the US Department, as well as by the EU in the framework of EU Outreach Project on the promotion of Effective Arms Export Controls.

By establishing international standards for arms transfers, the ATT fosters transparency, accountability, and responsibility among State Parties. However, challenges persist, and some countries still remain outside the framework of the Treaty. We are still facing numerous challenges and much work is ahead to make the Treaty fully functional and safeguard its effective implementation, which on its turn will contribute to reduction of risks and threats to the global security. In this regard, universalisation of the Treaty bears a particular importance.

Madam President,

Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine grossly violates international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter and undermine global security and stability.

Georgia has experienced Russia's full-scale military invasion back in 2008, resulting in occupation of two regions of Georgia, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. Territories occupied by Russia remain a security challenge in many dimensions. In this context considering Georgia's important transit role and potential, there is a danger that the territories could be used for illegal activities such as illicit arms trade. However, in the absence of the international presence on Georgia's occupied territories, it has become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground.

Madam President,

With regard to the effective treaty implementation, Georgia has made significant efforts to enhance its strategic trade control with assistance of the EU in the frame of the EU Outreach programs and US Department of State's EXBS Program. Georgian legislation is fully harmonized with relevant EU legislation with relevant standards, principles, the same elements and approaches.

Moreover, Georgia as a responsible State Party before authorizing any transfer of the conventional arms, conducts risk assessment on the relevant articles of the ATT.

We emphasize the importance of international cooperation and assistance to facilitate the implementation of the ATT by all states, especially those facing challenges in adhering to its provisions. Technical assistance, capacity-building, and the exchange of best practices are valuable tools in supporting states' efforts to meet their obligations under the Treaty.

Georgia will continue to contribute to these exchanges with information and assistance activities in support of the implementation and universalization of the ATT. The active and constructive participation of all stakeholders – States Parties, international, regional and non-

governmental organizations as well as industry and civil society – will help achieve the objectives of the ATT.

Finally, I would like to reconfirm that Georgia stands fully committed to cooperate constructively and contribute to the implementation of the Treaty and its universalization.