



Republic of Ghana



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**STATEMENT BY**

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**GHANA**

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**DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE SESSION**

**OF THE**

**NINTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

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21<sup>st</sup> August, 2023  
Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG),  
Geneva

*Madam President,*

Ghana aligns with the statement delivered by the Republic of Nigeria on behalf of the Africa Group and join others in congratulating you on your sterling leadership during the cycle of the Ninth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We also congratulate all the other members of the Bureau for the various roles they have played during this cycle and assure them of Ghana's continued full cooperation and support. We wish to also take this opportunity to welcome Andorra, Gabon and The Philippines to the ATT family and look forward to their active engagement during our discussions.

*Madam President,*

2. It is worth noting that the Arms Trade Treaty has been hailed as an effective instrument which can support and promote development especially in Africa by considerably reducing the proliferation of small arms which are the main factors of armed conflicts and violent crimes within the sub region.

It is therefore this reason why Ghana played a major role in the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and continue to be a strong advocate for an effective implementation of it.

3. Ghana believes that the effective implementation of the ATT will ultimately save lives and protect communities at risk of current trade practices. Therefore, in order to

reduce unlawful armed violence Ghana consistently advocates for states to adopt measures for a strong and effective implementation of the Treaty. An effectively implemented ATT requires regular reporting, transparency, accountability and enforcement that serve to protect communities, nations and regions affected by poorly regulated transfers of conventional arms.

*Madam President,*

4. Terrorism and violent extremism are emerging as a key consequence and driver of the flow of illicit conventional arms. The persistent deterioration of security in the West and Central Sahel region of Africa has intensified violent extremists and terrorists' activities in the ECOWAS regions which has involved indiscriminate targeting of civilian and military populations. According to the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, 1st April to 30th June 2023 recorded 809 terrorist attacks that resulted in **4, 027** deaths across Africa. Compared to the same period in 2022, the terrorist attacks increased by a whopping **152%** and total deaths also increased by approximately **56%**. Of 4,027 deaths recorded, **2,294 were civilians, 979 were military/security personnel and 754 were terrorists.**

5. It is worth noting that the terrorist groups used Small Arms and Light Weapons in about 72% of the total attacks, IEDs were used in 22% of attacks, mixed attacks constituted 1% and 5%.

***Madam President,***

6. The available data clearly shows that terrorism and violent extremism is far from abating in Africa. Despite the numerous ongoing operations, terrorist groups continue to exhibit strong will, cohesion and capability to launch devastating attacks against critical infrastructures and security installations. The unfolding episode has created catastrophic and dire humanitarian crisis in many parts of the continent particularly in the Sahel region, the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, and the Lake Chad Basin area. The threat is setting in motion a dramatic reversal of governance and democratic gains and threatening the very existence of the state and its citizens. The widespread fatalities and casualties caused by the phenomenon have created situations of pronounced and critical humanitarian need.

***Madam President,***

7. This, therefore, brings to the fore the need for us to pay closer attention to the effective control and regulation of conventional arms in Africa as one of the major prerequisites to preventing terrorism and violent extremist from gaining ground. It is also key to ensuring peace, sustainable development, and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa. A major lesson learnt by various research findings in African States over the years is that where conventional arms are not controlled they

become easily accessible, armed violence dominate, development suffers, and negative consequences spill over to neighboring continents.

*Madam President,*

8. **In conclusion** the deteriorating security situation in parts of Africa has compelled respective governments including Ghana to place greater emphasis on controlling the possession, trafficking, and proliferation of conventional arms. We therefore call on all States and other international organisations to encourage the universalization and rigorous implementation of the ATT, particularly in Regions at risk of emerging security threats such as terrorism and armed conflict, establish and support programs that limit the risks of diversion and misuse of conventional arms, and support international, regional and national cooperation and assistance to mitigate the risk of arms diversion.

**I thank you.**