

## **Arms Trade Treaty Third Conference of the States Parties**

### **Statement of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**

#### **Agenda item 8 - Treaty Universalization**

Madam Chair,

The International Committee of the Red Cross thanks Finland and Nigeria for their contributions as Co-chairs of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization. We also echo others in commending the Presidency and the Secretariat for their considerable work to promote the universalization of the Treaty throughout the past year.

We congratulate Madagascar, Cabo Verde, Benin, the Republic of Korea and Honduras on joining the Treaty. We encourage the remaining 41 Signatories and all other non-States Parties to ratify the Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity. In that vein, we acknowledge and welcome the efforts of those States that are taking steps domestically to enable their adherence to the Treaty.

Madam Chair,

The ICRC continues to promote adherence to the Treaty and its faithful implementation through a range of activities, including by raising awareness of the Treaty in the ICRC's bilateral dialogue with States and at regional conferences. The ICRC's Advisory Service on IHL, our delegation to the United Nations in New York and our Arms Unit here in Geneva offer their assistance to States for the adoption and implementation of the Treaty.

Recognising the specificities of regional arms flows, the ICRC reiterates its support for the identification and creation of opportunities to discuss the Treaty at a regional or sub-regional level. We encourage States Parties to share their experiences of implementing the Treaty with neighbours who might benefit from any lessons learned – and we have been glad to hear reports during the week that some States have already embarked upon this sharing exercise.

The ICRC encourages all States Parties to promote universalization by demonstrably implementing their obligations under the Treaty to the highest possible standards. When States are seen to act in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Treaty, it builds confidence in the treaty as an instrument that is capable of limiting the availability of arms to those who would use them to commit war crimes, serious violations of human rights and other serious crimes.

Thank you, Madam Chair.