



ICRC

5TH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY 28 August 2019, Geneva

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

Treaty Universalization

Thank you, Co-Chairs.

The ICRC congratulates Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Suriname on joining the Treaty in 2018 and Lebanon, Canada, Botswana and Palau for joining in 2019.

We commend the development of the Universalization Toolkit and Welcome Pack for New States Parties to the ATT. We also commend the Republic of Korea for their useful Working Paper on Asian ratification plans, particularly their suggestion that the ATT be translated into Asian languages. With every important treaty, it is essential that States and the public be able to read the texts in their own language. We encourage this specifically with the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and it remains equally valid for the ATT.

We encourage the remaining 33 signatories and all other non-States Parties to ratify the Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity. We acknowledge and welcome the many efforts of those States that are taking steps at the national level to enable their adherence to the Treaty.

The ICRC continues to promote adherence to the Treaty and its faithful implementation through a range of activities, which include raising awareness of the Treaty through high-level statement and in the ICRC's bilateral dialogue with States and at regional conferences.

For example, we had an audience with the Legal, Rules and Privileges and the Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution Committees of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) to speak about the ATT in June this year. The ICRC made a presentation on the Arms Trade Treaty during the regional meeting of IHL Commissions from Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan). At the 2nd Pacific Islands Roundtable on IHL delegates from 11 Pacific Island countries¹ exchanged their views and experiences with ATT ratification and implementation.

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.

¹ Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, PNG, RMI, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

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 show this is happening.

The ICRC encourages all States Parties to promote universalization by demonstrably implementing their obligations under the Treaty to the highest possible standards.

Thank you.