

**Third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Geneva, 11-15 September 2017
Irish Statement on Treaty Implementation**

Thank you Mr. President and many thanks to Ambassador Elayne Whyte of Costa Rica and Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior of Switzerland for their hard work and efforts undertaken as Co-chairs of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation.

I wish to align Ireland with the statement delivered by the European Union and to add some remarks in a national capacity.

Ireland, as one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, has been a strong and consistent supporter of the Treaty.

The Arms Trade Treaty was conceived to prevent illicit and irresponsible transfers of arms, and their use as a means to threaten security, destabilise states, violate international humanitarian and human rights law, and exacerbate conflict. Now as the Treaty enters its fourth year, the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and its provisions is a priority for us all. An effective Treaty will represent a vital element in our collective commitment to create a more secure, stable world in which economic and social development can prosper. While weapons of mass destruction continue to threaten our security, conventional weapons are responsible for the majority of deaths from armed violence today. Both illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, and the

terrible civilian casualty rates from the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas remain matters of urgent concern for Ireland.

The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals provide our global framework – universal and indivisible – for the future of humanity, and the planet. They address the interlinked causes of poverty, inequality, injustice and damage to our planet which are a pre-requisite for sustainable development. The ATT and other disarmament and non-proliferation instruments are critical tools as we face up to the challenge of sustainable development and achieving concrete progress on the commitments entered into by the world's leaders with such ambition and hope in September 2015.

While the Goals are indivisible, SDG 16 on “Peace Justice and Strong Institutions” and SDG 5 on “Gender Equality” are particular relevant in relation to the ATT.

SDG 16.4 explicitly links development to peace and security. Its target 16.4 “**By 2030 significantly reduce illicit arms flows**”, is at the core of the purpose and objective of our Treaty. Our work here relates directly to the achievement of this key target of the Sustainable Development Goals and I very much welcome the opportunity provided to us this afternoon, to study how we can better implement our Treaty and create a more secure, stable world in which economic and social development can prosper.

Throughout the process leading to the adoption of the ATT Ireland maintained a strong focus on the relationship between illicit arms flows and gender based violence. We welcomed the inclusion in the Treaty, for the very first time in an arms control instrument, of agreement that gender based violence should be an element for assessment when State's Parties are considering arms transfers. Ireland has highlighted the importance of the gendered impact of weapons as

well as in the inclusion of women in arms control and disarmament processes. We believe that these issues both link strongly to the achievement of SDG 5 on Gender Equality and are also of great importance to the effective implementation of the ATT.

Today, I am pleased to introduce an Irish working paper on Article 7(4) and Gender Based Violence Assessments in the ATT. While the inclusion of the GBV provisions in the ATT was ground-breaking, we realise that, for effective implementation, States Parties need to give consideration to and develop guidance on how to best to approach GBV assessment. Ireland believes the time is right to have this discussion.

Our paper examines the historic commitment that State Parties have made to preventing GBV; it assesses the means by which it may be implemented and makes recommendations on how we as States Parties can proceed.

The recommendations contained in the paper are:

- First, we acknowledge the need for further clarity around the interpretations of the language and standards entailed in article 7(4), notably the delineation of “serious” and “overriding” risk.
- Second, we ask State’s Parties to be forthcoming in how they are enforcing human rights and IHL based export risk assessments, and what provisions they are making for GBV in order to facilitate learning between State Parties.

- Third, to leverage the knowledge of states, we call on the ATT Secretariat and State Parties to draft a guiding document to inform on the “best practices” for assessing GBV, alongside other Human Rights and IHL concerns.
- Fourth, we encourage State Parties and the ATT Secretariat to draw from the experiences and knowledge of the development sector to inform the construction of GBV indicators and checks.
- Lastly, we would welcome the incorporation of a GBV element into the annual returns.

The paper is provided as a contribution for further discussion and to encourage States Parties to give further consideration to how we can best work together to implement this particular objective of our Treaty, the prevention of arms flows which enable and contribute to gender based violence. We look forward very much to listening to the views of other States and Civil Society and to working together on this key implementation question, including at this session of our meeting.

Mr Chairman

The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty and of the Sustainable Development Goals represented beacons of hope in an increasingly uncertain world. They demonstrated what can be accomplished by the international community when States and Civil Society come together with a shared vision and objective. This

session today shows that that spirit is still with us. Ireland looks forward to working with our partners on the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, an essential component in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

ENDS