

Ninth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Geneva, 21 August – 25 August 2023

General Debate

General Statement by Bahtijors Hasans

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Mr. President,

At the outset, on behalf of the Latvian Government, I would like to express our deep gratitude to you, Mr. President, and your team for the inestimable efforts in organizing this Ninth Conference of States Parties. I would like to thank the head of the Secretariat Mr. Dumisani Dladla personally for tireless efforts in securing all activities under the Arms Trade Treaty in these difficult times.

Mr. President,

The Latvian delegation aligns itself with the statement *delivered/to be delivered* by the European Union and would like to add some remarks in a national capacity.

Latvia ratified the Arms Trade Treaty on 2 April 2014 thus contributing to the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty at the end of 2014. Successful implementation of the Treaty at the national level has always been a priority of the Latvian government. Latvia attaches great importance towards the values of the ATT. In that spirit Latvia exercised function of the President of the CSP5 in 2019. Our priority at CSP5 was a fight against a gender based violence in arms export. The priority was

extensively discussed during the CSP5 and resulted in adoption of the result-oriented plan of action highly evaluated by the ATT community and we are glad to see that this priority is still widely discussed among national administrations and NGO's.

Latvia fully welcomes the values of the ATT and has always been ready to contribute to achieve the goals written in the Treaty. Since completing of its duties to serve as a President of the ATT Latvia has offered its services as a Vice President of the Arms Trade Treaty for the whole 4 years period being a Vice-President from the Eastern Europe group. As Latvia is ready to do its utmost in future in order to prevent illegal trafficking of weapons around the globe we are committed to ATT values and we are ready to give our contribution to different ATT committees when and where needed.

Mr. President,

Your priority to enhance the discussion on the role of industry in responsible international transfers of conventional arms is a core issue of the Arms Trade Treaty. The focus on different types of industry actors, as well as the role of national legislation in tackling the issue of non-compliance has to be discussed, taking into consideration that the industry has to be well informed but also compliant to national measures, their export markets and possible risks of diversion.

Latvia along with other ATT Vice-Presidents South Africa and Uruguay will host a side event on Wednesday during lunch time on our countries' experience in ATT reporting. We will have not only governmental insight but also a valuable vision of the expert from "Control Arms". We believe that there is still a room of improvement in ATT members' obligation of reporting.

Latvia considers that universalization of the Treaty is a key to a world without violence caused by unsanctioned circulation of arms across the borders.

We always welcome new states joining the Arms Trade Treaty – Gabon and Andorra have become a full-fledged State Party on 21st of September and 2nd December respectively this past year. It is an honor to see two states from different regions becoming members of the treaty, and we are looking forward to ideas, discussions and cooperation, that will follow.

Latvia shares concerns already expressed during the fifth Conference of State Parties in Geneva that despite an increased number of countries who have ratified the Treaty, the Treaty global coverage is uneven. It would be of utmost importance to further promote the Treaty and encourage States to join it, especially in the Middle East and Asia.

Mr. President,

It has been already mentioned by the European Union in its statement, but the situation with fulfillment of obligations of the ATT is only worsening. The operation of the ATT secretariat is a great benefit to all of us. Submission of annual reports to the secretariat is a core obligation arising from the Arms Trade Treaty.

We believe our deliberations through out the week will increase our common firm dedication to the ATT values and goals.

Thank you!