

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Macedonia**

**Statement by Svetlana Geleva
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General debate of the Second Conference of States Parties of the Arms Trade
Treaty (CSP2)

Geneva, 22 - 26 August 2016

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to address the 2nd Conference of the state parties to the ATT and share with you the views of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on the progress achieved and the challenges we have in the process of implementation of this landmark and robust instrument. The delegation of the Republic of Macedonia has also aligned with the Statement of the EU under this agenda item.

The Arms Trade Treaty has been tailored to prevent weapons from being used to threaten security, destabilize regions, violate international human rights and humanitarian law, undermine economic and social development and fuel conflicts. It requires hard work and commitment to translate the treaty obligations into action and save lives. The recent terrorist attacks targeting a large number of civilians and the continuing armed violence in a large number

of countries are an indisputable indication of widespread availability of arms and the inability of states to eradicate their illicit trade.

Building on the compromises we learned to achieve when the ATT was being drafted and during the First CSP, I believe that we should spare no efforts to make further progress in its implementation and universalization, because lives depend on that. The success is evident in its early entry into force and the number of ratifications/accessions – 87 as well as a large number of signatures. We particularly cherish the unique nature of concerted efforts aimed both at its implementation and advocacy by governments, civil society and industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives us confidence that the ongoing debate clearly demonstrates that the ATT is proving to be a valuable instrument with clear advantages in the wide spectrum of international arms control efforts. Consequently we hope that this fact will prompt “reaching critical will” for wider adherence to it, especially by large producers and exporting countries.

As the Treaty itself stipulated, its implementation is a national responsibility i.e. state parties are fully responsible for establishing national system for the control of international trade of conventional arms. At the same time in order to be fully effective, states should improve cooperation, coordination and dialogue with each other. Outreach and capacity building are critical in this endeavor. Individual efforts of states do not suffice to combat illicit trade and prevent diversion.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My country was among the staunch supporters of the elaboration of a legally binding international instrument establishing the highest common standards for international arms trade aware of the alarming and devastating consequences on human suffering worldwide. Macedonia ratified the Treaty in January 2014 and our national legislation had been fully in line with the provisions set out in it before its ratification. We have submitted the initial and the annual reports on time and made them public.

The Republic of Macedonia belongs to the region of South-Eastern Europe in which intense cooperation and exchanges of information, supported by the EU sponsored programmes, SEESAC and US EXBS, and other regional actors, have contributed to development and strict implementation of export control standards for conventional arms and SALW. The region benefitted as the standardization of norms and their national implementation turned out to be of crucial importance for effective fight against illicit arms trade and thus for the regional stability.

Consequently, I believe that it is a privilege and a huge benefit for other countries and regions to have the ATT as a unique platform for dialogue and cooperation. In this context, let me underline the importance of international assistance and support, as well as the sharing of the already existing expertise, as well as avoiding duplication of efforts.

Mr. President,

In closing, I am confident that the growing awareness of the vital importance of arms trade control for sustainable development and stability and human security will inspire us to make a number of important decisions to address the challenges all over the world establishment of the Voluntary Trust Fund as well as creating a momentum for the increase in number of accessions-ratifications.

Let me assure you Mr. President of the support of my delegation in your efforts to bring this Conference to a fruitful outcome and thank you and all who contributed to the successful process of preparation of the Second CSP.

Thank you.