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CONTROL ARMS FOUNDATION OF INDIA (CAFI) POSITION PAPER & STATEMENT FOR CSP 5 IN GENEVA

AGENDA ITEM: UNIVERSALISATION

1. The fact is that nearly half the number of UN Member countries have yet to join or ratify the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Despite a much higher incidence of gun violence and illicit small arms proliferation, the support for ATT remains particularly weak in Asia and Africa.
2. The ATT requires to facilitate a regional dialogue process in Asian and African regions to understand the reluctance of countries that have yet to join the ATT, and create knowledge of ATT's Principles, preamble and its implementation processes to develop an understanding of the benefits of the ATT? This requires a Regional dialogue process to be dovetailed into ATT's initiative for universalisation. For example in South Asia, other than Bangladesh all other SAARC members have so far not joined the treaty.
3. The ATT's Preamble should be implemented in letter and spirit "to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and to prevent their diversion to the illicit market." Describing the ATT as an arms control instrument would be replicating the UN Conventional Arms Register. The ATT should work towards arms trade accountability, recovery of illicit weapons by the state; prevent diversion of arms by the arms recipient states; verification of end-use of arms transferred to recipients etc.
4. Several countries have expressed reluctance to join the ATT on the arguments that ATT processes need to develop accountability of arms transfers to the States as well as to the Non-state actors (NSA), which should also be monitored against a strict criteria of stockpile safety to ensure arms and ammunition are not diverted or sold in disregard of public safety. Stricter end-use verification standards of arms sales have to be applied to non-state actors (NSA) even if they may seek weapons for survival against the militaries in states that do not have democratic constitutions. The major arms supplying countries need to exercise much higher standards of export control procedures, as well as ATT must explore ways that arms sales could promote security sector governance in states with military-dominated political systems.

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