



**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER
OF DEFENCE OF NIGERIA, MANSUR DAN ALI
AT THE OPENING OF THE 2ND CONFERENCE OF
STATES PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY
(ATT) GENEVA, 22 AUGUST, 2016**

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA

**President of the Swiss Confederation
Representative of the Secretary General
Honourable Ministers
Excellencies, Ambassadors
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Mr. President,

Let me on behalf of my delegation join those who have taken the floor before me, to heartily congratulate you as President of the Second Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the able manner in which you have steered the affairs of the organization since your

assumption of office. My delegation wishes to underscore your immense effort in overseeing the process of moving the implementation of the Treaty forward in the last one year.

2. Permit me also, to express our gratitude to the government of Mexico for hosting 1st CCP; and to commend the government of Switzerland and the United Nations for their invaluable assistance in the take-off of the Secretariat of the ATT. I also seize the opportunity to thank Costa Rica, Finland, Montenegro and New Zealand, who in their respective capacity as Vice-Presidents in the last twelve months, collaborated with the President in the direction of the affairs of the ATT. My sincere appreciation also goes to the Czech Republic, France, Jamaica, Japan and Cote d'Ivoire, who served meritoriously on the Management Committee. Today, our dream has been realized, and it is to the credit of all that the Arms Trade Treaty has overcome its teething problem and is ready for the purpose, for which it was established after entry into force on 23 December, 2014.

Mr. President,

4. It bears mentioning that the overwhelming support reflected in the adoption of the landmark ATT resolution on

2 April, 2013 indicated the need for a global response to the threat posed to international peace and security by the non-regulation of conventional weapons. My delegation is concerned that today, and most sadly, this palpable threat to global peace and security appears not to be diminishing. Nigeria believes strongly in the regulation of arms trade of conventional weapons and with a process guided by policies, procedures, and practices that would regulate their import and exports; as well as their re-transfer and end use.

5. The unregulated trade in conventional weapons by governments, which has found its way in the hands of terrorists, criminal gangs, repressive regimes, non-state actors and so on; is put at over \$120 billion per annum and is believed to lead to the deaths of over one million people annually. These figures are scary and it is not certain if the producers of these weapons take into cognizance the possibility of the arms falling into the hands of non-state actors, especially terrorists when sales are made.

Mr. President,

6. We no longer think of the risks that terrorists might obtain and use these weapons on a large and devastating scale; this is because they already possess them, and are

effectively deploying them to optimum use. There can be no better illustration of this fact than in their occurrence in the Middle-East, some parts of Africa, Asia, Latin America; and even Europe. As it appears, no country seems to be safe from terrorist attack.

7. Recent acts of terrorism and the preponderance of various insurgency groups across many regions of the world, including mine, have presented us with another unique opportunity to once again take a cursory look on the implementation of our obligations as State Parties. The task before us is daunting and one that requires the commitment of all State Parties and manufacturers of conventional weapons to come together to adopt basic regulations and approval for processes involving the flow of weapons across borders.

8. My delegation believes that the ATT remains the multilateral instrument that can put an end to the unregulated flow of conventional arms across borders and thus prevent the carnage we see on a daily basis.

Mr. President,

9. Since the Arms Trade Treaty opened for signature on 3rd June 2013, a total of 87 Member States of the United Nations have ratified the Treaty out of 130 signatories. My

delegation feels that a lot more needs to be done to get more State members to ratify the treaty in view of the importance of the Treaty in adopting basic regulations and approval processes in stemming the flow of weapons across international borders and establishing common international standards that must be met before exporting arms.

10. In this sense, it is our belief that in so-doing, the ATT reinforces the work of the United Nations Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security; and nations must commit to its overall objective of also aiding development. Development can only thrive where there is peace and absence of terror, transnational crime, war or repression of any nature.

Mr. President,

11. A year ago in Cancun, Mexico, the First Conference of States Parties held and provided a road map on ATT's implementation process, by adopting key measures which set the principles for continuity and its universalization. It is against this backdrop that States Parties are required to play key roles, in the coming months, by ensuring that the ATT truly reflects global outlook to promoting its universalization.

12. In this connection, States Parties must stridently work on to halt the status quo, where every year, the unregulated, illicit flow of arms claims hundreds of thousands of lives across the globe. It is for this reason that Nigeria joined five other Foreign Ministers from Denmark, Germany, Mexico, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom, to amplify these challenges in the build-up to the adoption of the resolution on ATT in 2013.

13. Indeed, States parties must ensure that the strident march of the Treaty aims for no less a goal than a global pursuit of action, where conventional weapons are adequately regulated to the extent that, no unauthorized non-State entity is allowed to acquire arms and ammunition from regulated markets. We must remain resolute and firm in this direction. In the final analysis, what is most significant is not which path we have jointly chosen as States Parties, but that the path is heading in the right direction – towards the intended goal of a world where arms and ammunition are legally regulated and global mayhem and impunity, including abuse of human rights are reduced and eradicated.

Mr. President,

14. As the first nation to ratify the ATT in Africa, Nigeria remains committed to the ethos of a world free of unauthorized movement of conventional weapons. It is also pertinent to underscore the efforts of other States Parties so far. They underline the collective commitment we owe unborn generations, to stem the tide of unregulated trade in conventional weapons. This is most significant considering the changing complexities of actions by terrorist and non-State actors, as well as other evolving threats to international peace and security.

15. We call for more robust engagement with non-States Parties and other institutions on developing assets and resources at the national, regional and international levels towards sustaining the long-term vision of this Treaty, as a goal of universalization and in the deepening of our resolve to succeed in the enterprise.

Mr. President

16. Let me digress a little to mention efforts by the Nigerian government to stem the flow of illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in

Nigeria. Nigeria as a State Party to the ATT has made tremendous effort in stemming the flow of illicit arms and light weapons into the country which in the past has led to security challenges in the country, by setting a Presidential Committee on small arms and light weapons and in addition, engaged SAS of Geneva to do a survey of illicit small arms and light weapons in Nigeria, which has been a source of insecurity. Nigeria has in addition put in place measures such as End User Certificates, and checks on movement of arms and light weapons to check the unconventional trade in arms into the country.

Mr. President,

17. Let me assure you of the full commitment of Nigeria to the full implementation of the Treaty, even as I seize the opportunity to express our best wishes to the incoming President of the Third Conference of States Parties. My delegation will constructively engage throughout the conference, as a minimum commitment by Nigeria to the full implementation of the Treaty and its universalization.

I thank you.