

Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
General Debate 22 August 2016
Statement by Norway

Thank you Mr President

Let me start by thanking the Government of Nigeria for providing leadership of the ATT for this second Conference of States Parties. We also thank our host the Government of Switzerland as well as the secretariat and the UNDP for their valuable support of a young treaty in the period leading up to this meeting.

Mr President,

If applied to its highest potential, the ATT could contribute substantially to global security and stability. As has been pointed out by others, acts of terror rely on access to arms. The illicit arms trade is often a key factor in transnational organized crime, and to financing international terrorism and activities of non-state armed groups. People who live with armed violence tell us how it affects every aspect of their lives.

We therefore need to step up international efforts to stop the illicit and poorly regulated arms trade. We should apply this treaty's provisions to the broadest range of conventional arms, and to all armed conflicts, including non-international armed conflicts

This will require both effective implementation and universalization of the treaty. In several regions of the world where large numbers of arms contribute to high levels of conflict, we also see a low number of states parties. Norway will continue to work for the universalisation of the norms of this treaty. We welcome each new State Party, and we urge states to speed up their ratification processes.

We would like to pay tribute to the role of civil society for their valuable contributions to this end. We encourage non-governmental organizations to continue to monitor implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, and to use their regional networks to create further support for the Treaty.

Norway has from the outset attached great importance to the humanitarian aspects of the ATT because we see a clear link between illicit and irresponsible arms trade and human suffering. We have focused in particular on the treaty's potential to enhance the protection of civilians.

The ATT is the first international treaty that provides for an obligation to assess the potential for gender-based violence before authorizing an arms export. This is a great achievement and will hopefully contribute to enhanced focus on measures to prevent gender-based violence and armed violence against women and children.

Mr President,

All States Parties share a responsibility to fulfil the humanitarian potential of the ATT. We believe that transparency is essential in this regard. We are pleased to see that the large majority of States Parties which have submitted their initial and annual reports have chosen to make their reports publicly available. However, we note that half the states parties who should have done so have not yet submitted their annual reports. We encourage all states parties to comply with their obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, and we urge the secretariat to make it a priority to follow up this issue with the countries concerned and to provide assistance where needed.

Thank you.