

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

PROPOSED PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

On the Occasion of the
SECOND CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
ARMS TRADE TREATY
22-26 August 2016

(As of 22 August 2016)

Thank you for giving me the floor Mr. President.

At the outset, allow me to convey to you my delegation's sincere congratulations for your assumption to the presidency of the Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. Rest assured that the Philippine delegation would provide you with its full support and cooperation as you lead us to a successful conclusion.

The Philippines has staunchly and consistently supported the Arms Trade Treaty since it was first tabled before the First Committee of the General Assembly in 2006, and was very active during the negotiations of this landmark treaty. In fact, the Philippines signed the ATT on 25 September 2013 and became the first country in Southeast Asia to do so. While we have yet to ratify the ATT, the Philippines' unwavering support for the treaty is manifested in its various efforts to promote its understanding and universalization.

As part of these efforts, various national, regional and international workshops and seminars have been conducted and/or participated in by the Philippines, with assistance from international organizations and civil society partners. In 2013, the Philippines and United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) hosted the Second Asia Regional Meeting to Facilitate Dialogue on the Arms Trade Treaty, in Manila. The Manila Meeting identified priority areas, common challenges, as well as tools for assistance for countries in their efforts to move towards signing and ratifying the Treaty.

With the need to synergize the ATT with other existing international instruments, and to brief government agencies involved in conventional arms controls, the Philippines and the UNRCPD conducted the workshop on "Building Capacity in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control through the United Nations Programme of Action (UN-PoA)", which was held in November 2015 in Manila.

The Philippines will conduct a three-phased technical and legal assistance project to support the country in the implementation of the ATT and other disarmament treaties (to which the Philippines had expressed its commitments). This project is scheduled to take place at the end of this year. Thanks to UNRCPD and the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) their support in this endeavour.

Further, the Philippines and the European Union through the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) are also collaborating to conduct at the end of this year, two events

namely 1.) Practitioners Workshop for implementing agencies, and 2.) Outreach Seminar to Industry, with focus on the licensing procedures for the implementers of the treaty as well as a dialogue with the firearms industry on the nature and benefits of the treaty.

Likewise, and in line with its commitments to curb the proliferation of conventional arms transfers, the Philippines attended and participated in the series of ATT-related seminar workshops held in Thailand, Bangladesh, and Cambodia this year where we had opportunities to build the capacity of our various national agencies to effectively implement the treaty and promote its universalization, thanks to our civil society partners such as the Non-Violence International Southeast Asia and the Control Arms. The Philippines is also working closely with Nonviolence International Southeast Asia as a partner in conducting regional trainings on universalization and implementation in Asia, and has recently concluded a technical workshop in Siem Reap in May 2016 together with countries from the Asia Pacific and will have the second training in December 2016 in Bangkok.

Mr. Chairman, we are pleased to inform the Conference that Republic Act 10697, otherwise known as Strategic Trade Management Act (STMA), was passed into law in November 2015. The STMA aims to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and regulate conventional arms transfer through responsible management of strategic goods and the provisions of related services in trade and investment. This instrument is another milestone to implement the Philippine commitments to ATT and other treaties.

The Philippines is now in the process of drafting the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the STMA, a challenging endeavor as it entails the harmonization of the STMA provisions with existing domestic laws, as well as the establishment of Strategic Trade Management Office (STMO), which will be the primary government agency charged with implementing the STMA.

Mr. Chairman, the Philippines wish to assure the Conference that the domestic processes which will lead to the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty is underway.

Mr. Chairman, the Philippines welcomes the creation of a sponsorship program, which would allow for greater representation during the Arms Trade Treaty Meetings. The grant of sponsorship not only to delegates of States Parties, but also to delegates of States Signatories as well as other States not party nor signatory to the treaty, would encourage its universal application and adherence.

We likewise welcome the establishment of the Voluntary Trust Fund aimed at providing assistance to requesting States Parties which need support in implementing the ATT, which should be grounded on the principles of equity and transparency.

We thank Amb. Paul Beijer of Sweden and his team of experts for their work on drafting the reporting templates, which will no doubt help States Parties comply with the reporting mandates required by the Treaty.

The Philippines is concerned that proliferation of conventional arms has contributed to violence and instability in many parts of the world. In this current volatile international climate and alarming instances of armed violence regardless of the motive, the Philippines believes that strong regulations embodied in the ATT which covers conventional weapons intended for military use and small arms, their ammunition, parts and components, should be universally implemented.

The Philippines signed the ATT to fulfil our country's commitment to uphold international peace, security, and the rule of law.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.