

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
ATT CSP5
Regional Joint Statement on Diversion
Latin America and Caribbean Region
August 27, 2019

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the following Latin America and Caribbean State Parties: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay, and my own country Costa Rica, and the following Signatory State: Haiti.

For our region, the challenges posed by the illicit arms trade and diversion are quite important. Our countries have made steady efforts to strengthen national legislations and institutions, as it relates to national control lists, and transfer assessments, in order to improve compliance with the obligations of the Arms Trade Treaty, more notably the prevention of diversion. However, the Latin American and Caribbean region, is disproportionately affected by the constant supply, availability, and proliferation of arms and ammunitions. The illicit arms trade and diversion are a current concern, due to its critical role within the region's worrisome armed violence records; where the high incidence of violent crimes are linked to the use of firearms. These incidents have reached high proportions and represent a key challenge to sustainable development in the region. The diversion of small arms and light weapons to criminal organizations also contributes to this alarming situation, which reduces citizen security, impedes socio-economic development, erodes confidence in national security, and heightens fear among the population.

The Arms Trade Treaty makes a significant contribution to international and regional peace, security and stability. Strengthening controls over arms and ammunitions trade, and ensuring compliance with the Treaty, is an important step in the right direction towards addressing this situation.

Nonetheless, this is an ongoing effort, one that requires strong political commitment, as well as strengthened trans-boundary cooperation and assistance. In this regard, and in addition to the development of procedures and mechanisms to prevent and/or mitigate diversion, we have identified that State responsibility works in both directions, as exporters and importers; therefore all States involved in the transfer of arms, must identify risks of diversion as part of their arms trade control practices, and work proactively, to minimize opportunities for arms diversion.

In our estimation, States are also required to work closely with the private sector, both industry and entities involved in the supply chain management, to maximize efforts in preventing diversion, especially when they have knowledge that the arms being sold and/or transferred, may be diverted or used to commit illegal acts and/or transgressions against international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

In this regard, we welcome the two informal exchanges to discuss cases of detected or suspected diversion, scheduled to take place in the margins of CSP5, which draw from the three-tiered approach on the exchange of diversion information adopted in the CSP4.

Finally, we also believe that transparency and information-sharing practices by all States and actors involved in the arms trade is essential. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we have made important progress in this regard and call on all States Parties to act in good faith in complying with the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty, while also calling on non-States Parties to halt arms transfers that may violate the Treaty. We hope that national and regional databases, and information exchange mechanisms, as well as other tools and processes, are developed in the near future, to strengthen cooperation and to better support the Treaty's implementation and its impact on the ground.

Thank you, Mr. President!