



State of Palestine
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates

State of Palestine
General Debate

Thank you Madam President.

Madam President,

Arms Control is a matter of collective security for all states; it rises above narrow interests of the few because it must reflect the interests of the wider international community in preserving regional and global peace and security. We are convinced that real and universal respect of the international rules-based system and the norms it embodies in the form of treaties and conventions is essential to protect the world from the devastation of chaos and lawlessness.

Adherence to these norms represents the yardstick with which the international community can measure a state's commitment to the Arms Trade Treaty and the values it represents. This entails a responsibility to make every effort to ensure that violators of IHL and IHRL are not provided with arms and ammunition. This is also an obligation of third States in accordance with their commitment to not only respect but also to ensure respect for international law. By adhering to this important standard, States would be effectively implementing their responsibility in promoting the Treaty objectives.

Madam President,

Irresponsible arms transfers and lack of respect for the provisions of the treaty come at a high price to human life and dignity.

In this regard, it is essential to highlight the connection between the arms trade in our region and the sustained violations of the Palestinian people's human rights by Israel, the occupying Power. Israel's arms sales reached a new record in 2022, with double the number of exports compared to around a decade ago. This significant increase in arms



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exports, coupled with Israel's ongoing egregious violations of international law, as reported in countless reports by United Nations bodies and international civil society organisations, creates a deeply alarming situation. Indeed, in the book "The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation around the World" released this year, journalist Antony Lowenstein shows in great detail how Israel tests its weapons on occupied Palestinians, then markets them as "battle-tested" in order to then sell them to countries across the globe for profit. This is not only morally repugnant, but also illegal and States have a legal obligation not import arms that have been tested in this way.

This underlines the importance of addressing the impact of arms transfers on the human rights situation in the region, and its consequences on regional and international peace and security. It also underscores the importance of the theme chosen for this session. We believe that industry's responsible engagement is pivotal for preventing the negative consequences of the arms trade and advancing the goals of the Arms Trade Treaty.

In conclusion, Madam President, the State of Palestine firmly believes and calls on all States parties to join hands in achieving a world where arms transfers are conducted with the utmost responsibility, ethics, and respect for human rights. We owe this to the countless victims of senseless war, violence, colonialism, apartheid, and terror, including state-sanctioned terror. We owe this to all those who wish to live in peace.

I thank you.