



Arms Trade Treaty
3rd Conference of States Parties
Geneva, 11 – 15 September 2017
Agenda Point 9: International Assistance
H.E. M. Erwin Bollinger
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Voluntary Trust Fund

Mr. President

As a member of the VTF's Selection Committee, Switzerland is, in general terms, pleased with the first project cycle's development so far. We are especially grateful to Ambassador Biontino to have agreed to lead the group and to have so efficiently guided it as it had to break new ground.

Switzerland welcomes that a high number of projects were submitted to the selection committee from diverse regions and sub-regions.

Most approved projects have the potential of significantly advancing the ATT implementation processes in the respective countries. Some 1.6 million have been committed in support of projects in the first VTF cycle out of 1.9 million. It will be important that the fund be replenished via new contributions.

We welcome the initial lessons learnt identified by the selection committee in its report. Some of the challenges seem of particular importance to us, like assessing the political commitment towards ratification of non-states parties applicants or a better understanding of what constitutes implementation.

We are also grateful that the selection committee is working on finding the most appropriate solutions to address these challenges. In a long-term perspective, it could be useful to think about establishing certain quality standards or strategic guidelines, which short-listed projects would need to fulfill in addition to the formal requirements already applied. The experience of 2-3 project cycles might allow for a first analysis whether such additional standards could be useful or not.

We also fully support the recommendations formulated by the VTF selection committee in its report. This concerns in particular the provision of a mandate to the VTF to seek and identify the most appropriate options to secure the capacitation of the VTF administration.

Finally, I would like to inform that, as in this project cycle, Switzerland will also make a similar contribution to the next project cycle of the VTF.

Thank you, Mr. President.