

Working Group on Universalization

Initial Work Plan, Rev. 1

Introduction

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a legally-binding instrument which seeks to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms. The ATT came into force on 24 December 2014 when the ratification threshold of 50 signatories set for its entry into force was attained. Currently, the Treaty has 91 States Parties ratifications or accessions and a further 42 Signatories whose ratifications are still pending. Considering that the Treaty has been hardly two years in force, these numbers are impressive. However, if the Treaty is to be truly universal, the current level of membership needs to increase through the creation of a momentum towards more ratification, accessions or acceptance.

Mandate given by CSP2

CSP2 established an Informal Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGU) with the objective of leading the process of harmonizing thoughts on the issue of universalization with a view to determining the best approach for taking the issue forward. The Informal Working Group shall generate and share views and implementation measures on Treaty universalization and where appropriate, place in context vital lessons from other Treaties and Conventions. It shall convene meetings in a public format and include States, civil society and advocacy groups to generate new ideas and strategies for advancing universalization.

The Working Paper *Promotion of Arms Trade Treaty Universalization* (ATT/CSP2/2016/WP.4/Rev.1) will serve as a basic document for WGU work at least until CSP3. Stakeholders will be invited to present other working papers and documents to facilitate the deliberations.

CSP2 mandated the President with the responsibility of facilitating the work of the Working Group up until the next annual ordinary session of the Conference. On 21st September 2016, the CSP3 President appointed Ambassador Emmanuel Imohe (Nigeria) as the Co-Chair of the WGU.

WGU will present reports on its deliberations to CSP3 and to CSP3 Preparatory Meetings.

Meetings / Terms of Reference

The WGU will hold one or two meetings before the CSP3, as deemed appropriate by the Co-Chairs. The envisaged duration of a meeting is from ½ to 1 working day.

Whenever possible, the meetings will be scheduled back to back with other WG and ATT meetings. The first meeting of the WGU was held on 9th February 2017, following the meetings of working groups on Effective Treaty Implementation (6-7 February) and Reporting and Transparency (8 February).

The meetings will be held in Geneva, where they may be supported by the Secretariat. To minimize budget implications, English shall be the working language of the meetings. Direct meetings costs, such as for conference, technical support and documentation shall be covered by the budget of the CSP3. Indirect meeting costs, such as travel and accommodation, shall be borne by participants.

The meetings shall be open to participation by ATT States Parties, Signatory States and other States, as well as by representatives of international and regional organizations, civil society, industry, and other groups.

Draft outline of the WGU Work Plan and possible deliberations

Review membership status

- 1) Review the status of ratifications, accessions, and signatures.
- 2) Assess ATT membership level and outreach activities by region/sub-region (possibility of specific study groups for regions/sub-regions).

Outreach activities

A. International level

- 3) Receive reports on recent and relevant events (Conferences, Workshops, etc.).
- 4) Receive presentations of:
 - a. relevant activities of other WGs;
 - b. relevant activities of the VTF;
 - c. relevant research and policy reports; and
 - d. relevant research and other project plans.
- 5) Conduct expert hearings.
- 6) Share lessons learned on universalization of other treaties and conventions.
- 7) Develop cooperation and outreach with relevant UN agencies.
- 8) Exchange of views with relevant global and regional parliamentary organizations and parliamentarians.
- 9) Exchange of views with Civil Society on cooperation to promote ATT Universalization.

B. Regional level

- 10) Develop cooperation with UN Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament.
- 11) Exchange of views with regional/sub-regional organizations on cooperation to promote ATT universalization in their area.

C. National level

- 12) Identify states for universalization outreach.
- 13) Identify possible entities to conduct outreach activities (e.g. ATT Presidency, WGU Co-Chair, Vice Presidents, regional and sub-regional organizations, States, civil society representatives).
- 14) Report, as appropriate, on consultations with non-State Parties on the prospects of their ratification of/accession to the Treaty.

In order to realise the Treaty universalization objectives set out above, the Working Group will develop specific activities and targets.

Annex. Working paper *Promotion of Arms Trade Treaty Universalization* (ATT/CSP2/2016/WP.4/Rev.1).
