



BELGIUM

Agenda Item 10. Matters pertaining to Financial Contributions

Arms Trade Treaty Fourth Conference of States Parties (Tokyo, 20-24 August 2018)

Mr President,

Belgium wishes to thank the Management Committee for its efforts to explore a way forward on the issue of delayed and unpaid contributions. Unfortunately, the ATT is not the only arms control arrangement confronted with this challenge. A prolongation of this kind of problems can raise doubts about the continued commitment of the international community to arms control as an essential component of the international security architecture.

The report of the management committee identifies a number of causes of delayed or non-payment and offers some useful measures to address these. We welcome these, with the understanding that the ATT financial rules already contain a number of provisions to deal with the issue of arrears. It is important to use the tools already at our disposal and we should therefore maintain the focus on the full implementation of the current ATT financial rules.

As regards the measures presented in Table 1, we are not convinced by the idea of showing flexibility regarding the exchange rates and the possibility of payment in national currency. This would transfer the problem to the ATT-secretariat and would risk creating a limited but in term structural deficit problem.

With respect to the proposed options under the heading F in the paper of the Management Committee, we can agree with reviewing the application of current measures and their effectiveness. We are however reluctant to embark at this stage on an exercise of identifying the types of arrangements on the basis of which states parties would be discharged from their financial obligations as suggested in par. 18 c, d and e of the report.

As regards a possible reserve fund, this proposal calls for careful consideration. The overarching principle should be that we find an arrangement to avoid short term cash flow problems, but without letting States in arrears off the hook. One possible idea would be to strictly limit the use of such a fund to the functioning of the ATT secretariat and the payment of salaries.

Finally Mr. President,

We are in favor of an increased outreach effort towards States Parties in arrears. In this regard, we believe it to be important not to limit our messaging to a confined set of administrative contact points, but to also raise the issue with other interlocutors having an influence, including at a decision-making or political level. The Bureau, including the President, can play an important role by awareness raising in their official contacts.