



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

20 AUGUST 2018

**ARMS TRADE TREATY
FOURTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES**

**AGENDA ITEM 4 – GENERAL DEBATE
NATIONAL STATEMENT – CANADA**

Mr. President,

Canada is pleased to be here today to participate in the Arms Trade Treaty's 4th Conference of States Parties.

As we all know, conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, represent the vast majority of weapons used in armed conflicts. Irresponsible transfers of these weapons can

- fuel, intensify, and prolong conflict;
- lead to regional instability;
- contribute to violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including gender-based violence;
- hinder development; and
- exacerbate structural inequalities affecting women and girls.

The Arms Trade Treaty, as the first legally-binding instrument ever negotiated in the United Nations to establish common standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons, plays a vital role in preventing these negative consequences of the irresponsible transfers of conventional arms.

Canada remains committed to acceding to this important international instrument and legislation to permit our accession is currently before our parliament.

While Canada already meets the vast majority of the ATT's obligations, accession is important to us because quite simply it's the right thing to do. Our commitment to ATT accession reflects our desire to bring ourselves into line with many nations who have already signed or ratified the treaty.

We are working to further strengthen our export controls regime to increase not only its rigour, but its transparency. We know there are ways that we can make improvements and are in the process of doing so.

Earlier this year we renewed and expanded Canada's Weapons Threat Reduction Program to also now provide support towards the universalization of treaties and conventions related to the proliferation of conventional weapons. This expansion reflects the priority Canada attaches to strengthening a rules-based international order, to which the Arms Trade Treaty contributes.

Canada has contributed to a number of recent projects related to conventional arms. We provided funding to UNSCAR in support of the implementation of both the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action. We also supported Small Arms Survey's Security Assessment in North Africa which tracks illicit arms flows in Africa.

We are moving ahead with new projects with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (on mine action) and with the Small Arms Survey (on SALW), as well as investigating other potential partnerships in this area.

While we still have work to do to improve our system and accede to the treaty we are confident that we will do so and look forward to joining you as a States Party.

Thank you Mr. President.