



Republic of Ghana

Please Check against delivery

OPENING STATEMENT

BY H:E FRANK OKYERE

**AMBASSADOR EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA IN
JAPAN**

AT THE

**THE FOURTH CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES TO
THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (ATT)**

TOKYO, JAPAN

20th AUGUST, 201



Republic of Ghana

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

My delegation warmly congratulates you and other members of the bureau on your election to preside over the fourth conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty and we wish to assure you of our full cooperation and support.

Mr. President,

The Arms Trade Treaty is a landmark global instrument. It establishes binding international norms on the global trade of arms. As we know, the ATT seeks to address the human suffering caused by insufficient controls over transfers of conventional weapons. The severity of these consequences cannot be overestimated. The proliferation of arms and ammunition facilitates violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and of human rights law, including acts of terrorism and sexual and gender-based violence.

Mr. President,

Ghana places special value and emphasis on the need for the ATT universalization especially in Africa. While we congratulate all new States Parties, we wish to note that, for the treaty's promise of reducing human suffering is to be fully realized, more States must adhere to the treaty and it must be implemented in good faith,

with the highest possible standards. We therefore call on States who have not yet ratified or acceded to the ATT to do so without any further delays.

Ghana is a strong supporter of the regional approach for the universalization for the ATT and wish to call for its consideration. We have demonstrated our support for the regional approach for the universalization by hosting the COARM Second Regional Workshop on Arms Transfer Controls and Arms Diversion in October 2017 in Accra. The Regional meeting which was organized in collaboration with the European Union and the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Controls (BAFA) is an example of fruitful and effective actions to promote the universalization of the ATT in Africa and is indeed a significant achievement, for the ATT Universalization.

Mr. President,

Article 5 of the ATT has been described by many states including Ghana as the back bone of the ATT. It has been frequently stated that in order to build confidence among States Parties and civil society, the treaty must be faithfully implemented at the National level.

Ghana has heeded to this call and currently adopting various measures to implement the ATT effectively. For us Mr. President, the ATT implementation has become a national priority.

With the support of the VTF Fund, Ghana has completed the consultation process for the National Control List. The list is currently undergoing the required administrative procedures to be enacted as a Legislative Instrument.

Again, we have initiated a consultation process to adopt an institutional legal regime for the implementation of the ATT in Ghana. This would complement the adoption of a National Control List.

Mr. President.

Ghana has been a partner country of the EU ATT Outreach programme being implemented by the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Controls (BAFA) and Expertise France since 2015. The Ghana/EU Outreach programme has successfully produced the underlisted outcomes

- Ratification of the ATT by Ghana's parliament on 24th July 2015,
- Enhanced Capacity of various Implementing Agencies in Ghana,
- Improved inter-agency collaboration for the implementation of the ATT in Ghana,
- Sustained political Interest,
- Robust domestic Legal review to incorporate the ATT underway.

Mr. President,

Before I conclude and in recognition of the one minute silence observed, permit me to make a statement on behalf of the people of Ghana for the passing on of one of the illustrious and selfless international diplomats in recent times, Mr. Kofi Annan, seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) from 1997 to 2006.

A son of Ghana who rose through the ranks of the UN to lead the organization with vision and integrity, Mr. Annan represented what hard work can achieve in life – an internationalist who fought for all that is good for humanity. Much has been said about his life already – i.e. chairman of humanitarian group (The Elders) formed by Nelson Mandela, Chancellor of the University of Ghana – Legon, UN Special Envoy to Syria and also, to Kenya, and remembered for the comprehensive reforms of the UN during his time as Secretary General and the introduction of the millennium development goals under his leadership of the UN.

For the people of Ghana, we remember Mr. Annan and his peers as the generation that returned our dear country to constitutional rule in 1993. Since then, his mediatory role and timely interventions from within and out of the country have

helped in keeping our constitutional democracy in the right direction. He played similar roles in Africa to ensure that our continent largely remained peaceful.

But more specific to this gathering, it was Mr. Annan's time as Secretary General that the report of the first governmental panel of experts on small arms was produced in 1997 in response to a global determination to identify and manage post-conflict arms. Referring to its destructive impact on human lives, Mr. Annan aptly described small arms and light weapons as weapons of mass destruction in 2006 and led the processes that culminated in the adoption of the "Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplementing the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime" and the "Programme of action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" both in 2001. These two documents have inspired several regional and sub-regional protocols internalizing standards and norms for small arms control around the world such that today, the world is united in ensuring that the entire range of conventional arms are transferred effectively under the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Indeed, Mr. Annan's pursuits, with its challenges as all determined efforts would have it, constitute a legacy of empowerment for the underprivileged in the world.

While the world mourns the loss of Kofi Annan, we would like to urge all State Parties to the ATT to remain committed to its key objective to contribute to international and regional peace, security and stability, reducing human suffering, and promoting cooperation, transparency and responsible action among the international community. This was indeed the desire and vision of Kofi Annan.

I thank you.