

Nonviolence International Southeast Asia
Statement: General Debate
4th Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Tokyo, Japan
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Thank you, Mr. President.

In Southeast Asia, universalization of the ATT has been slow, but certainly, measures to implement it are present. This is a region that has been ravaged by war, from its colonial past to the threat of armed conflict in the present and its catastrophic effects on human security within and across state borders. It remains to be an emerging market for weapons proliferation of all types used in war, from small arms, to landmines, to nuclear weapons and its parts.

For these reasons, this is a region which abhors the consequences of war and the devastation caused by the irresponsible use of weapons. The link between development and security holds especially true for Southeast Asia, whose primary concerns are focused on overcoming development challenges while facing security challenges, the latter often impacting the former negatively.

Nonviolence International's work in Southeast Asia, in our discussions on the ground with government officials and representatives, civil society organizations and victims of armed violence and war, has revealed that the region is in fact prepared to implement the Treaty at different stages, but whose needs and views of an arms control regime should be understood in a particular context. We offer the following general recommendations for consideration at this session:

First, while national control systems in Southeast Asia are present, these are far from harmonized. There are legal and practical systems, be it small arms control or export control systems, dedicated to specific weapons types that independently fulfill parts of the Treaty. Assistance to the region should work towards harmonizing these national systems and building on what is already present.

Second, a shared problem among countries is the threat of diversion. There are regional and multilateral agreements in the works that aim to promote measures against diversion, but the ATT can provide even closer and more focused cooperation between states on targeted issues. Efforts in the region must highlight this as one of the benefits of becoming a state party.

Finally, Southeast Asia does not see the proliferation of arms as an isolated issue, but one connected to many national and regional challenges. Regulation alone is not the region's aim. Instead, weapons proliferation should be discussed under how it can affect larger issues such as development and modernization and contribute to preventing the outbreak and exacerbation of destructive internal conflicts.

Mr. President,

When the Arms Trade Treaty was passed in 2013, it was heralded as a landmark treaty in the regulation of arms, previously considered politically impossible to tackle. We are at our 4th Conference of States Parties and still have considerable work ahead of us. Unfortunately, even states with more stringent export controls and who have been staunch supporters of the ATT can undermine our efforts by supplying weapons in situations where it is abundantly clear that they will be used to violate the

principles of the Treaty. As states continue discussions for the rest of the week on universalization, transparency and cooperation in this Conference, we must be reminded of the work that has been done and only move forward.

Thank you, Mr. President.