

Fourth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Tokyo, 20-24 August 2018

General Debate

General Statement by Counsellor Renārs Danelsons
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Mr. President,

At the outset, on behalf of the Latvian Government, I would like to express our deep gratitude to you, Mr. President, and your team for the inestimable efforts in organizing this Fourth Conference of States Parties. I would like to thank the head of the Secretariat Mr. Dumisani Dladla for tireless efforts in securing all activities under the Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. President,

The Latvian delegation aligns itself with the statement *delivered/to be delivered* by the European Union and would like to add some remarks in a national capacity.

Latvia ratified the Arms Trade Treaty on 2 April 2014 thus contributing to the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty at the end of 2014. Successful implementation of the Treaty at the national level has been a priority of the Latvian government. A wide spectrum of measures and activities were put in place to maintain the highest possible standards in control of trade with conventional arms at national level. Higher standards of responsibility and traceability in the transfer of defense products have been achieved. Today we are prepared and willing to share our experience and best practices in order to assist other countries on their way to develop effective and internationally recognized export control of arms.

Latvia considers that universalization of the Treaty is a key to a world without violence caused by unsanctioned circulation of arms. A universalization process allows further common peace building efforts where the Treaty's strong human rights and conflict prevention criteria are met in weapon trade deals and transfers.

We welcome new states joining the Arms Trade Treaty - Chile that has ratified the Treaty and became a State Party on 16 August, Cameroon that will become a full-fledged State Party on 16 September of this year and last but not least – likewise Brazil on November 12.

Latvia shares concerns expressed during the third Conference of State Parties in Geneva that despite an increased number of countries who have ratified the Treaty,

the Treaty global coverage is uneven. It would be of utmost importance to promote the Treaty and encourage States to join it, especially in the Middle East and Asia.

Equally, Latvia is concerned with the number of outstanding national assessed financial contributions. The effectiveness of the Treaty depends on the availability of resources to carry out its mandated activities. Non-payment or delayed payment of contributions seriously hamper normal functioning of not only the Secretariat but also the treaty as a whole. Such a situation is not acceptable. Latvia calls on all States Parties to fulfil their obligations towards ATT and pay assessed contributions in time and in full.

Mr. President,

Latvia is taking part in outreach activities under the European Union's programs. At the beginning of this year a Latvian national expert participated in the "First EU ATT Train the Trainer Session" and in July a Latvian expert shared Latvia's arms export control practices in Accra under the EU export control program for arms project "2nd ATT Roadmap Activity for Ghana". Successful and sustainable development of ATT is of crucial importance to the international community. Every activity by the Treaty's State party creates a positive input for the achievement of the main objectives of the Treaty. Inactivity, in contrary, contains hidden threats.

Mr. President,

Close cooperation between individuals and enterprises as well as cooperation between countries create conditions for development and growth. It allows the elimination of minor disagreements and fosters achievement of common goals. I am confident that this Conference of State Parties will be a good example of close cooperation between countries with a common goal to enhance and further promote an effective arms export control worldwide.