

**Keynote Remarks by Mr. Timo Soini,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland  
at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty,  
Geneva 11 September 2017**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Arms Trade Treaty does not operate in a vacuum. As we meet, many fundamentals of international security are under pressure. In different parts of the world, countries rely more on force than on international rules and peaceful cooperation.

We need this Treaty. It supports human rights and humanitarian law. It promotes transparency and confidence-building. It provides common ground for the defence industry. Somebody said that only 20 years ago international trade of bananas was better regulated than trade of assault rifles and battle tanks.

Tomorrow I will be speaking at the Conference of Disarmament. I will point out that in arms control and disarmament we must pay more attention to conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons. Over half a million people a year are killed in conflicts, terrorist attacks and crime with ordinary weapons and explosives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ATT has established a necessary norm at a global level. I would add that regional agreements and cooperation are also very useful and complement the Arms Trade Treaty. During the Finnish Presidency contacts have been established with all major regional organisations.



At the moment we have 92 State Parties, almost half of UN Member States. This is a good achievement. But for the ATT to be even more effective, it should be close to universal. Promoting universality has been a priority for the Finnish Presidency Team and Finnish Embassies around the World. We are grateful for the support that we have received from the civil society in our work.

There has also been strong emphasis on concrete efforts to support national implementation of new States Parties. I think we can all be proud about ATT's own Voluntary Trust Fund which has been established for that purpose.

My own Government of Finland contributed 270 000 dollars to the Voluntary Trust Fund during the First Funding Cycle this year. I am pleased to inform you that Finland is planning to give a substantial financial contribution also in the next Cycle in 2018.

After the establishment of the necessary administrative structures, The ATT Community is increasingly addressing substantive questions. At this stage we need to focus on the future, such as the impact of technological developments. Which new weapons and products need to be included, in order to maintain the efficiency of arms transfers regulation?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We can be optimistic about the future of the Arms Trade Treaty. We are doing well. But we truly are in the very beginning in of this joint effort.

Finland is committed to continue working with you so that the Arms Trade Treaty achieves its full potential. I wish you all a successful Conference and I am eager to hear the remarks of other members in this High Level panel.