

Third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
General Debate 11 August 2017
Statement by Norway

Thank you Mr. President

On behalf of the Norwegian delegation, I would like to express our deep gratitude to you and your team. We also want to express our appreciation to our host the Government of Switzerland - as well as the Secretariat - for their valuable support. Let me assure you, Mr. President, of my delegation's full support. We look forward to a productive and positive.

Mr. President,

If applied to its highest potential, the ATT could contribute substantially to global security and stability, as well as mitigating a range of other challenges. Acts of terror rely on access to arms. The illicit arms trade is often a key factor in transnational organized crime and it contributes to financing international terrorism and activities of non-state armed groups. People who are victims of armed violence tell us how this affects every aspect of their lives.

Therefore, we need to continue and strengthen international efforts to stop the illicit and poorly regulated arms trade. We should continue to apply this treaty's provisions to the broadest range of conventional arms, and to all armed conflicts, including non-international armed conflicts.

Norway greatly appreciates the efforts made so far by the ATT working groups continuing the important work of implementing the treaty, focusing the aspects of transparency and reporting and the essential task of universalization. The efforts of the working groups are vital in bringing the treaty to its highest potential.

Norway warmly welcomes the recent ratifications and accessions to the ATT. This is a testament to our common efforts to promote universalization of this important Treaty – and an important reminder of the work still remaining:

In several regions of the world where large numbers of arms contribute to high levels of conflict, we see a low number of states parties. Norway will continue to support and work for the universalization of the norms of this treaty. We welcome each new State Party, and we encourage states to speed up and continue their ratification processes.

My delegation would like to pay tribute to the role of civil society for their valuable contributions to this end. We encourage non-governmental organizations to continue monitoring the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, and to mobilize their regional networks to create further support for the Arms Trade Treaty.

Norway has from the outset attached great importance to the humanitarian aspects of the ATT because we recognize a clear link between illicit and irresponsible arms trade and human suffering. We will continue to focus in particular on the Treaty's potential to secure the protection of civilian lives.

We want to emphasize again this year that the ATT is the first international treaty that provides for an obligation to assess the potential for gender-based violence before authorizing an arms export. This is a great achievement and hopefully contribute to enhanced focus on measures to prevent gender-based violence and armed violence against women and children.

Mr. President,

All States Parties share the responsibility to fulfil the humanitarian potential of the ATT. We believe that transparency is vital in this regard. My delegation is pleased to see that many States Parties have submitted their initial and annual reports publicly. These acts of transparency will contribute to our shared goals.

However, we note that several States Parties have not yet submitted their annual reports. We encourage all states parties to honor their obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, and we will continue to applaud the Secretariat's efforts to follow up this issue with the countries concerned and to provide assistance where needed.

Finally, let us all recognize again the ATT as a milestone for the international community – for the first time we have established legally binding standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons on a global level. Much work remains to be done, but we are confident that the growing number of States Parties – together with the civil society - will continue to work together to strengthen the ATT and put an end to the illicit and poorly regulated arms trade.

Thank you, Mr. President.