



**SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT TO THE THIRD CONFERENCE OF STATE  
PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

**11 September 2017**

[Check against delivery]

Mr President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you Mr President for your hard work over the last year for the outreach activities you have undertaken and your leadership during preparations for this Third Conference of State Parties.

Mr President,

The central pillar of the ATT is premised on the requirement that State Parties should establish, where they do not already exist, effective national conventional arms transfer control legislation, together with the requisite dedicated conventional arms control systems.

In this regard, Mr President, as part of South Africa's commitment to responsible arms transfers we have established a national legal framework, including the National Conventional Arms Control Act which ensures proper accountability in the trade in conventional arms as well as the Firearms Control Act which establishes a comprehensive and effective system of commercial firearms control and management. Our national control lists are consistent with the ATT scope and adopted definitions. In addition, South Africa has a rigorous governmental inter-departmental review process that precedes decisions to authorise or not to authorise arms transfers. As part of our reporting arrangements on arms transfers, reports are made to Cabinet, National Parliament, the United Nations, the Arms Trade Treaty and other international organisations that South Africa is party to. All of this

underscores South Africa's continued commitment to fulfil its international role as a responsible manufacturer, possessor and trader in conventional arms.

Mr President,

South Africa believes that the ATT will, through regulating the legal trade in conventional weapons, combat the illicit trade in weapons, which exacerbates conflict and crime, especially in Africa. The full and effective implementation of the ATT will tangibly contribute to promoting international and regional peace security and stability, socio-economic development as well as to reduce human suffering.

Mr President,

The establishment and maintenance of arms control systems, as envisaged under the Treaty, is a complex task if viewed against the ever-changing strategic environment and the ever decreasing resources. In this context, South Africa supports the adoption of a long term perspective in the implementation of the Treaty. South Africa welcomes the ATT process that, through the work of the working groups, creates a continuous platform for all states (both exporting and importing) to exchange views and share experiences on the implementation of obligations under the Treaty. At a national level, it is imperative that the necessary support and assistance also be extended to those State Parties and Signatories States that may require assistance to fulfil their obligations. It is with this understanding in mind that South Africa will, later in the week, approach and engage in the discussion on the structuring of the ATT future work on national Treaty implementation.

We believe that the object and purpose of the Treaty, as set in Article 1, will only be achieved when all States Parties move in concert in Treaty implementation and build a critical mass to establish a new arms transfer norm.

Mr President,

We conclude by encouraging all states that have not yet become States Parties to the ATT to undertake all that is necessary to ratify the Treaty and become States Parties to the Treaty.

Once again we wish to thank you, Mr President, the Bureau, the Management Committee and the Secretariat for the hard work that has been done toward this Third Conference of State Parties. I thank you