

CSP3 General Debate: UK Statement

Mr President,

1. I would like to support the statement made on behalf of the EU and its Member States and wish to add some comments in a national capacity.
2. At the outset I would like to record my gratitude to you for your commitment and work since being elected President of CSP3. In particular the travel you have undertaken to promote further awareness and universalisation of the Arms Trade Treaty. We now need to focus on making the most of the next five days to ensure that the work of the ATT remains energised and that we can make further, substantive progress towards meeting the Treaty's objects and purpose.
3. The conclusion of CSP2 marked the final step in putting in place the key structures and processes of the ATT. As a result our work leading to CSP3 has been focused on delivering results; setting the route for progress, co-ordinating work with other interested parties, and ensuring that duplication is minimised, but true complementarity encouraged. Progress has been made. The Working Groups have had a number of meetings and I look forward to discussing the proposals contained in their draft papers. These should be at the heart of our discussions over this week, including assessing their mandates for the forthcoming year. Their role is central to ATT progress.
4. As we look to the future of the ATT we need to keep in mind the overarching vision of a globally well-regulated, legal trade in arms in order to better identify, and then tackle, illicit flows (to build a safer world). Within that context it is important that CSP3 starts developing a long-term vision for what the ATT should be achieving i.e. better identification of illicit arms flows and then taking action on them.
5. Universalisation and implementation remain the priorities. Only through true universalisation will the Treaty be able to challenge and reduce the impact of the illicit arms trade and fulfil the goal we all share of creating a stable, reliable and transparent environment in which governments and legitimate companies can operate. However we also need to consider whether we should be more focussed in our work on universalisation. The Treaty is strengthened by each new ratification – but there are some very significant absentees from the current list and we should consider what can be done to bring them into the fold. Consequently while we welcome the increase in States Parties over the last 12 months it remains important to address the specific concerns of key states that have so far proved reluctant to accede to the ATT and find ways of

convincing them that the Treaty is neither a threat to their right to self defence nor to their own arms industry.

6. On implementation we welcome the progress made by the Voluntary Trust Fund and commend Ambassador Biontino on his chairing of the VTF and the secretariat for its work on the bidding process. There are clearly lessons to be learned from the first round of funding but in terms of funds raised, bids received and assessed and the amount of support disbursed the VTF has made a strong start and will clearly play an important role in the future.
7. Both civil society and industry have much to offer the ATT, particularly around the priorities of implementation and universalisation. It is important that we harness those contributions to ensure we make the best use of them. Civil Society already plays an active role in ATT processes but industry has been less engaged since the Treaty was drafted. They have an important role to play –in delivering a positive message to contacts in non-States Parties which may be less receptive to traditional diplomatic lobbying. We need to be clear on what the ATT means for industry and why it can be a positive for them, with the aim of them promoting this message to partners and governments in their regular business contacts.
8. It is important that our discussions over this week are forward looking as we seek to ensure that the ATT can be a mechanism that makes a tangible difference to stability and security in the world. With that in mind we must address the issue of funding. It is concerning that so early in its existence the Treaty is facing the financial challenges that have hit other treaties and conventions. These issues need to be tackled early and effectively otherwise they will impact on our ability to achieve our ambitions. The UK looks forward to taking part in a lively and forward-looking discussion over the next few days, which will result in clear, achievable objectives moving ahead to CSP4 and beyond.