



**DECLARATION FROM PARLIAMENTARIANS TO THE UN SECRETARY
GENERAL ON THE ATT UN CONSULTATION PROCESS**

We stand at a critical moment on the road to a tough legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that will help to prevent irresponsible transfers of conventional weapons. As democratically elected representatives we strongly welcome the adoption on 6 December 2006 by the UN General Assembly of Resolution 61/89, which marks the start of a process towards an ATT, and the overwhelming support it received from 153 states. Moreover, over 100 states have submitted their views on the ATT to the UN Secretary General. This is a further indication of the seriousness with which the international community regards this issue.

For many years, parliamentarians from all regions have voiced their concerns about the irresponsible spread of conventional weapons. These weapons exacerbate conflicts and instability, facilitate terrorist attacks, undermine development, and contribute to serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Every day, millions of men, women and children are in fear of armed violence, partly because weapons are too easily moved across borders into the hands of people and to groups who use them to violate people's basic rights. Human rights and human security will continue to be at the mercy of irresponsible traders until there is an effective international agreement setting high common standards for all forms of international arms transfers covering all conventional arms. This is a global challenge; it requires a global response.

It is with these issues in mind that parliamentarians from around the world have repeatedly expressed their support for an international ATT that would establish binding common standards on the global trade in conventional arms. In May 2006, at the 114th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the First Committee on Peace and Security passed a resolution on *The role of parliamentarians in strengthening the control of trafficking in SALW and their ammunitions*, which called on parliaments to "promote the development of an international ATT to strictly regulate arms transfers on the basis of State obligations under international law and internationally accepted norms and human rights standards".

An ATT that reflects states' existing legal obligations and whose implementation and enforcement are open to public monitoring will contribute to conflict prevention, and help prevent irresponsible arms transfers from being used in serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, or in terrorist acts and the like. We encourage all countries, through a fruitful exchange of experiences and ideas, to make their contribution in finding a common approach to developing such high common standards.

We convey here our sincere hope that the recent progress toward an ATT will be maintained throughout and beyond the 2008 deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts mandated by the UN General Assembly resolution. We are greatly encouraged by these recent advances and look forward to future discussions proceeding in an atmosphere of mutual confidence and harmonious collaboration on which the fate of the Treaty will depend. It is in this context that we call upon all states to move quickly towards the negotiation of a strong and effective ATT that will prevent irresponsible arms transfers. As Parliamentarians we offer an assurance that our concern and actions will remain focussed on the realisation of an effective ATT.

Signed.....

Full name..... **Country**.....

Email.....