



### **Third Informal Preparatory Meeting for the 2017 Conference of States Parties** Geneva, Switzerland, 1 June 2017

Although it still lacked regional balance, the third Informal Preparatory Meeting saw better attendance than previous PrepComs, particularly from African and Latin American states. This is in part due to the efforts of Control Arms campaigners in encouraging and supporting their governments to attend these important meetings. A total of 22 delegations took to the floor, in addition to Control Arms, the ICRC and a number of Observer States.

This was the third and final preparatory meeting for the third Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP 2017), which will be held in Geneva on 11-15 September 2017. The meeting was focused on finalising the agenda for CSP 2017, and on updating states on several on-going programmes and processes.

The President of CSP 2017, Ambassador Klaus Korhonen of Finland, opened the meeting by reminding delegates that this Conference must focus on substantive issues. *"We should not revisit mandates and organizational structures every year. We need to focus on thematic issues and substance, not administrative matters."* However, there was very little discussion of substance or thematic issues in the meeting, with only Control Arms speaking on actual arms transfers.

#### **Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)**

Germany reported that the VTF now has a sound financial basis for the immediate future, having received almost \$2 million in donations since the beginning of the year. The Selection Committee has drafted a short list of 18 possible projects. Nine proposals have been approved already, two more will be approved if they can respond to requests for further information, while the remaining proposals require substantial further work to be considered. The Committee has asked for further information from some states, who will be given until the end of June to respond.

The Netherlands took the floor to make public that they will contribute €100,000 to the VTF. Control Arms recommended that the VTF Committee develop strategies to monitor and evaluate projects it approves, and to ensure that 'success' is based around outcomes (i.e. the overall impact on ATT implementation) rather than output (i.e. how many meetings were held).

#### **Sponsorship**

In response to questions at the previous preparatory meetings, UNDP provided a presentation on their sponsorship programme for ATT meetings. The programme has a budget of USD \$260,000. A total of \$61,500 has been spent so far, leaving \$198,500 for the CSP. Donors include Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and UK. Overall it is anticipated that 45 delegates will be sponsored during the year through UNDP. Very limited funds have been allocated by a specific donor for NGO participation. The programme has faced issues with visas for delegates. Several countries (Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Ghana, Zambia) described challenges with the tight deadlines for applications and erratic communication of information that have made visa applications impossible. UNDP announced the CSP deadline for sponsorship applications will be 31 August. Several states voiced concern that this would be too late, and UNDP agreed to move the application timeline forward to July.

Control Arms updated the meeting on its own sponsorship programme for civil society, which – through the support of the German government— has enabled participation of 29 colleagues at this year's preparatory meetings from across all regions, and another anticipated 20 participants at CSP 2017 itself, at an average cost of under \$3000 per delegate.

Sweden relayed the outcomes from a lunch jointly hosted with Control Arms held at their national mission earlier in the week that focused on discussing how to increase participation from the global south. Many practical ideas were generated, including the importance of good communications around the sponsorship programme, early selection so that visas and flights can be obtained in time, and the



provision of interpretation at meetings. Sweden and Control Arms will circulate more details from this meeting in writing.

### **ATT Financial Contributions**

Dumisani Dladla, Head of the ATT Secretariat, briefed delegates on the overall state of ATT financial contributions. A total of 124 states were assessed at CSP 2015 and the Extraordinary Meeting in February 2016 as being required to make contributions to the ATT Secretariat. So far only 58 states have made a payment, less than 50 per cent of those who committed to contribute.

The ATT Secretariat has received 81% of what was assessed as due. A total of USD \$185,876.94 is still outstanding.

The ATT Secretariat has uncommitted funds for 2017 worth over \$100,000, following careful savings in previous years. These funds have shrunk from earlier years as it has been used to cover the shortfall in unpaid contributions from states. As Sweden noted in its contribution from the floor: *"We are losing 20% of each annual budget. In five years, we'll lose a whole year's budget due to unpaid contributions. This is an unsustainable situation..."*

States considered ways to encourage states to make their financial contributions in time, including publishing a list of who has paid/not paid on the ATT Secretariat's website (US, Japan, France, Switzerland), issuing reminders from the Secretariat (Japan, Finland), and using uncommitted funds as a 'buffer' to protect the Secretariat (Belgium, Italy), outreach to missions in New York (Ireland) and to have this as a standing item in the CSPs' agendas (France, Ireland).

### **ATT Annual Reports**

The deadline for 2016 Annual Reports closed on 31 May 2017, the day before this preparatory meeting took place. Dumisani Dladla updated states on the rate of compliance with this legal obligation. As of 12pm 1 June, a total of 31 states had reported (39 per cent of those due). Four states had initially made their reports public, or partially public. One of those, Uruguay, announced it will make all of its report public.

### **Side events**

SIPRI and the EU held a side event, where they presented the latest data on trends in arms transfers. A total of 57 countries have exported major conventional arms between 2012-2016, while 157 have imported these weapons in that time period. Netherlands and Mexico also spoke about their experiences of completing their ATT reporting obligations

### **Reports from Working Groups**

The co-Chairs of the three working groups (Implementation, Transparency and Reporting, and Universalization) updated delegates on progress made in their work earlier in the week, including in identifying priorities for future work to recommend to CSP 2017. Control Arms reminded states that it was critical that they discuss Treaty violations, saying: *"Non-compliance with Articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty constitutes a grave threat to its credibility. Unless there is a fundamental change in the basic conditions that prompted the international community to adopt the ATT in the first place, there is a real risk that the value and promise of this historic treaty will be gradually eroded."* The Chair took this moment to remind delegates not to *"repeat points already made in Working Groups."*

### **CSP 2017 Agenda**

Amb. Korhonen outlined the draft [agenda](#) for CSP 2017, which will include a thematic debate dedicated to exploring practical linkages between the ATT and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Control



Arms welcomed this move towards potentially more substantive discussion. Our [briefing paper](#) on this topic is available online.

New Zealand spoke to reinforce its desire that there be a focus on compliance with Articles 6 & 7 during CSP 2017, while Ghana requested that there be a civil society participant in the expert panel on the SDGs. Control Arms supported these two comments, and highlighting the role that civil society can play in bringing more substantive issues into future CSP discussions.

Japan has announced its candidacy to be President of CSP 2018, vowing that it would work to improve universalization in Asia, and pushing for a more comprehensive approach to implementation.

The third Conference of States Parties to the ATT will take place in Geneva on 11-15 September 2017.