



Control Arms intervention on Rules of Procedure as delivered by Hector Guerra, Control Arms (Mexico)

Monday 6 July 2015

Mr Chair,

We are pleased to see that so much progress has been made towards agreeing rules of procedure, however we feel there are a few areas where concerns remain.

The first relates to decision-making. Control Arms believes that as a general principle, the Rules of Procedure should assist States Parties in coming to decisions in an effective and efficient manner. Any potential for delay, and any potential for veto, will hamper this effort.

It is clear that the Presidents of CSPs will be required to strive for consensus, and that any attempt to "rush to decision" will be resisted by States Parties. We therefore firmly believe that any language around deferral is unnecessary, and will place unnecessary strain on what will already be a very tight CSP schedule. We agree with Costa Rica that this reference should be removed.

We would also encourage States to ensure that where consensus is not achieved, all substantive issues should be decided by a 2/3 majority vote, with all procedural issues decided by a simple majority. This includes financial decisions and decisions to amend the rules of procedure themselves.

The second area is transparency. Increasing transparency in the arms trade is one of the aims of the ATT, and Control Arms is concerned that the rules of procedure seem to be moving toward greater secrecy. To ensure transparency is maintained, we believe that all meetings of the conference should be open by default. This includes extraordinary sessions and subsidiary bodies, and any intersessional meetings. Closing meetings by default will not build confidence in the Treaty, and will not assist transparency.

Thirdly, on participation, Control Arms maintains that NGOs have an important role to play in the CSP process. Therefore, we support the proposal by New Zealand, Nigeria, the UK and other States to include a guaranteed attendance for an international umbrella grouping of NGOs. As has been demonstrated throughout the preparatory process, and indeed from the start of the campaign for an ATT back in 2003, organising NGO engagement through the Control Arms Coalition has proved an effective and efficient way for civil society to make a constructive contribution to the process.

The strong link between armed violence, poverty and human rights abuse and the devastating impact that it has on communities throughout the world has been the central motivation for the Control Arms Coalition, which brings together hundreds of NGOs from many different fields including human rights, poverty alleviation, conflict reduction, weapons expertise, health, youth, gender, survivor networks, parliamentary networks, legal expertise and arms control.

We further see no need for hierarchy of speakers, since the President of the CSP will maintain a speaker's list. Allowing all participants at the CSP to intervene as they wish helps to maintain the interactive dialogue that we have had in the preparatory process.

Finally, we are concerned by the suggestion in rule 50.3 that observers, and we assume including civil society, may be required to pay for their attendance. We reiterate that this would be a very negative precedent for all UN processes, and we believe has very little support.

Thank you.