



ATT Informal Preparatory Meeting

**February 1 2019
Geneva**

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Thank you Ambassador,

Control Arms congratulates you both on your Presidency and your choice of gender and arms related gender based violence as this year's ATT theme. We see tremendous potential in this theme to help advance effective Treaty implementation.

We particularly welcome the broader focus on gender, as well as the specific examination of GBV. Understanding the gendered impact of armed violence and conflict is essential to a proper appreciation of the potential humanitarian and human rights risks of arms transfers.

The use of arms in modern conflict, particularly in urban warfare, has a gendered impact. Men and boys are more likely to be combatants, and to suffer death or injury in conflict. Women are more likely to be displaced, to be victims of sexual violence, and have their health impacted in indirect ways such as lack of access to medical care in pregnancy and childbirth because of destruction of medical facilities. Similarly, malnutrition due to interrupted food supplies affects both men and women, but women have additional burdens in that malnutrition can prevent lactation to feed babies. In traditional societies, women often lack access to aid or to markets to purchase food when the male head of household is fighting or has been killed. Risk assessments have to go beyond examining attacks which are in themselves a breach of IHL, and look at the gendered impact of the use of weapons as part of a thorough examination of the potential for GBV using or facilitated by transferred arms. This is an essential component in reducing human suffering, the key purpose of the ATT.

Control Arms is developing several practical resources and training modules specifically on GBV. These include a training programme in Central and Eastern Europe this spring, focussed on building the capacity of governmental officials involved in the arms transfer decision-making processes. This training will bring together 30 - 40 participants from relevant government ministries of countries in the region, and will cover detail about GBV in relation to arms transfers, and the application of risk-assessment criteria that fully take these risks into account. We hope this work will help strengthen arms export control policies and ultimately decrease the risk that the arms exported will be used to perpetuate gender-based violence and violence against women and children. We hope this will also provide a forum for export control officials involved in implementing the ATT to discuss, and strengthen compliance with, the GBV criteria.

The training will utilise the practical guide *"Assessing the risk of gender-based violence under the ATT"*, developed by Control Arms, which aims to provide specific and accessible guidance and



resources to licensing officials on how to initiate a GBV review consistent with the commitments set out in the Arms Trade Treaty.

Control Arms has also worked with the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School to develop a series of case studies. Each case is based on a real-world example and describes a series of in-country conditions — both in general and specific to gender and gender-based violence — as well as arms trade practices. The cases are designed to be used as training materials that States Parties can talk through, sharing their methods for conducting export assessments by means of these hypothetical materials.

We welcome the Presidency's call for gender balance at all levels of participation, and we as civil society are working hard to ensure this within our own work. It has been commented that civil society sometimes achieves better gender balance in its work and delegations. Among strategies we are using are to achieve this are to make gender balance a criteria for sponsorship, and for small grant awards, and to consider gender balance early on in the planning of delegations, training teams and panels. We also seek to provide opportunities for more junior women to participate in programme activities and project management responsibilities, in order to develop a 'pipeline' of women in future leadership roles. We welcome your call for delegations to include members with expertise in gender issues, and in the UN's Women, Peace and Security agenda. We aim to do this within civil society too.

Thank you.