



**Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty
Voluntary Trust Fund**

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Thank you Mr. President.

Control Arms welcomes the continued support for ATT implementation assistance provided by States Parties through the Voluntary Trust Fund. The VTF is one of the key instruments through which states facing challenges to universalization and implementation of the ATT may receive international assistance. Contributions to the VTF are an important means of supporting a range of assistance programmes including outreach, capacity building, information sharing, and technical, legal and financial assistance. Indeed, as noted by the delegation of Namibia, Control Arms is pleased to be supporting Namibia's efforts to contribute to the Treaty's universalization and effective implementation in Southern Africa as a result of support obtained from the VTF.

However, it is important to recognise that international assistance needs to go far beyond what can be provided through the VTF. While civil society organisations play a significant role in their own right supporting ATT implementation assistance around the world, they cannot apply to the VTF independently and must, instead, secure a partnership with a government. However, there are many worthwhile projects that do not necessitate a partnership between civil society and government, or where the more natural lead in the project would be from civil society rather than the government. Also, there will be occasions where for any number of reasons the VTF might decide not to fund worthwhile projects.

For these projects it is critical that other funding streams are available; however, Control Arms and its member organisations are concerned by a developing trend whereby potential donors are channelling all their ATT funding support via the VTF.

Control Arms urges States to continue to provide stand-alone funds for capacity-building, training, awareness-raising and technical assistance, as appropriate, to civil society and to non-ATT States Parties who wish to encourage or take steps towards ATT accession or implementation.

Finally, Mr President, we would encourage a review of current VTF reporting requirements with a view to their simplification and streamlining, in line with standard reporting practice in this field. We would also encourage the VTF Committee to consider raising the ceiling on individual application amounts to allow support to be provided to increasingly complex and in-depth projects.

Thank you.

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