ATT Working Group and Informal Preparatory Meetings for the Eighth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty

First CSP8 Informal Preparatory Meeting

19 February 2022

The meeting was opened by the CSP8 President, Ambassador Thomas Göbel of Germany, who presided over the proceedings of the first CSP8 Informal Preparatory Meeting. State Parties and Civil Society provided interventions on different agenda items and representatives of the ATT Secretariat delivered presentations. At the outset, an additional agenda item was adopted to incorporate an ‘Overview presentation on the Status of ATT Finances including the Sponsorship Programme’.

Introduction of the priority theme for the German Presidency

Considering the status of Treaty implementation, areas of progress, and areas of challenge, Ambassador Göbel explained that Germany has chosen post-shipment controls (PSCs) as the priority theme for CSP8. Ambassador Göbel, recognizing that the prevention of arms diversion is a key issue when tackling the root causes of armed violence, pointed out that, while end-use/r assurances in arms trade are the main legal means introduced, measures and controls to indicate that these are adhered to in full are still lacking. It was highlighted that in this context PSCs are mainly referred to as the physical site inspection of the respective item by the exporting State after it has been delivered to the final user. The Ambassador also emphasized that a number of legal and operational challenges may hamper States’ ability to introduce and implement PSCs. For instance, national legislation may not allow for inspection by external entities.

Germany organized a side event open only to ATT state parties and signatories on Tuesday 15 February on the topic of PSCs, which will be followed by a further workshop to be held on the margins of the second series of Preparatory Meetings in April 2022, to which civil society partners are encouraged to attend. The two workshops will provide the basis for a thematic Paper or Handbook summarizing discussions on PSCs and providing guidance to States that may want to consider introducing PSCs in their national control systems. The document will be ready for discussion at CSP8 to be held in August 2022.

The European Union (EU) reiterated continued support to Treaty universalization efforts and to State Parties seeking to meet Treaty obligations, as well as to the German Presidency to
achieve concrete outcomes in these areas at CSP8. **Ireland** stressed that the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) is well positioned to become a valuable mechanism for States to combat arms diversion and expressed hope that DIEF will take into account the valuable contribution that can be made by civil society. **China** stressed that they attach great importance to the issue of diversion and called on States to refrain from selling arms to non-state actors (NSA). **Ghana, France, and Mexico** welcomed the focus of CSP8 on PSCs as key measures to prevent the risk of diversion. Mexico reiterated its commitment to advance on priorities that are specific to the Latin America and the Caribbean region, i.e. combating illicit trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and diversion of SALW. The discussion on PSCs will help contribute to the fight against these issues. Mexico also underscored the necessity of engaging in outreach activities to illustrate the negative consequences of irresponsible arms industry and of adopting a victim-centered approach in this regard. **France** highlighted that different measures can be undertaken after the delivery of weapons, including declarations of arrival at destination certificates, *a posteriori* controls within the exporting country, consisting of on-site checks giving the rise to sanctions where necessary, and measures of verification on site in the final destination country.

**Overview of the implementation of the CSP7 decisions**

The ATT Secretariat provided an update on progress made towards the implementation of the **decisions taken in the context of CSP7**. Mr. Dumisani Dladla delivered an **Overview of the Implementation of CSP7 Decisions**. Key points included the following:

- **SALW & stockpile management.** Recommendations on these areas were submitted by the CSP7 President in the framework of the CSP7 priority theme. The utilization by relevant stakeholders of guidance and tools developed under relevant international and regional instruments is ongoing; discussions concerning post-delivery cooperation were formalized through the adoption of Article 11 multiyear Workplan and CSP8 President priority theme; WGETI and the ATT Secretariat have started identifying and compiling a list of existing relevant bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes through the establishment of a database supported by the EU.

- **Transparency and Information Exchange.** The implementation of relevant decisions, which include the active use of initiatives to enhance transparency and information exchange, such as the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) and the information exchange platform, is underway. Post-delivery cooperation will be further explored as an important element in the framework of the CSP8 priority theme.

- **Diversion Information Exchange Forum** (DIEF). The first meeting of DIEF will take place as soon as in-person participation is allowed.

- **ATT Working Groups.** The paper outlining the elements of a process for assessing the risk of diversion, endorsed at CSP7, is now published on the ATT website as a tool; the revised initial and annual reporting templates are also published on the ATT website.
Status of gender participation in ATT meetings

Ms. Sarah Parker from the ATT Secretariat provided an overview of the Status of Gender Participation in ATT meetings since CSP5. According to CSP5 decisions, paragraph 22(a), (i) “States Parties, Signatory and Observer States attending ATT Working Groups, preparatory meetings and CSP itself should strive for gender balance in their Delegations”; (ii) “The ATT Secretariat should report to CSPs on overall progress among Delegations in achieving gender balance”.

In accordance with the mandate given to the ATT Secretariat by CSP5, the Secretariat undertook an assessment of progress made by Delegations in achieving gender balance. Ms. Parker explained that the Secretariat looked at all delegations participating in CSP meetings including civil society and organizations (regional organizations and international organizations). Gender balance was referred to as “the equal representation of men and women within and among delegations”. In terms of methodology, the main sources of data that were utilized for the assessment were the lists of participants and online registration records of CSP5 and CSP7 (it was recalled that CSP6 was held through written procedure).

- **Gender balance among total delegates in attendance**: overall, women represented 40%, 56%, and 47% of delegates from States, organizations, and civil society at CSP5; and 35%, 49%, and 47% of delegates representing States, organizations, and civil society at CSP7.
- **Gender balance among State delegates by region**: the proportion of female participation from Africa went up between 2019 (CSP5) and 2021 (CSP7), whilst a decrease was registered for all the other regions.
- **Gender balance within delegations**: at CSP5 for 43% of State delegations at least 50% or half were women, whilst at CSP7 the percentage dropped to 37%. Looking at organizations, those that had more than 50% female delegates at CSP5 represented 62.5%; at CSP7 the numbers went down to 43%. For civil society, the numbers were 47% at CSP5 and 41% at CSP7. Overall, a decline in the number of delegations that had 50% or more of women at CSP7 was registered.

A concern was that 25 delegations did not have any female delegate participating at CSP7. While it should be stressed that some delegations may have odd numbers and a better approach may be looking at how many delegations had 40% to 60% women as a measure of gender balance, to date the goal of gender equality endorsed at CSP5 has not been met yet. This is confirmed by the fact that a decline, albeit slight, was also registered from CSP5 to CSP7 with regards to the percentage of women participating as Heads of Delegation. It is the intent of the ATT Secretariat to continue monitoring progress in this area and provide an updated overview at the first Preparatory Meeting on a regular basis.

WILPF took the floor to welcome the new agenda item and regretted that women’s participation has dropped since CSP5. WILPF finds the review of gender participation in ATT meetings a
useful exercise and tool to improve gender equality. It was also underlined that gender equality does not only refer to the number of women, since it is also about ensuring women’s meaningful participation: female participation as Heads of Delegation was thus considered a useful indicator. WILPF is also keen on working with Control Arms to improve the methodology for monitoring progress.

Progress reports of ATT subsidiary bodies

New Zealand, as the VTF Chair, reported that since the first call for contributions, more than US$ 10 million had been contributed by 28 states. It was highlighted that the VTF can be accessed by both State Parties to implement Treaty obligations and by State Signatories to progress their ratification procedures, as well as by States seriously considering joining the Treaty in the near future. Recognizing the impact of the pandemics on the VTF 2020 and 2021 funding cycles, New Zealand stressed that the vast majority of projects that were funded by the Selection Committee in 2019 and 2020 have been completed or are in good progress.

The ATT Secretariat presented on VTF Finances and Status of VTF 2017-2021 VTF Projects and 2022 Applications. Of 13 projects funded in 2021, 11 are underway, whilst two were withdrawn. 15 proposals were received for the 2022 funding cycle for a total budget of USD 1.3 million. 87% of the applications for the funding cycle came from the Africa region. Overall, total contributions that were received from VTF donors to projects amount to USD 10.8 million. Total contributions received towards the VTF Outreach Programme amount to over USD 70,000. Funds available for projects currently amount to USD 4.5 million.

The following Delegations spoke on the VTF:

- **Japan** highlighted the utility of the VTF to non-State Parties, as the Fund can be an incentive for non-State Parties to join the Treaty, thus contributing to further Treaty universalization.
- **Costa Rica** and **El Salvador** highlighted that they requested project financing to the VTF to assist, respectively, a project to put in place a digital platform for information exchange at the domestic level, and a project entailing the purchase of equipment to increase national capacities in the control and registration of arms.
- **Mexico** recognized the importance of the regional impact of VTF-funded projects.

The Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Working Groups (WGETI, WGTR, and WGTU) reported on the status of discussions, summarizing key points and exchange of views that took place during their sessions held on February 15, February 16, and February 17.

- **WGETI Chair** Ambassador Lim of the Republic of Korea summarized main points of discussions undertaken by the three Sub-Working Groups on Article 6 and 7, Article 9, and Article 11. The Ambassador also briefed on the next steps:
  - Article 6 and 7: A revised draft of Chapter 1 (key concepts) of the Voluntary Guide to assist States Parties in implementing Articles 6 and 7 will be prepared;
discussions on Article 6 obligations will be advanced during the second series of Preparatory Meetings.

- **Article 9**: Measures to regulate transit and trans-shipment by sea will be the focus of the next meetings of the Sub-Working Group, which will also discuss the role of the private sector in the transit and trans-shipment of arms.
- **Article 11**: Measures to prevent diversion post livery, at or after importation, will be discussed during the next meetings of the Sub-Working Group.

Importantly, the relationship between Articles 6 and 7, Article 9, and Article 11 will be further explored, with a view to fostering coordination between the Sub-Working Groups.

- **WGTR Co-Chair** Ms Visser, summarizing main points of discussion, reiterated that the overall status of reporting is poor, noting dropping compliance rates and increase in private reporting incidences. It was highlighted that during discussions participants encouraged State Parties to report on time and publicly, and to use the online reporting tools; and that increasing synergies between the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) and ATT was deemed important to reduce reporting burden. While gender issues were addressed, there was agreement that more work needs to be done on integrating gender.

- **WGTU Co-Chair** Ambassador Göbel reiterated that the German Presidency has undertaken a range of activities in support of Treaty universalization and welcomed ongoing focus on Asia-Pacific due to low membership rates in the region. The Ambassador welcomed the Philippines’ announcement that the ratification process has been completed and expressed interest in building on regional expertise of the Philippines.

**Status of ATT Finances**

**Mr. Dumisani Dladla**, Head of the ATT Secretariat, gave a presentation on the Status of ATT Finances. Mr. Dladla underscored that ATT financial management is guided by strict Financial Rules. Calculations for contributions by different States are based on a variety of factors; the ATT Secretariat derives the entirety of its revenue from State Parties’ contributions, which also cover conference costs. Outstanding contributions have increased significantly, corresponding to 78.97% of the budget received. However, to date, only 40.2% of States have paid their contributions. Implications of non-payment are that liquidity challenges may become prevalent in the medium term. It was also noted that, while CSP5 established a reserve fund, this has never received any contributions. Total contributions received for the Sponsorship Programme amount to over USD 900,000. **Ghana** called on State Parties to stand by the ATT Secretariat and fulfill their financial obligations. Similarly, the **European Union** also called on Member States to pay their dues in full.

**Considerations of the CSP8 draft agenda items**

**Control Arms** noted the renewed willingness of State Parties from all regions to engage in addressing critical challenges in the arms trade, including poorly regulated transit and
trans-shipment. Building on a suggestion that was previously presented by Control Arms, WILPF and other civil society organizations at CSP7, Control Arms called to add to the annual agenda a standing item that would gauge progress on thematic focus areas of each preceding CSP cycle. Control Arms also encouraged State Parties to develop clear strategies and mechanisms to ensure that outcomes related to themes become the basis for concrete action. To this end, Control Arms is in the process of developing a methodology in tracking progress on the gender and GBV theme, as endorsed at CSP5.

**WILPF** expressed support for Control Arms’ suggestion to add the standing items to the CSP agenda and, similarly as Control Arms, expressed concern that there is a risk of losing momentum on work conducted in previous years and recognized that it can be hard to stay on top of the status of past themes. Also, WILPF mentioned that taking stock of ATT achievements could be a thematic focus in this and future CSPs, following the Germany-supported work of the last year, and WILPF encouraged engaging in stock taking on a continuous basis. In the same vein, **Georgia** highlighted that they highly appreciate the focus on gender and welcomed added focus on GBV criteria in risk assessments, also noting that in general terms reducing GBV incidences involves increasing awareness of GBV. In addition to official statistics, it was highlighted that reports of civil society organizations should be taken into account when assessing the risks of GBV. **Ireland** called on State Parties to engage in further discussions on CSP5 outcomes on how they can be better implemented throughout the Treaty going forward and welcomed the focused work on gender and GBV in WGETI Sub-Working Groups on Article 6 and 7 and in WGTR.

As announced by **Ambassador Thomas Göbel**, the second series of CSP8 Preparatory Meetings will take place from 26 to 29 April 2022.

END.