CONTROL ARMS

VISION
Fewer people suffer harm through armed violence and conflict.

MISSION
To help reduce human suffering by stopping arms transfers that fuel poverty, conflict, and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

We work toward achieving our mission primarily by supporting universal membership to and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) through four distinct workstreams:

1. Amplify the voices of civil society in the arms control dialogue
2. Strengthen Regulations Governing the International Trade in Conventional Arms
3. Advance accountability in the global arms trade
4. Strengthen the foundation of the Control Arms coalition
Summary of 2020 Activities

In 2020, Control Arms demonstrated resilience and versatility in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to advance the objectives of the ATT, maintaining close contact with a wide range of stakeholders in New York, Geneva and around the world, and quickly adapting to virtual and online operations. Control Arms also undertook work to further improve its board structure and internal processes, and in this regard implemented a new accounting system that is expected to improve oversight and efficiency.

The Sixth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (CSP6) was held “virtually” using a written procedure, which allowed ATT States Parties and other stakeholders to submit written statements in advance of CSP6, while decisions were adopted by “silence procedure.” While these extraordinary measures were adopted as a way to ensure continuity in the ATT process, they did not allow for significant progress towards the Treaty’s effective implementation. These measures also did not allow for open deliberations on the key decisions put forward for adoption this year, thereby weakening transparency, a key purpose of the ATT.

In response to these measures, Control Arms efforts centered on protecting transparency in the ATT process in the face of the closing of civil society space. Following a two month campaign, Control Arms’ calls for openness in the CSP process were successful, resulting in the release of the draft CSP6 decisions to all ATT stakeholders for meaningful public comment submitted in writing prior to the taking of decisions.

Control Arms also worked together with civil society stakeholders across sectors to explore the impact of alternative procedural formats in a variety of multilateral processes with the aim to ensure that going forward, access to multilateral processes in this limited COVID-19 pandemic environment is granted appropriately and fully to all stakeholders.
With the shift in working methods in the ATT process, Control Arms redesigned its programs and activities to meet the requirements of a virtual work environment. In advance of each set of ATT meetings, Control Arms organized virtual consultations with members, which allowed civil society representatives from around the world to continue to input into the Control Arms written submissions to the CSP and its intersessional meetings.

Control Arms also hosted a series of thematic virtual consultations with members and partners covering the areas of ATT Universalization, Transparency and Reporting, Youth Engagement and Diversion. In these virtual consultations, Control Arms members shared with one another valuable national and regional information with regard to implementation and universalization of the ATT. These consultations also provided a virtual space for Control Arms members to come together as a coalition, even with COVID-19 travel restrictions in place, to develop common messages and approaches to support the Control Arms mission to reduce human suffering by stopping irresponsible arms transfers.

As a result of retooling these preparatory events and consultations in the virtual space, Control Arms was able to continue its work during COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. 2020 actions included:

- The submission of substantive written statements - nine (9) to the ATT Working Group Meetings and four (4) to CSP6
- Coordination with the CSP6 Presidency, including a presentation on the role of civil society in advancing ATT universalization during the February 2020 Meeting of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization.
- Resource development for Control Arms members and partners to conduct outreach to encourage the submission of timely, comprehensive and public initial and annual reports to the ATT Secretariat.
- Targeted advocacy through statements and bilateral engagement during UNGA First Committee meetings in favor of ATT universalization and effective and consistent ATT implementation in an objective and non-discriminatory manner to end weapons transfers that unleash destitution, despair and death.
- Support for the incoming President of the Seventh ATT Conference of States Parties (CSP7), Ambassador Gberie of Sierra Leone, to advance the annual UNGA First Committee ATT Resolution. In this regard, Control Arms reached over 100 First Committee delegations, an effort which resulted in 56 co-sponsors and ensured the resolution passed with 150 votes in favour, 2 against and 28 abstentions.
In 2020, Control Arms organized six events across all official ATT meetings and UNGA First Committee, including three regional roundtable discussions on ATT implementation and universalization in Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America and three side events:

- 3 February 2020 - “Harnessing Information Sharing & Transparency to Prevent & Respond to Diversion”
- 20 August 2020 - “Strategies To Protect, Maintain, And Enhance ATT Transparency In The Time Of COVID-19”
- 02 November 2020 - “ATT Update—Report From CSP6 And Prospects For CSP7”

Several in-person trainings were scheduled to take place in June 2020, including the second meeting of the ATT Academy in Southern Africa, the first session of the ATT Academy for Indian Ocean States, as well as a workshop in Latin America on the implementation of ATT Article 7.4 relating to gender-based violence. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions, these trainings were postponed to later dates. As pandemic restrictions continued throughout 2020, Control Arms began to explore ways and means to provide effective training in a virtual format.
Control Arms and Namibia held two virtual meetings of the ATT Academy on 12 and 17 November 2020 to maintain the momentum achieved during the first in-person training in December 2019. The ATT Academy is a learning opportunity specifically tailored to address regional needs, theme, and level of ATT implementation and designed specifically for government officials responsible for arms transfer decisions.

During these virtual meetings, the participants continued to address challenges and focus on key areas of work that they themselves identified as important to their day to day jobs.

The meeting also highlighted key outcomes from CSP6 and expectations for CSP7, reviewed the ATT provisions on reporting, discussed key findings from the ATT Monitor 2020 Report, explored states’ obligations under Article 5 as well as good practices in support of ATT implementation and available opportunities for international assistance. At the same time, these virtual meetings provided clarity and insight on whether a second in-person or virtual meeting would be feasible for the ATT Academy in Southern Africa.

2.2 Research and Other Publications

Throughout 2020, Control Arms continued to monitor and engage in human rights processes relevant to the ATT, including the Business and Human Rights Forum.

Control Arms conducted research and engaged in consultations with its members to develop a detailed submission for review by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in connection with their Report on the Impact of Diversion of Arms and Unregulated or Illicit Arms Transfers on Human Rights.

Control Arms also contributed to the “Joint NGO Submission to the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights: Project on business in conflict and post-conflict contexts” co-authored by the Business, Conflict and Human Rights Network (BCHR Network), Christian Aid Ireland, Control Arms, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) and Swedwatch.
3 Monitoring ATT Implementation, Transparency and Reporting

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ATT Monitor adapted its work to a virtual setting using online platforms, developed new online resources and met all deadlines for the production of its main output: the ATT Monitor 2020 Report. In 2020, we redesigned and updated the ATT Monitor website to better reflect the work conducted by the ATT Monitor team. Among the new developments are an interactive map displaying dates and milestones relevant to ATT reporting obligations and a new section presenting Country Profiles based on an updated methodology that contain an in-depth analysis of reporting and transfer practices of each reporting State Party.

The 2020 Report also included an extended thematic chapter that brings together research on transparency, information sharing and arms diversion. The chapter illustrates the need for transparency and increased effective and cooperative action between ATT stakeholders to prevent and mitigate diversion and provides lessons learned and recommendations that may be helpful to States Parties in implementing Treaty provisions to such an end.

The sixth edition of the ATT Monitor Annual Report was launched virtually on 19 August 2020 during the Sixth Conference of States Parties to the ATT and on 29 October 2020 during the UN General Assembly First Committee. Co-sponsored by the governments of Australia and the Netherlands and attended by over 100 stakeholders, both events highlighted the importance of continued dialogue among stakeholders to safeguard the ATT transparency and reporting obligations and emphasized the role of civil society and of research organizations, such as the ATT Monitor, in maintaining effective monitoring. The annual report was also launched online in English, along with executive summaries in English, French and Spanish. These outputs which have been viewed over 550 times and downloaded 328 times.
In 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, Control Arms’ impact remained consistent with that of previous years. Control Arms continued to actively engage in the ATT CSP process and related multilateral conferences and events, to produce the ATT Monitor Annual Report and create other impactful resources in support of the ATT universalization and implementation.

In 2020 we raised over US$600,000 through individual contributions, grants, and in-kind support. Key donors include:

- The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
- The Government of the Netherlands
- The Government of Sweden
- The Government of Switzerland
- The Government of Ireland
- The ATT Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)

These funds were used in 2020 to support the core areas of work described above, as follows:

Expenditure by Project/Work Area

- ATT CSP Support and Engagement: US$170,710 (43.9%)
- ATT Monitor: US$202,656 (37%)
- Policy Resource Development: US$19,141 (4.1%)
- Other Projects and Core Costs: US$69,416 (15%)
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2. Support for Effective ATT implementation

2.1 Training, Capacity-building and Awareness-raising

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SUMMARY OF 2020 ACTIVITIES

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1. Coordination, Representation, and Support in the ATT Process

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