

Ninth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty

Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation

Future Working Group Agendas/Topics

Wednesday 10 May 2023

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Thank you to Ambassador Sanchez for your hard work as chair of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation.

Simplifying the WG arrangements and focusing on practical implementation challenges feels like a sensible way forward. But it is not quite clear whether we are moving to a situation of a single working group that would subsume the work of all the current working groups – we would appreciate final clarity on this point.

In exploring the options for the future of the WGETI, we need to start with clear objectives, and with a focus on how to improve the depth and breadth of engagement. From our discussions with delegations, it seems there is a widespread feeling that the current ways of working are not providing for the level of interactivity or engagement we might like.

We understand the need to be able to plan ahead, but fear that the multi-year workplan as proposed may be overly-structured, too rigid and too inflexible, and we share some of the concerns raised by many states in this regard.

The Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation should maintain flexibility in order to stay relevant to the world outside the conference room: There is a need to address how states are implementing the Treaty through their transfer decisions.

We encourage states to explore how to find the right balance between allowing states to prepare in advance and providing space for the WG to be responsive.

We see the Irish proposal to have standing agenda items as a way of addressing our concern, and we support the Dutch suggestion to include questions around effective risk assessment among such standing items: It is critical for the health and credibility of the Treaty that we address how states are implementing their obligations through their transfer decisions.

Could there be flexibility in working methods as well? Could the working groups provide, for example, space for smaller group meetings, as mentioned by Australia – perhaps organised on a regional or sub-regional basis? Perhaps not all meetings need to be held in plenary format.



We also note with concern the apparent reduction of attention being paid to transparency and reporting in light of the fact that transparency is in decline. If the WGETI is to take over the work of the WGTR, it will surely be necessary for transparency and reporting to also be among the standing agenda items, as also proposed by the US.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.