



ACTIVITY REPORT - JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2023

Introduction

Throughout 2023, Control Arms continued its mission to halt irresponsible transfers of conventional weapons to situations where there are serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Control Arms' work primarily involved advocacy with national governments and via multilateral fora to strengthen the international norms and rules applicable to the arms trade; providing an independent platform for a wide range of issues relating to the international arms trade to be addressed; and the implementation of policy and practical projects on the international arms trade. Control Arms remains at the forefront of efforts to raise awareness of, implement and ensure compliance with the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which serves as the benchmark in international law governing the global arms trade. Despite the challenges of closing the Control Arms office in New York and the two Co-Directors stepping down, a full programme of activities was successfully delivered in 2023.

In 2023, Control Arms delivered:

- Three regional meetings on ATT universalization;
- 16 bilateral meetings with non-States Parties;
- Six briefings and debriefings on the ATT Working Groups and Conference of States Parties
- 21 statements to the ATT Working Groups and Conference of States Parties
- Two national clinics
- Six roundtable discussions
- One podcast
- Completed and launched *the Practical Guide: "How to Use the Arms Trade Treaty to Address Violence Against Children"*
- Completed the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund Project with Namibia
- A sponsorship programme, which supported the attendance of six civil society members to attend the 9th ATT Conference of States Parties.

Universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty

In 2023, expanding the membership of the ATT continued to be a priority for Control Arms. Control Arms staff held bilateral meetings on ATT universalization with 16 non-States Parties. Control Arms either hosted or co-hosted one informal meeting and three formal meetings on ATT universalization. The formal meetings were:

- By invitation only "*Understanding the Arms Trade Treaty's role in the Pacific Region*" on 12 May 2023, which was co-hosted by Control Arms, Japan, Australia and New Zealand and included the participation of the ICRC, Stimson Center and Conflict Armament Research (CAR).
- By invitation only - "*Examining the role of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region*" on 23 August 2023, hosted by Control Arms. This meeting was conducted in Arabic and English and included Mr. Fadi Abi Allam, Permanent Peace Movement (Control Arms sponsored participant); Ms. Farrah Hawana, Geneva Graduate Institute; and Mr. Fahad Ahmed, ICRC.
- "*Analyzing the prospects for expanding the membership of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in Africa*", held on Monday 27 November 2023, 10:00am CET, online. This event focused on the prospects for expanding ATT membership across the African region, a region in which 54% of States have joined the Treaty. Speakers were: Ambassador



Razvan Rusu of Romania, President of the 10th ATT Conference of States Parties; Mr. Dumisani Dladla, Head of the ATT Secretariat; Ms. Laurence Marzal, Inter Parliamentary Union; Mr. Fahad Ahmed, ICRC; Mr. Guy Lamb, Stellenbosch University; and Hine-Wai Loose moderated the discussion.

Promoting the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty

In 2023, Control Arms continued to be a dominant force in the ATT process. As testimony to the value placed on direct advocacy with governments, in the margins of the ATT Working Group Meetings and 9th Conference of States Parties, Control Arms held 56 bilateral meetings.

Engagement in the ATT Process

(a) Focus on the Working Groups

In 2023, Control Arms engaged actively in the ATT Working Groups and Preparatory Meetings held in February and May 2023. In preparation for and following these meetings, Control Arms organized:

- Briefing meeting for Control Arms Members in advance of the first ATT Working Groups on 8 February 2023;
- Debriefing for Control Arms Members on 14 February 2023; and
- Debriefing and strategizing for the 9th Conference of States Parties (CSP9) on 31 May 2023.

These meetings enabled the Control Arms Secretariat to gauge the priorities of Control Arms Members concerning the issues being addressed at the ATT Working Groups and the 9th Conference of States Parties.

At the two Working Groups, Control Arms delivered 13 statements on the following issues: Articles 6 and 7 (x3), Article 9 - transit and transshipment (x1), industry (x2), transparency and reporting (x2), universalization (x2), future of the Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation (x1), and future of the ATT Programme of Work (x2). Following the Working Groups held in May, Control Arms drafted and distributed to all delegations a "Summary Analysis of the Working Group Meetings".

(b) Focus on the 9th ATT Conference of States Parties

In preparation for the 9th Conference of States Parties, Control Arms held an online briefing on 17 August 2023 and in-person meeting for Control Arms Members attending the Conference on 20 August 2023. The meetings were used to discuss the priorities for Control Arms at CSP9 and key messaging, finalize statements and identify overall objectives.

To raise awareness of 9th Conference of States Parties taking place and the issues being addressed at the Conference, Control Arms organized a four-day countdown on social media. For diplomats, Control Arms held an online briefing on 15 August 2023. This briefing included presentations by Saferworld on the future of the ATT programme of work and the ATT Monitor on transparency and reporting. It also included the first briefing by Austria, Ireland and Mexico on their working paper on industry. On 18 August 2023, Control Arms participated in the online meeting organized by these three states in which they again presented their joint working paper.



As was the case in the past, Control Arms was represented in the Opening Ceremony of the Conference. The representative was Ms. Bianca Pabotoy, who spoke on her experience of the proliferation and regulations of guns and gender based violence in the Philippines.

In the margins of the 9th Conference of States Parties, Control Arms hosted the following two clinics:

- Clinic on “Everything you need to know about ATT Reporting” on 22 August 2023, with presentations from the ATT Monitor and Stimson Centre.
- Clinic on “Establishing a National Control System under the ATT” on 23 August 2023, with presentations from Romania and Saferworld.

Control Arms delivered seven statements during CSP9. Those were opening ceremony, general statement, Treaty implementation, industry, ATT programme of work, transparency and reporting and universalization.

Policy Contributions

Launch of the Practical Guide: “How to Use the Arms Trade Treaty to Address Violence Against Children”

Whether in times of peace or conflict, violence against children cannot be justified. Contributing to the protection of children against violence is the ATT, which is the first legally binding global instrument to recognize and create obligations around the connection between arms transfers and violence against children. To contribute to this aspect of the ATT’s risk assessment, Control Arms completed work on and launched a guide to enable states to conduct meaningful export risk assessments concerning VAC. The paper can be accessed [here](#).

Practical Contributions

In 2023, Control Arms completed a project with the Government of Namibia, which was supported by the Voluntary Trust Fund. This project undertook a comprehensive review of Namibia’s existing national arms transfer control legislation and systems to identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps that may exist. The project also supported Namibia with developing a National Control List and preparing its first ATT Initial Report.

Roundtable discussions

In 2023, Control Arms organized four roundtables to explore implementation topics and experiences and identify opportunities to advocate for more robust arms control standards and practices. Those were:

Meeting by invitation only on “*What’s next for Feminist Foreign Policy and Gender Champion states in the ATT?*”, Thursday 11 May 2023 during lunchtime, held at the Permanent Mission of Canada in the margins of the ATT Working Groups. The speakers were Ambassador Leslie Norton of Canada; Ms. Hana Salama, UNIDIR; Mr. Callum Watson, Small Arms Survey; Ms. Cindy Ebbs, Control Arms, and Hine-Wai Loose moderated the discussion.

“*A conversation with Mr. Albrecht von Wittke on the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management – Achievements, challenges and what this new framework means for the Arms Trade Treaty*”, a one hour online event held on Friday 23 June 2023. This event was conducted as an interview by Hine-Wai Loose of Mr. von Wittke, Chair



of the Open-ended Working Group on Ammunition. The video of this event can be accessed [here](#).

“Responsible Business Conduct: The Case of the Arms Trade” on Tuesday 22 August 2023 and co-hosted by Control Arms, Pax, Saferworld and the Quakers United Nations Office (side event held during the 9th ATT Conference of States Parties). Moderated by Hine-Wai Loose, the event included: Professor Anita Ramasastry, former UN expert in the Working Group on Business and Human Rights, University of Washington School of Law, and Mr. Diederik Cops, Flemish Peace Institute.

“Examining support to Myanmar’s military: Implications for the Arms Trade Treaty”, on Friday 25 August 2023, 1:15 to 2:45 pm, (side event held during the 9th ATT Conference of States Parties), Control Arms co-hosted this event with the European Union. The speakers were: Ms. Marketa Homokova, European Union; Mr. Tom Andrews, Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar (by video); Ms. Montse Ferrer, Amnesty International; Ms. Khin Ohmar, founder and Chair of the Advisory Board of Progressive Voice (by video); and Hine-Wai Loose moderated the discussion. The video presentation of Mr. Tom Andrews can be accessed [here](#).

“Examining the role of arms transfers and militarism in the Israel - Palestine conflict. What is the impact and what can be done?”, held online on Friday, 1 December 2022, 3:00 to 4:30pm. The speakers were: Mr. Martin Butcher, Control Arms Board Member; Ms. Doaa’ Elnakhala, Small Arms Survey; Mr. Josh Paul, Former Director of the United States Department of State; Mr. Eitay Mack, Lawyer and Human Rights Advocate, Israel; and Hine-Wai Loose as moderator. The video of this event can be accessed [here](#).

Building upon synergies and leverage Geneva-based processes to maximize the impact of the ATT

Work on peace fora and the Arms Trade Treaty

At the *“New Agenda for Peace - Universality, Trust and Solidarity” - Geneva Consultations*, Control Arms was invited to co-chair the session on *“Strengthening prevention through the regulation of conventional weapons”*, held on Friday 17 March and hosted by Switzerland. This was an important opportunity to bring together the entire conventional weapons community in Geneva from mine action advocates to those working on arms transfers in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

For the 2023 Geneva Peace week, Control Arms contributed a podcast titled, *“Unveiling the Impact of Arms Control: Real-world Insights”*. Control Arms campaigners striving to prevent gun violence have limited participation opportunities in multilateral forums, where top-down approaches prevail. The podcast presented the views of campaigners, offering their perspectives on the actual impact of arms control agreements on the ground and what would be needed to bring about change. Participating in the podcast were: Ms. Carina Solmirano of the ATT Monitor; Ms. Shirine Jurdi, Lebanon; Mr. Edward Chaka, Malawi; Ms. Monsterrat Martinez, Mexico; Ms. Pauline Dempers, Namibia; and Mr. Baptiste Ngenzwanayo, Burkina Faso. The podcast can be accessed [here](#).

Work on the disarmament machinery and civil society

Control Arms organized in cooperation with SOAS University and Geneva Centre for Security Policy an in-person and online event titled *“Revisiting Disarmament and Arms Control: Progress or Regression?”* on Tuesday 19 September 2023 during lunchtime. The speakers were: Professor Dan Plesch, SOAS University; Ambassador Flavio Damico of Brazil;



Ambassador Amanda Gorely of Australia; Ambassador Aidan Liddle of the United Kingdom; Mr. Husham Ahmad of Pakistan; and Ms. Aixa Paumier Lopez of Cuba. Hine-Wai Loose made concluding remarks.

Control Arms Sponsorship Programme

In 2023 through its long established sponsorship programme, Control Arms was able to support the attendance of six Control Arms Coalition Members to the 9th Conference of States Parties, who were from countries such as Burkina Faso, Mexico and Nepal.

Monitoring Arms Trade Treaty Implementation

The ATT Monitor, an independent project of Control Arms, is the de facto international monitoring mechanism for the ATT and serves as a key source of information on the implementation of and compliance with the Treaty. The ATT Monitor Annual Report is the flagship publication of the ATT Monitor. Annual Reports take stock of existing practices, create greater transparency in how the Treaty is implemented, inform the work of the CSPs and intersessional meetings, and ensure accountability for Treaty commitments. The ATT Monitor Annual Report also analyzes critical ATT provisions and mechanisms and disseminates key information and guidance relating to ATT transparency and reporting.

The 2023 ATT Monitor Report

The ninth edition of the 2023 ATT Monitor Report was launched on 19 August 2023 during the Ninth Conference of States Parties to the ATT held in Geneva.

The 2023 ATT Monitor Report featured a special chapter on Conventional Ammunition that summarized how this is covered under the ATT and provided an analysis of the main gaps in how the Treaty addresses ammunition. It then focused on one specific area of control, conventional ammunition diversion, by presenting several case studies that highlight some ways in which ammunition may be diverted. It also explored measures that States Parties could adopt to prevent or mitigate such diversion.

In addition and as it does each year, the Report presented ATT Country Profiles, which provide an analysis of reporting and transfer practices of each State Party that submits a publicly available annual report. By disaggregating its analysis by country, the ATT Monitor continues to serve as an essential resource for policymakers and civil society, and thereby contributing to building the knowledge and capacity among officials responsible for completing ATT annual reports.

The [launch of the ATT Monitor 2023 Report](#) was attended by 88 participants from over 30 countries. It was co-sponsored by the Government of Canada and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Speakers included the participation of Ambassador Seong-mee Yoon, Republic of Korea and President of the 9th Conference of States Parties to the ATT; and Ambassador Robert in den Bosch, Kingdom of the Netherlands, who acted as Chair; Carina Solmirano, ATT Monitor Project Lead; and Rachel Stohl, from Stimson Centre.

The [2023 Report was also presented virtually](#) in the margins of the UN General Assembly First Committee on 1 November 2023. The event was attended by 72 participants from 20 countries and featured presentations from Ambassador Robert in den Bosch, Permanent Representative to the Conference of Disarmament of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Carina Solmirano, ATT Monitor Project Lead, and Rachel Stohl, Director of the Conventional Defense Program at the Stimson Center.