

12th Conference of States Parties (CSP12) of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Agenda Item: General Statements

Geneva, August 25, 2026

Speaker: Ivan Marques, Secretary of Multidimensional Security of the OAS

General Statement – OAS support to ATT's implementation

Thank you, Mister Chair.

On behalf of the Organization of American States, it is a great pleasure to participate once again in the Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

Curbing the devastating impact of the illicit firearms flows remains our regional priority, coupled with a growing concern over the use of conventional weapons by highly sophisticated organized groups. The Americas insistently keeps the record of highest firearm homicide rates globally, with roughly 75% of all homicides in Latin America and the Caribbean involving firearms. In particular, firearms are a leading driver of youth mortality across the continent, driven heavily by concentrated social inequalities, gang activity, and urban violence.

More than ever, this challenge calls for sustained multilateral cooperation and improved coordination. A vast majority of the Americas ratified or acceded to the Treaty. Notably, the two most recent accessions—from Colombia and Ecuador—underscore the region's continued commitment to this agenda.

However, limited resources, fragmented responses, and technical challenges still limit the ability of our Member States to meet their obligations.

The OAS has served as a regional hub for promoting the effective implementation of the Treaty and for translating its commitments into concrete action, through the promotion of synergies with Inter-American tools, particularly the CIFTA convention. With the support of the European Union, the OAS has shown how implementation in a coordinated manner can significantly strengthen States' capacity to prevent and combat firearms diversion.

First, and directly linked to the ATT, we are strengthening export control through the Regional Communication Mechanism for Licit Transfers of Firearms and Ammunition (MCTA). This tool will enable licensing and custom authorities to exchange information securely, identify risks, enhance traceability, and comply with relevant instruments. To ensure that countries can engage regardless of their existing technological capacity, the OAS has also developed the National Licensing System (SNL), a free and secure digital tool for countries that do not yet have a national electronic licensing system.

The OAS is preparing to launch the pilot of the MCTA in the region, but, once again, the mechanism is open to all countries—within and beyond the Americas. We will host a side event tomorrow with GICHD at 8:30am at Maison de la Paix to present more details about the MCTA, SNL and the pilot process. I encourage you to come by, and understand more of how the MCTA can be a valuable tool. Breakfast will be provided. I am also pleased to share that, with financial support from the VTF, we are about to start upgrading Paraguay's information management system based on the functionalities of the digital platforms already developed by the OAS.

On a strategic level, we have started the development of the Andean Community Firearms Roadmap, a process facilitated by the OAS, in coordination with UNLIREC

and the Andean Community. This will be the third roadmap in our region, a proven methodology that provides a shared framework to align national and subregional priorities that can strengthen governance through interinstitutional and multi-stakeholder coordination. The Roadmaps, and its National Action Plans, allow countries to operationalize multiple international and regional agreements in one single strategic plan.

These efforts are complemented by ongoing implementation of the Program of Assistance on Control of Arms and Munition, PACAM, which has provided technical assistance, training, and material support to 29 Latin American and Caribbean States, including strengthening of legal frameworks and institutional capacities to manage the lifecycle of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.

Mr. Chair, allow me to conclude by reaffirming the OAS's full commitment to supporting the Americas in advancing the universalization and implementation of the ATT, in partnership with government authorities, civil society organizations, industry and other international actors.

Thank you.