

Agenda Item 5 – Treaty Implementation

BDS National Committee

12th Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty

Geneva, August 2026

Thank you Madam President.

I take the floor on behalf of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), the largest Palestinian civil society coalition which leads the global Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement for Palestinian rights.

The BNC strongly supports the integration of maritime dimensions into ATT workstreams as a cross cutting issue, crucial to the effectiveness of the Treaty as a whole. The overwhelming majority of military and dual-use materiel is shipped via sea. Articles 6 and 7 give rise to obligations not only with regard to transfers but also to the facilitation of transfers, including transit and transshipment.

Positively, we have seen several states take action against transfers through their territory, or on vessels flying their flag, of cargo which could be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or other human rights violations. Examples include Italy and Malaysia holding shipments trans-shipping through their ports for investigation, Portugal de-flagging a vessel, Antigua and Barbuda issuing a directive prohibiting carriage of military and dual-use materiel to conflict zones on vessels registered under its flag, and Namibia, Spain, Malta, Turkiye, and Cabo Verde preventing vessels from docking at their ports. However, we are yet to see states put effective risk assessment procedures for maritime transfers.

In the case of transfers to Israel, the lack of effective risk assessment is compounded by unwillingness to act by major exporters and transshipment port states, while shippers increasingly use tactics to evade enforcement of international law, from changing shipping destination information to flag-hopping and shadow fleets. States have the authority and legal duty to counter such tactics and to ensure they control cargo passing through their ports and being shipped under their flag, for example by requiring disclosure of cargo manifests for high-risk routes or shipping companies before granting docking rights.

Experts in international law, including the Law of the Sea, have developed [operational guidelines](#) for port, coastal and flag States.



For effective implementation of the Treaty, Coastal, Port and Flag States must establish and implement risk-assessment methodologies, develop systems to act on alerts, ensure effective and ongoing monitoring and compliance with the Treaty. Due diligence is an obligation, not an optional.

We urge States to universalize best practices, and implement operational policies to uphold the international law to which signatory States are bound.