

Arms Trade Treaty – CSP12

General Debate Statement

Australia

President,

We thank you and your team for your guidance and assure you of Australia's support. Thanks also to the Secretariat, the Management Committee, and the Working Group Facilitators for their commitment to supporting the ATT's implementation.

We are pleased to welcome Vanuatu and Ecuador as the newest members of the ATT.

President,

Global instability is increasing with conflicts across the globe. The latest Global Peace Index states that overall peacefulness has deteriorated in 99 countries, marking the 12th consecutive year of global decline. Regrettably in the past year we have witnessed not only the continuation of existing conflicts, but also the emergence of new ones.

President,

Australia welcomes the development of a 5-year ATT Strategy. It will provide us greater direction and coordination in our work on universalisation and implementation. We look forward to continued discussion of the draft elements over the intersessional period.

We can all play our part in strengthening the implementation and universalisation of the ATT.

Australia supports transparent and timely reporting under the ATT. The Treaty's reporting obligations are critical to building trust and confidence between States Parties. Yet the annual reporting rate remains low.

Australia has submitted a working paper which brings together ideas and experience from across conventional arms control frameworks to identify ways to improve reporting outcomes. We encourage States Parties and the ATT Secretariat to consider the ideas outlined in this paper and progress practical steps to improve transparency reporting.

President

It is imperative we push harder for universalisation. This requires understanding the underlying reasons for States not joining the ATT. Australia is prioritising regional engagement, working closely with Pacific Island nations and Southeast Asian countries to overcome barriers to ratification - such as administrative hurdles and lack of local capacity.

President,

We commend the ATT as the first legally binding treaty to recognise links between the arms trade and gender-based violence including violence against women and children. In conflict settings this link is even more profound, with 70% to 90% of documented conflict-related sexual violence incidents involving firearms. Supporting gender equality reflects Australia's values and is a vital national interest. Australia's *International Gender Equality Strategy* and National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security builds on our proud legacy as a global leader and trusted partner on gender equality and places gender equality at the center of our international engagement.

President,

Our work in the ATT is complemented by efforts in other multilateral bodies. Australia would like to thank States that participated in this year's Ninth Biennial Meeting of States on implementation of the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. Australia had the honour to chair the Meeting and was pleased to work alongside Sierra Leone as Chair of the inaugural Open-Ended Technical Expert Group. These meetings advanced global efforts to tackle the diversion of illicit small arms and light weapons.

President,

Australia's commitment to reducing human suffering also extends to the protection of those who deliver humanitarian assistance in armed conflict and other situations of crisis. In this regard, Australia was pleased to lead the Declaration for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel, which includes a commitment by signatories to assess the potential that exported weapons could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, including those involving harm to humanitarian personnel.

President,

May we again assure you of our support in working towards meaningful outcomes at CSP12.

Thank you.
