



UK Mission
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UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

ARMS TRADE TREATY

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UK CSP13 Presidency Statement

H.E. Mr. David Riley, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Conference
on Disarmament in Geneva

Friday 28 August

Madam President, excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues,

Let me begin by expressing the United Kingdom's sincere appreciation to South Africa for its leadership of the Arms Trade Treaty over the past year. We are grateful for the commitment, skill and inclusive approach that South Africa has brought to the Presidency, and for its contribution to advancing our shared work. We particularly welcome South Africa's focus on strengthening the role of women and young people in driving forward implementation of the Treaty.

I also wish to thank the Secretariat. Carina and her Team play a vital role in supporting the effective functioning of the Treaty. Their professionalism, expertise and dedication are indispensable to the work of the ATT community.

The United Kingdom is deeply honoured to assume the Presidency of the ATT. We do so with a strong sense of responsibility, conscious of the ambitions that inspired the Treaty's creation and of the urgent need to translate those ambitions into practical results.

The ATT was created to make a difference in the real world. When the United Kingdom signed the Treaty in 2013, our Minister, Alistair Burt recalled its potential to "make the world a safer place". He said plainly that the Treaty would "save lives", "reduce human suffering" and help prevent arms from being used in serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Those principles are as important today as they were when the Treaty opened for signature.

Our responsibility is to ensure that the Treaty delivers on that promise.

The United Kingdom's Presidency will therefore focus on three closely connected priorities: strengthening implementation, advancing meaningful universalisation and ensuring that the ATT produces tangible outcomes.

Effective implementation must remain at the heart of our work. The value of the Treaty will ultimately be judged not only by the commitments we make, but by the changes those commitments produce. We should continue to strengthen national systems, promote effective controls, address diversion risks and support States in overcoming practical barriers to implementation.

Universalisation must likewise be understood as more than an increase in membership. Our objective should be meaningful universalisation, resulting in wider application of the Treaty's standards and broader engagement with its principles and objectives.

CSP13 should mark the beginning of the ATT's next chapter. The development of a five-year strategy offers an important opportunity to establish a long-term vision for the Treaty: to set a clear direction for the years ahead. We have an opportunity to reflect honestly on where progress has been made, where challenges remain and how our collective efforts can achieve greater impact.

The strategy must not become an end in itself. It should provide a practical foundation for stronger implementation, broader universalisation and a renewed commitment to upholding the Treaty's principles and objectives. It must be built on a vision of success - ambitious, but also focused, realistic and capable of guiding practical action.

Success will depend upon collective ownership. Just as the ATT itself was built through collaboration, its future must be shaped and delivered through the participation of States Parties, civil society, industry, and regional and international organisations. Each brings distinct experience, expertise and perspectives. Each has a contribution to make. We have witnessed this again this week, with the valuable input from across the diverse ATT community.

In this context, I encourage States Parties to consider taking on leadership roles as office holders or Friends of the President, helping to ensure that the work ahead is driven by broad participation and shared responsibility.

The United Kingdom will lead a transparent and inclusive Presidency. We will listen carefully, communicate openly and seek to build support around shared priorities. We will work to ensure that all voices have a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the Treaty's future.

Consensus and collective effort remain central to the ATT's success. Consensus does not require us to begin from identical positions. It requires a willingness to listen, to engage constructively and to search for common ground. Durable progress will be achieved only through cooperation and a shared commitment to the Treaty's objectives.

The United Kingdom looks forward to working with all members of the ATT community over the coming year. Together, we can begin the Treaty's next chapter, renew its sense of purpose and ensure that it continues to support peace and security, promote responsibility in the international arms trade and reduce human suffering.

Thank you.