



VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Adopted: ATT Second Conference of States Parties

First Amendment: ATT Fourth Conference of States Parties

Second Amendment: ATT Twelfth Conference of States Parties

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ATT VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND

Purpose and Scope of the Trust Fund

1. The Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) establishes a Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) in accordance with Article 16 of the ATT.
2. The primary objective of this Trust Fund is to assist requesting States Parties requiring international assistance to implement the ATT.

Signatory States and other States that have shown a clear and unambiguous political commitment to ratify or accede to the Treaty may also benefit from assistance from the VTF.

3. The Conference of States Parties to the ATT shall decide on General Principles for Implementation Assistance Projects under the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, in particular specific criteria for eligibility.

Authority

4. The Trust Fund shall be administered by the ATT Secretariat, with the support of the Selection Committee, which shall be established in accordance with Article 17.4 (f) of the ATT and Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure, to execute the functions as set out in these Terms of Reference. The administration of the VTF by the Secretariat shall be funded, as appropriate, from VTF contributions as determined by the Selection Committee annually.
5. To promote diverse and geographical representation, the Selection Committee shall consist of up to 15 seats, as agreed by the Second Conference of States Parties (para. 23, ATT/CSP2/2016/5). States Parties shall be appointed to be members of the Selection Committee by the Conference of States Parties, including donors as well as non-donors to the Fund. Members of the Selection Committee shall serve for two years and are eligible for reappointment.¹ The Selection Committee shall select one of its members to chair its deliberations. The ATT Secretariat participates in meetings of the Selection Committee in an ex officio capacity. The President of the Conference of States Parties chairs the first Selection Committee meeting if the Chairperson has not been selected or appointed before the first meeting and can participate in meetings of the Selection Committee in an ex officio capacity.

¹ In the event that one or more seats on the Selection Committee is vacated for any reason before the period of two years, a request to become a member of the Selection Committee will be circulated for a silence procedure or the next Conference of States Parties may appoint one or more States Parties to fill the seat or seats, as the case may be.

6. The Selection Committee shall meet in accordance with Article 13 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of States Parties and draw, as appropriate, on outside expertise, in particular from UN agencies and civil society. A member of the Selection Committee that has submitted a project proposal can participate in the discussion of the proposals for that project selection cycle but does not take part in the decision making of the Selection Committee for its own proposal.²

Operation of the Trust Fund

7. States Parties or other entities may donate to the VTF throughout the year and may make pledges at a dedicated segment of each ordinary session of the Conference of States Parties. These donations shall be transferred to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, preferably within 30 days. The ATT Secretariat will keep a record of received contributions to the Trust Fund, and will inform States Parties of the amount of funds available for each cycle of the VTF.
8. On an annual basis, the ATT Secretariat will issue a call for project proposals by States requiring implementation assistance to be submitted by a date determined by the Selection Committee allowing for adequate time for the preparation of those proposals.
9. The ATT Secretariat shall conduct a pre-screening of all project proposals received by the due date against “The General Principles for Implementation Assistance Projects under the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund” as decided by the Conference of States Parties to the ATT (see Attachment) and taking into account the Guidance for the Selection Process developed by the VTF Selection Committee accordingly. The ATT Secretariat shall draft a shortlist of eligible project proposals, relying on outside expertise as appropriate and needed, for consideration by the Selection Committee.
10. The Selection Committee shall decide on the initial allocation of available funds, based on the shortlist, taking due account of the VTF operating costs for the following and subsequent years. This decision, and any subsequent allocation decisions that may be required over the course of the project year, shall follow “The General Principles for Implementation Assistance Projects under the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund” as decided by the Conference of States Parties (see Attachment) and shall be reported to the Conference of States Parties.
11. The ATT Secretariat will ensure that the grants are transferred as decided by the Selection Committee and ensure transparent accounting. It shall report to the Conference of States Parties accordingly.
12. The ATT Secretariat will evaluate reports on the implementation of projects by beneficiaries and will report to the Conference of States Parties via the Selection

² In the case of equality of votes, the Chairperson of the VTF Selection Committee will cast the deciding vote.

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Committee on the outcomes of the projects. Beneficiary States may be invited to the Conference of States Parties and Working Group meetings by the ATT Secretariat to present their results and answer questions.

13. Administrative details regarding the application procedure to be followed by applicants shall be elaborated by the ATT Secretariat.

Monitoring, Auditing and Reporting

14. The audit provisions as per Rule 10 of the ATT Financial Rules shall be applicable to the VTF mutatis mutandis.
15. All recipients of funds shall submit a final report that should be made publicly available via the ATT Website. The final report should include a description of the outcomes, achievements and impacts as well as outline possible shortcomings and recommendations for further actions. Furthermore, the final report should include a detailed financial report on expenditures and balances. The report is due 60 days after completion of the activity financed by the Trust Fund. The ATT Secretariat shall provide technical guidelines for reporting, and shall ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation.

Final Provisions

16. These Terms of Reference will be re-evaluated by the Conference of States Parties as appropriate.
17. In the event of a termination of the activities of the Trust Fund, outstanding bills shall be paid and the remaining donations shall be refunded.

ATTACHMENT 1

The General Principles for Implementation Assistance Projects under the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund

Eligibility Criteria

1. Any State Party to the ATT requiring assistance in the implementation of the Treaty may submit a project proposal.
2. Signatory States and other States having shown clear and unambiguous political commitment to accede or ratify the ATT requiring assistance to implement the Treaty may also submit project proposals.
3. Applicants must be the beneficiary States.
4. Assistance projects required by requesting States may be implemented by or in conjunction with UN agencies, international or regional organisations, civil society organisations or other competent implementing partners.
5. VTF project applications must contain an adequate description of the proposed project, including a description of the state of ATT implementation in the requesting country or, if the applicant is not a State Party, a plausible roadmap towards ratification/accession via a designated template. The applications should also include the following:
 - a. an outline of challenges to implementation, accession/ratification,
 - b. a description of the aim of the project,
 - c. how the VTF can help overcome the challenges identified and the added value of the project in relation to other initiatives,
 - d. a timeline for project implementation,
 - e. an outline of the institutional and organizational setup of the proposal, and
 - f. a detailed budget plan.
6. Applicants must ensure that any project funding received from the Voluntary Trust Fund does not duplicate funding received for the same or a similar project from other sources.
7. Applicants are encouraged to consider, where appropriate, how projects may contribute to the effective and inclusive implementation of the Treaty, including through consideration of gender perspectives, as reflected in the relevant provisions of the Treaty.
8. The ATT Secretariat shall consult regularly with other funding entities on projects funded and discuss options and possibilities for synergies with a view to avoiding duplication.

Selection Criteria

1. The selection shall be based on a qualitative assessment of the descriptions and outlines to be submitted as specified by the eligibility criteria.
2. Priority shall be given to States Parties requiring assistance to implement the Treaty.
3. Eligible projects by Signatory States and other States requiring assistance may also be considered if the applicant has shown clear and unambiguous political commitment to accede or ratify the ATT and is able to show how the envisaged projects will help to meet envisaged milestones and ultimately lead to speeding up (or enabling) the process of ratification/accession.
4. If two or more project proposals are considered to be of equal quality after thorough assessment against the quality considerations as established by the Selection Committee, ATT strategies and/or priorities established by the Conference of States Parties, including geographic requirements, shall be taken into account in the allocation of funds to beneficiary States.
5. Overlap/duplication with projects funded by other relevant funds and by States Parties on a bilateral basis shall be avoided.

ATTACHMENT 2

Template for Demonstrating Political Will to Join the Arms Trade Treaty

This template is intended for use by States that have not yet joined the Treaty. Its purpose is to enable such States *to demonstrate clear and unambiguous political will* to accede to or ratify the Treaty. By providing detailed responses to the questions below, States can outline existing political commitments, institutional arrangements, and strategic considerations related to joining the Treaty.

Please complete all sections as thoroughly as possible. Where applicable, attach supporting documentation or references.

Section 1: Formal Expression of Intent

Have government leaders publicly expressed an intention to join the ATT?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details (e.g., official statements, announcements):

Is this intention reflected in any political party platform? [] Yes [] No

If yes, specify the party and relevant provisions:

Section 2: Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Framework

Is there a dedicated Parliamentary Committee or other organization tasked with deliberating on joining the ATT?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide the name of the organization and its mandate:

Is there a draft bill before Parliament concerning ATT ratification or accession?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details and timeline:

Do you have a Roadmap, National Action Plan or Strategy on Conventional Arms?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes: When was it established? How will the proposed project help meet envisaged milestones and accelerate the process of ratification or accession?

If no: Are you currently developing such a plan or strategy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 3: Executive and Inter-Agency Coordination

Has joining the ATT been discussed within your National Security Council or equivalent body?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details:

Are there Director-General or Director-level inter-agency meetings to review the ATT?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, describe the structure and frequency of such meetings:

Section 4: External Indicators of Commitment

Has the State participated in ATT meetings?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details:

Has the State consistently voted in favor of ATT-related resolutions in the UN General Assembly or First Committee?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If there has been a recent change in voting behavior, explain:

Has the State's leadership made public statements of intent to join the ATT (beyond those noted in Section 1)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details:

Section 5: Additional Circumstances

Are there external factors or circumstances that demonstrate the State's commitment to the ATT (e.g., regional security initiatives)?
