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EFFECTIVE ATT IMPLEMENTATION MEANS PUTTING PEOPLE ABOVE PROFITS

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

As Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) states parties and signatories resumed their “general debate” on Tuesday morning, the key sentiment expressed by most delegations was that the Treaty’s potential as a humanitarian, life-saving mechanism is not yet being appropriately utilised. Implementation failures, primarily by arms exporting and importing countries, mean that the flow of weapons—and thus the violence—has not been significantly curtailed since the Treaty’s entry into force five years ago. In the meantime, the arms industry continues to produce and push the sale of these weapons into zones of conflict and violence, a point raised by several delegations. States parties are also not sufficiently complying with their reporting obligations under the Treaty, meaning that transparency of even the ATT-regulated segment of the international arms trade is decreasing. These are serious challenges with which ATT states, and the non-governmental and international organisations working on these issues, need to grapple.

Many states, in particular those suffering from armed violence, armed conflict, and occupation, have highlighted the humanitarian objectives of the ATT. Argentina, Barbados, Chile, Guatemala, Ireland, Lebanon, Mozambique, Palestine, Peru, Samoa, Senegal, and Togo, among others, spoke about their commitment to the Treaty in their quest to curb proliferation of weapons and their use against civilian and civilian infrastructure. Many delegations similarly pointed out the importance of the ATT for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), arguing that preventing violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by restricting the global arms trade is an imperative part of fostering sustainable human and economic development.

These are the same arguments that were made back when the ATT was being negotiated. It is frustrating that we cannot claim even limited success thus far. It is not yet clear what impact the ATT’s restrictions and prohibitions have had on

actually stopping arms transfers that might have led to or perpetuated violence. But we have plenty of examples of cases in which the arms transfers were not stopped, leading to grave humanitarian disasters. It’s beyond time for states parties to seriously address this problem; as Poland suggested, future conferences of states parties should be used to talk about problematic arms transfers. Of course, non-compliance with the ATT’s restrictions and prohibitions on arms transfers does not mean the Treaty is useless or bad. On the contrary, it is to say that states parties—particular arms producing and exporting states parties—need to get serious about their obligations, fully implement the Treaty, and stop putting profits above people. As Côte d’Ivoire said, states need to go beyond economic interests of the arms trade to take into account the international community’s interest in peace.

Shifting away from profits and the perpetuation of violence towards people and peace requires a reconfiguration of how we think about, and talk about, issues of security. It means challenging long-held norms about weapons bestowing power and invulnerability upon their bearers to understanding weapons for what so many delegations recognise them as—tools of repression, occupation, violence, destruction, and death. As Jamaica’s delegation noted, weapons are used to perpetuate instability and insecurity. During the negotiation of the ATT, much emphasis was placed on not undermining the “legitimate” trade in arms whilst regulating it sufficiently to prevent human suffering and the “illicit trade”. But this misses the fact that all weapons can contribute to insecurity, violence, and conflict. It also ignores that to those seeking profits from their arms industries, all arms trade is legitimate. This is why the UK government, for example, can claim at the ATT conference of states parties that it has one of the most robust arms export systems in the world even while its Court of Appeals has just ruled that its arms transfers to Saudi Arabia are unlawful.¹ It’s why Australia, which was one of the

ATT's "champions" during negotiation, has declared its intention of being one of the world's top ten largest arms exporters.² The examples could go on; the point is that there is a profound disconnect between this notion of the "legitimate" arms trade and what is actually happening in the world—profound enough to render the term meaningless. But this is difficult to talk about in the ATT context and still be taken seriously. Which brings us back to Monday's conversation about increasing gender diversity in arms control and disarmament.

Nearly every delegation seemed to indicate support for increasing women's participation in ATT delegations. Many of these even argued that this participation has to be meaningful—it needs to go beyond numbers and actually address gender inequalities in terms of who gets to speak and who gets to participate in decision-making. From WILPF's perspective, we also believe there is inequality in who gets to participate in norm-setting: whose voices are considered credible and realistic, who is taken seriously in putting forward ideas—especially when these ideas contradict or challenge established normative perspectives that have been developed over centuries by a particular subset of the global population—predominantly white, western, heteronormative men. To change whose perspectives are considered credible and realistic means increasing diversity of participation not just by adding women, but

also by including those who have survived the violence being discussed and those who have been traditionally excluded from these spaces: LGBT+ people, nonwhite and nonwestern people, people with disabilities, and those with socioeconomic disadvantages. Conversations at the international level about weapons and war are almost never led by—or have meaningful participation of—those who live with the daily realities of either. Thus perspectives that challenge concepts like the "legitimate" trade in arms or that demand we prioritise human welfare over making a buck by selling bombs are generally not seriously considered. To truly address the humanitarian imperatives that have allegedly brought states to the ATT, the perspectives of those who live with the consequences of the arms trade should be the ones that matter most, not least.

1. See Campaign Against Arms Trade, <https://www.caat.org.uk/campaigns/stop-arming-saudi>.
2. Stephen Dziedzic, "Federal Government accused of contributing to global arms race with defence exports push," ABC News, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-29/aid-groups-lash-coalition-plan-to-become-major-weapons-exporter/9369962>.



WILPF has released a comprehensive report about the gendered impacts of military operations in Mosul, Iraq, where disregard for the human rights of the local civilian populations, including through the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, has undermined local peacebuilding approaches and inflicted disproportionate impacts on Iraqi women and girls.

Join us at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy on Wednesday, 28 August 2019 at 12:30 PM for an event to launch the report.

Download the report at <https://www.wilpf.org/new-report-we-are-still-here>

Information about the event at <https://www.gcsp.ch/events/women-mosul>

PREVENTING HUMAN SUFFERING: STUDY ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND SMALL ARMS IN SRI LANKA

Nadee Gunaratne | WILPF Sri Lanka

The Women International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Sri Lanka group, with support from the WILPF International Secretariat, has conducted research on “Interconnections between small arms and gender-based violence: Strengthening law to combat gender-based violence and to advance disarmament in Sri Lanka”. The research identifies gaps, shortcomings, insensitivities, and discrimination in state mechanisms and provides recommendations to redress arms-related GBV against women and girls in Sri Lanka through access to just, fair, and sensitive state mechanisms to promote the prevention of human suffering.

According to the United Nations, while Sri Lanka is a fairly low crime society, the crime rate for rape and sexual abuse has increased from 11 (for every 100,000 people) in 2009 to 15 in 2012, with many such crimes going unreported for various reasons. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is recognised as an impediment to development. In addition to facilitating crime and armed violence, SALW are used to facilitate sexual and gender-based violence and to reinforce violent, gendered social norms. The proposed research demonstrates that notions of masculinity are often linked to the possession of weapons.

The significance of the study is that to date, no national studies have been carried out about the impact on gender-based violence and small arms in Sri Lanka, although there are several research studies covering various aspects of GBV. WILPF Sri Lanka Group will research and review the current knowledge base on the gender impacts of SALW to identify research gaps. The project will give particular consideration to the social structures and gendered norms that may influence the use of SALW and its proliferation. In this small research both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies will be used. Key publications from several notable institutions, national reports,

newspaper reports, and court case records will be reviewed. Through the selection of a sample of judgements, a study will be done on positive and negative judicial responses. Key informant interviews will be conducted with victim survivors and criminal justice stakeholders like lawyers, judges, police, and women’s rights activists to find out about the relationship between gender-based violence and small arms. The research project seeks to identify problems in the formal justice sector and to offer recommendations for creating a violence free environment to prevent human suffering.

The project will hence contribute to gathering data on issues related to arms and gender-based violence. In addition, it will be used as a tool to advocate for the prevention of small arms proliferation including by implementing the GBV criterion under Article 6 and 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty. WILPF Sri Lanka will produce a report with the highlights of the findings from the research. The final report, to be completed in October 2019, will be published on the Group’s website. However, due to the sensitivity of the issue, the full report will not be made publicly available.

SIDE EVENT REPORT: INCREASING SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE WPS AGENDA AND ARMS CONTROL: INSIGHTS FROM THE ATT

Allison Pytlak | Reaching Critical Will, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

A thought-provoking and forward-looking side event explored practical and conceptual points of convergence between the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and arms control. Organised by the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, consisting of Canada, Ireland, Namibia, and UNIDIR, the event highlighted inputs from three expert panelists working in the areas of WPS and arms control.

Ms. Christine Hoebes, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia, described the Namibian experience in developing a WPS National Action Plan. She described this plan as comprehensive and wide-ranging in considering security threats that also come from climate change and technology, and said that it holds the overall aim of increasing women's participation in peace processes. She explained that WPS national focal points are concerned about the impact of small arms and light weapons in particular on women, especially as they perpetuate conflict and insecurity.

Mr. Daniel de Torres of DCAF emphasised that while participation of women in peace processes is a main pillar of the WPS agenda, that participation needs to be understood as not just about bringing women to the table and having the same conversation as before. It must also be about changing the conversation as a result of women's input and feminist perspectives. He also noted that too much time is spent arguing or justifying women's participation, overlooking their inherent right to be there—yet that same question is never and turned around applied to men.

Ms. Folade Mutota of the Women's Institute for Alternative Development based in Trinidad and Tobago raised important questions about power and privilege, and how we can manage and correct the belief systems that enable the perpetrators of gender-based violence (GBV). She highlighted the

biennial UN General Assembly First Committee resolution on "Women and disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control" as a guide to those working in arms control for how to explore synergies with WPS and encouraged the importance of states working together as champions in driving gender mainstreaming within the arms control and disarmament community.

The discussion, moderated by Ms. Renata Dwan of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), covered much ground. It identified important practical actions that could be taken to improve synergising arms control and the WPS agenda for the mutual benefit of both communities. For example, leveraging the obligatory reporting mechanisms within the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in ways that could provide better data and information-sharing on GBV, or on how GBV prevention measures are being incorporated into arms control, would be a specific action to encourage. The work of WPS focal points and NAPs provide other opportunities for overlap with national dialogue and action plans relating to export or small arms control. A question was raised about how we can avoid further legitimising militarism, in the pursuit of synergy between arms control and the WPS agenda. One participant asked about how to ask the right questions when making a GBV risk assessment under the ATT and was encouraged to also look into civil society reporting in order to get a true and accurate picture of what is happening with respect to gender equality and GBV.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Katrin Geyer, Allison Pytlak, and Athena Kerins | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

The News in brief is not a comprehensive recording of all statements and positions but attempts to capture key points from discussions.

Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)

Results to date

- Germany said that the VTF has successfully taken on 20 projects within 19 different states, all currently at different stages of implementation.
- The ATT Secretary named Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK as donors to the VTF since 2016. The Netherlands and the Republic of Korea have made recent contributions.
- The ATT Secretary named Germany and New Zealand as contributors to the VTF outreach programme.
- The ATT Secretary stated that 84% of grant recipients are state parties to the ATT.
- Paraguay described the successes of 111 civil servants (45% women) who trained with VTF funds and who seized large amounts of illegal weapons in transport a week later.
- Finland expressed general approval of how VTF projects are carried out.
- Netherlands cited an increase in state project applications as evidence of the VTF's success.
- Japan cited an increase in funding as evidence of the VTF's success.

Improving the VTF

- The UK urged the creation of in-depth feedback for grant applicant countries rejected by the VTF in order to refine and improve proposed projects.

- Mexico stressed the fundamentality of providing "feedback... to candidates that are not elected" to the selection committee.
- The ATT Secretary said that the good governance in the VTF "must be robust and be able to account to the donors".
- Belgium called on states parties to submit reports on VTF funding participation regularly.
- Control Arms called for a general review of the VTF reporting requirements in view of increasing state transparency and streamlining the VTF's implementation.

Universalisation and outreach

- Germany reported that during its period as Chair, 11 outreach events have been held.
- The ATT Secretary recommended that outreach be conducted on a regular basis moving forward.
- South Africa welcomed VTF outreach events, particularly those conducted as training events.
- Republic of Korea expressed a hope that their funding would support and encourage other countries to join the ATT and VTF.
- New Zealand affirmed its belief that repeat donations by VTF sponsors would encourage others to donate in future.

Implementation

- Belgium said that they feel generally positive about the ATT, but that "words still need to be transformed into action."
- South Africa described the VTF as a powerful internal tool to support the ATT implementation.
- Argentina highlighted the necessity of effective implementation to legitimise universalisation.

Funding and contribution concerns

- The ATT Secretary expressed gratitude to contributing states and said that the VTF “will be financially stable for the next 2 years.”
- The ATT Secretary expressed concern for donor organization and recommended better coordination with external organisations.
- Finland stressed the important of communication with other funding organisations to coordinate efforts and avoid duplicate funding.
- Namibia recommended coordination and possibly partnership with other funding organisations.

Allocation of resources

- Control Arms proposed that civil society be able to apply for VTF support for “worthwhile projects,” in which the VTF is unable to participate.
- Control Arms recommended “raising the ceiling on individual application amounts” to support larger scale and in-depth projects.
- New Zealand recommended the creation of audio-visual applications for states applying for support.

Other

- The ATT Secretary expressed a desire to make VTF funded projects sustainable.
- Belgium, Finland, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay and the UK announced their continued support for the fund.
- New Zealand confirmed that, under its term as chair, the fourth VTF project cycle will “be structured similarly to the previous three.”
- Germany expressed support for Rule 8 of the ATT Financial Rules stating that any applicant state that has been in arrears for 2+ years is “unlikely to get positive consideration by the Committee.”

General debate

Implementation

- Switzerland expressed concern over the increasing volume of international trade of weapons and emphasised the importance of rigorous implementation of the ATT.
- Ireland observed that the illegal and unregulated arms trade fuels human rights abuses and economic instability across the globe.
- Samoa said that it suffers from large scale arms trafficking and that it faces challenges in countering the illicit trade of SALW.
- Senegal noted that porous borders in many countries increases the risk of abuses of conventional weapons.
- Palestine highlighted the importance of refusing arms transfers where there is risk of war crimes, violations of IHL and human rights. It also said a recipient states’ record and formal commitments have to be taken into consideration.
- Norway encouraged civil society to continue monitoring the implementation of the ATT. Switzerland said that the success of the ATT depends not exclusively on the backing of all other state parties, but also on civil society.
- The ROK stated that full and effective implementation of the ATT must be a top priority and that the real success of the Treaty depends on domestic implementation.
- Ireland assured that when properly implemented, the ATT is a “major step forward” to regulate the trade of conventional weapons. Jamaica described the ATT as invaluable and important landmark in promoting peace and security, particularly where conventional weapons are used to perpetrate insecurity and instability fuelled by high levels of armed violence, including GBV. Others made similar remarks.
- Bulgaria recommended training licensing officials, drafting model legislation, and providing necessary technical equipment as a means to pursue ATT goals.

- Samoa reported back that its project, funded by the VTF, focused on the streamlining of data collection and reporting on conventional arms. Nigeria called on states parties to support collaborative efforts to address the lack of data on firearms and firearms tracking, to properly understand the problem of firearms and the impact on human security and safety.
- Sweden and Italy expressed support for the conference taking up consideration of Article 9 on transit and transport of weapons in future meetings of the implementation WG.
- Singapore said it had seized firearms and ammunition that was bound for Djibouti but would have been diverted to Sudan, which is under a UN Security Council embargo.
- China, a signatory, highlighted aspects of its export control regime which it says are stronger than the ATT; noting in particular that it only trades with sovereign states, abides by UNSC resolutions, and attaches importance to rights of self-defence, not undermining peace and security, and non-interference.
- Control Arms stressed the “growing number of red flags” surrounding on-going exports that still fuel human suffering as well as the well-documented humanitarian catastrophe that has affected millions of Yemeni men, women, and children stating that it demands a decisive response from the international community that must be aligned with expectations and legal obligations under the Treaty.
- The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) reminded that the ATT is a floor and not a ceiling, stating, “Governments can choose to go beyond these baselines, and should do so.”
- Poland suggested future CSPs should be used to talk about problematic arms transfers and suspected or identified incidents of diversion.
- Ireland, Poland, Iceland, France, Honduras, and Australia welcomed the seven new ATT accessions and/or ratifications since CSP4.
- Ireland stressed the need for states to “redouble and promote” universalisation, and that international standards are “strongest when universally applied.” Australia, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Romania expressed similar views. Samoa noted that universalisation is crucial to strengthen national, regional, and global security.
- Australia, Poland, Finland, and others noted that if large export industries joined the ATT, it would bolster the Treaty significantly. The Czech Republic recommended outreach to arms-exporting countries. Bulgaria described universalisation as a “crucial challenge” as the greatest arms exporters and importers refuse to join. Poland, France, Belgium, Chile, Italy, and Romania specified that priority in universalisation efforts should be given to major exporters, and importers of military goods.
- Finland suggested concentrating universalisation efforts on areas with weak regional support.
- Honduras updated that it is reforming its domestic legislation on firearms, to improve the scope and make it more rigorous.
- Canada announced it deposited its instrument of accession on 17 September. It took longer than hoped as a result of legislative amendments to enhance the rigour of its export controls.
- Thailand said its ratification process is still ongoing but its existing export regime upholds the spirit of the ATT.
- Malaysia updated that interagency consultations are ongoing to finalise its ratification process, but that it still subscribes to the ATT's provisions even as a signatory.

Universalisation

- Jamaica, Poland, Namibia, ROK, Romania, Iceland, and Nigeria, among others, urged all states to sign and ratify the ATT to achieve universalisation. Australia called on states parties to explain the value of joining the ATT to non-state parties.
- The Philippines expects to resume its ratification process shortly and said it recently participated in an interagency meeting of stakeholders about its future Treaty implementation.

- Singapore is updating its national legislation in order to be able to fully implement the ATT.
- Israel said it voted for the ATT's adoption and signing in 2014.
- China said that it is starting "seriously" its accession to the ATT.
- Guatemala and Palestine regret the United States' withdrawal from the ATT.

Diversion

- Finland and Italy promoted a continued focus on diversion through the next cycle of ATT meetings.
- Guatemala emphasised the importance of working with civil society on Article 11.
- Jamaica, Barbados, and Nigeria, among others, attested to the devastating impacts of illicit trade or the diversion of conventional weapons, resulting in high levels of transnational organised criminal activities, levels of crimes, displacement, and homicides, amongst other impacts.
- Antigua and Barbuda stated that addressing diversion requires a comprehensive approach with effective interagency cooperation.

Transparency and reporting

- Switzerland emphasised the importance of states parties fulfilling their Article 13 reporting obligations for the success of the treaty. Ireland and Romania noted that one of the main purposes of the ATT is the promotion of transparency through timely, accurate, and public reporting. Montenegro encouraged states to keep them public to ensure transparency.
- Ireland, Slovenia, Malaysia, and Romania expressed concern at the low annual reporting rates. Norway and Montenegro encouraged all states parties to submit reports.
- Slovenia welcomed the online reporting tool.
- Romania offered its assistance to those states that encounter difficulty in submitting initial or annual reports.

- Jamaica and Barbados noted that countries in their region have technical and resource constraints which negatively impacts reporting activities. Jamaica and Barbados argued that CARICOM countries would benefit from greater collaboration and institutional strengthening of national reporting mechanisms.
- Jamaica commended donor countries for ongoing assistance programmes through the VTF that provide avenues to improve reporting activities through targeted assistance packages.
- Antigua and Barbuda stated that as a result of a regional conference held in cooperation with civil society, reporting from the region has increased as a result.
- Singapore and China noted they submit reports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA).

Gender and gender-based violence (GBV)

- Many states, including Samoa, France, Poland, Barbados, Iceland, Canada, Romania, Malaysia, Antigua and Barbuda, and Ireland welcomed this year's focus on gender and GBV.
- Romania, Finland, Slovenia, Iceland, and Antigua and Barbuda, amongst others, expressed their full support to the president's draft decision.
- Iceland said that if the ATT is successful, and if it meets the immense challenges of gender-based atrocities, it would be a "great and shining achievement."
- Samoa noted conventional arms in its region has inflicted harm on the most vulnerable, in particular women. Barbados said women are frequently victims of GBV inflicted by firearms. Peru said that "women, girls, and boys are the main targets of crimes associated with illegal weapons." Bulgaria emphasised the importance of understanding why and how conventional weapons uniquely impact women and children. Guatemala acknowledged the gendered impacts of weapons on civilians in both conflict and non-conflict areas. Slovenia emphasised the importance of gender disaggregated data collection.

- Burkina Faso underscored the particular importance of the link between SALW and GBV in conflict zones and asked for special consideration of SALW during the CSP5.
- Samoa said that GBV is one of the “key net security threats in national security policy.”
- Romania and Barbados expressed support for the equal representation and participation of women in all disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation efforts. Finland recommended having gender and human rights experts present for decision making processes. Norway said that including women in these conversations is essential.
- Romania was thankful for the holistic approach that encourages all working groups, chairs and facilitators to explore how gender aspects could be included in an ongoing basis. It welcomed that such approach will provide better understandings of the gendered impact of armed violence, and how gender perspectives can be incorporated in the ATT’s implementation. Iceland expressed support for the upcoming presidencies in enforcing gender perspectives in the Treaty.
- Romania thanked civil society for its active role in raising awareness on GBV in the ATT context, and stressed the need for continued cooperation with all stakeholders on the topic.
- Australia said that it harnesses artificial intelligence and other methods to ensure that risk assessments are based on the most recent data, including with respect to GBV.
- Poland reminded that Article 7(4) should be taken seriously in risk assessment procedures, as should other criteria in the field of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHLR). Barbados called on states to appropriately review and update risk assessment processes to meet requirements under Article 7(4).
- Barbados said for the first time, women hold the two highest positions in its country. It said to safeguard these gains and fully implement the ATT, states should exchange best practices in the area of GBV risk assessments and continue to build on existing data and knowledge on GBV to reduce incidents of GBV.
- Honduras shared about a new criminal code regulation that accounts for GBV.
- Canada announced that as part of its recent accession, it has integrated the GBV risk assessments of article 7(4) into national law as a stand-alone assessment criteria.
- Philippines highlighted the disproportionate impact of small arms violence on women and children but also the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
- Several delegations highlighted the links between their National Action Plans on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda and the ATT. Samoa said that the implementation of the WPS agenda also relies on the achievement of the SDGs.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Samoa, Tonga, Ireland, and Botswana highlighted the link between combatting of the illicit trade of weapons and the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDG target 16(4). Ireland observed that the effective implementation of ATT also contributes to other SDGs, including to health and well-being, gender equality, sustainable cities, and peace and justice. Chile acknowledged the “obvious links” between the SDGs and ATT and encouraged states parties to fulfil SDG targets 16(1), 16(4), and 16(5).
- Paraguay expressed concern over the manufacture and production of conventional weapons capable of threatening human rights and the SDGs.
- Namibia asserted that the continued use of conventional weapons against citizens “compromises development” and is not in line with the 2030 Agenda.
- Antigua and Barbuda expressed concern about how limited resources are being redirected from its social and economic development needs and into security monitoring systems as a result of armed violence from diverted weapons.
- Côte d’Ivoire expressed concern over a new arms race, which “has resulted in a significant increase of military budgets.”

Capacity building, cooperation, and assistance

- Samoa noted that capacity building and international assistance is necessary for small island developing states.
- Botswana indicated it will reach out for capacity building and looks forward to enhanced technical cooperation and assistance.
- Samoa and Jamaica acknowledged the financial assistance they received by the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF). Serbia and Togo expressed gratitude for having been selected for VTF funding. Ireland described the VTF as a “vital mechanism” to assist states in the effective implementation of the ATT. Montenegro and Serbia recognised the VTF as an important tool for effective implementation.
- Samoa underscored that capacity-building and international assistance is crucial to fulfil the ATT’s obligations. Jamaica called for greater assistance for technical support for developing countries. Jamaica and Nigeria observed that countries in their region continue to confront significant challenges in adopting national legislation.
- Ireland and Australia informed about their financial contributions to the sponsorship programme.
- Thailand described a recent capacity building workshop in Bangkok that had been organised by the European Union, as beneficial.
- Tonga stressed the capacity constraints that it faces and welcomes further technical and financial resources available through the ATT; it thanked Australia and New Zealand for hosting two recent Pacific-region events on the ATT and conventional weapons treaties.
- The Wassenaar Arrangement’s Secretariat outlined the utility of its resources, including a best practices compendium, munitions list, and non-binding guidelines as well as its specific outreach and capacity building activities, such as policy and technical briefings.



Photo © Control Arms

- INTERPOL spoke to how aspects of its firearms control programme can be useful in preventing diversion, particularly through information sharing and tracing.

Financial and administrative issues

- Sweden raised concerns about the increasingly urgent need to address the ATT's financial situation, particularly the ATT's "problems of liquidity". Italy expressed concern at deficit accumulating and liquidity challenges. Bulgaria expressed frustration with "decreasing numbers of state parties making contributions to the treaty" and with many countries failing to make payments in a timely manner.
- Finland asserted that the only sustainable financing for the ATT would come in the form of all states parties legally enforced contributions. Ireland encouraged all states to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time, and to settle all outstanding arrears as soon as possible. Switzerland called on "certain states" to fulfill their financial obligations.
- Italy supported proposals of the Management Committee, but also reiterated that compliance with financial obligations from all states is the only long-term solution.
- Poland regretted that so much time is dedicated to discussing the worrisome financial situation of the ATT. It suggested the consideration of only one preparatory meeting ahead of the next CSP.
- The Czech Republic welcomed the VTF in supporting the ATT and recommended greater transparency to increase legitimacy. Australia informed that it contributed financially to the VTF.
- Peru voiced support for Argentina's candidacy for the ATT's management committee in 2021 and for Costa Rica to represent the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) in the ATT management committee.

Role of industry

- Peru asked manufacturers and other members of the weapons manufacturing industry to review the Arms Trade Treaty and to minimise sales to those who may breach human rights law and "exacerbate the vulnerable situation of regions" impacted by conflict.
- The Czech Republic voiced disappointment in arms producers who continue to work out of commercial interest.
- Côte d'Ivoire said states need to go beyond economic interests of the arms trade to take into account the international community's interest in peace.
- Montenegro, among others, encouraged all member states to remember the role of industry in disarmament efforts.

ATT MONITOR

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organisation in the world. Reaching Critical Will works for disarmament and the prohibition of many different weapon systems; confronting militarism and military spending; and exposing gendered aspects of the impact of weapons and disarmament processes with a feminist lens. Reaching Critical Will also monitors and analyses international disarmament processes, providing primary resources, reporting, and civil society coordination at various UN-related forums.



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