

# Arms Trade Treaty Monitor

Independent views and reports from the Arms Trade Treaty negotiation process

## Day 3: "Rights," "traps," and "balance"

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

On Wednesday morning, states continued discussing the provisional rules of procedure for the arms trade treaty (ATT) negotiating conference. On Tuesday evening, the Chair conducted open-ended consultations on this topic, which he found had a "constructive spirit when it comes to finding formulas that accommodate to the degree possible the different schools of thought." However, delegations continued discussing the rules in plenary, in anticipation of another round of consultations to follow.

### Consensus

The Mexican delegation, after pondering the consultations of the previous evening, mused in the plenary meeting that the principle of "one country, one vote" is the key that has allowed the United Nations to function. Work conducted within the General Assembly or under its mandate "cannot ask that countries give up this right."

Furthermore, the delegation argued, in the past some countries have used the idea of consensus to limit progress for the majority and then did not go on to sign or ratify the resulting agreements. Earlier this week, some states argued that unanimity is the only way to achieve universality of the final treaty. However, the Mexican delegation questioned this reasoning, noting that consensus has led to minimalist treaties that do not necessarily achieve universality or even entry into force.

Mexico thus argued that asking countries to give up their right to vote as set out in the UN Charter is "too high of a cost" and would likely lead to a limited treaty and not ensure universalization. It noted that if all participating countries made a commitment to ratify the treaty obtained by unanimity, "then we would rethink our position," but expressed doubt of that possibility.

Other delegations continued putting their weight behind one or another interpretation of consensus and operative paragraph 5 (OP5) of UN General Assembly resolution 64/48, the resolution that established the ATT process.

Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Colombia, Denmark, and Ecuador called for decisions to be made "on the basis of consensus," as stipulated in OP5. However, these states, as well as CARICOM and Niger, argued that consensus does not mean unanimity and that one or two states should not be able to derail the process or block the final text. Senegal's delegation argued that consensus is not the only way for moving forward and that it opens up a trap for potential stalemate. CARICOM supported Mexico's proposal for the rules to provide for two-thirds majority voting if all attempts to arrive at consensus fail.

Ireland and Poland argued that the provisional rules on decision-making reflect the intentions of General Assembly expressed in OP5. The Australian delegation said the rules of procedure must strike a balance between the need for progress and to reach consensus. Burundi indicated it is comfortable with following UN rules of procedure for conducting the negotiations in July.

The Czech Republic, Denmark, and Zambia said that the reference to the "basis of consensus" only applies to the adoption of final text. The Czech delegation also argued that this approach has been widely applied in past; represents well-established UN practice; and has worked.

However, the delegation of Uruguay expressed concern about paragraph 3 of rule 33, which states that the conference

**16 February 2012**  
**Vol. 4, No. 4**

- 1 | Day 3: "Rights," "traps," and "balance"
- 3 | Harmonizing differences
- 4 | Initial reactions to the Draft Report
- 5 | Principles and practices in good defence procurement
- 6 | Transparency and accountability
- 7 | The ATT and women, peace and security

The Arms Trade Treaty Monitor features civil society reporting and analysis on meetings of the UN conference on an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

The ATT Monitor is coordinated and edited by the Reaching Critical Will project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in partnership with Global Action to Prevent War, World Council of Churches, and the Control Arms Campaign.

All views expressed in this publication and corresponding blog, [attmonitor.posterous.com](http://attmonitor.posterous.com), are solely those of the contributing authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the supporting organizations.

More analysis is online at [attmonitor.posterous.com](http://attmonitor.posterous.com)

PDF versions of this and past ATT Monitors: [reachingcriticalwill.org](http://reachingcriticalwill.org)

*continued on next page*



**Reaching Critical Will**  
a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

**control arms**



**World Council of Churches**



*Day 3 (cont.)*

“shall adopt the final text of the treaty instrument by consensus”. Uruguay worried that this could result in a weak treaty. Qatar’s delegation suggested deleting this paragraph and also deleting paragraph 1 of rule 35, which says that all decisions of substance “other than the adoption of the final text shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting”. This would have the result of not necessarily adopting the final text by consensus, but certainly taking procedural decisions by vote.

Meanwhile, the delegations of Pakistan, Syria, and Venezuela argued that OP5 is clear and does not need elaboration. Syria’s delegation argued that other delegations are trying to “reinterpret” the principle of consensus. Venezuela’s delegation said that participants must avoid falling into the trap of “abandoning this conference to the whims of the majority”.

The Moroccan delegation argued that whether the conference resorts to consensus or voting, no one will be giving up any right or power. It said that OP5 gives a mandate consisting of two elements that are “interlinked and equally important”: to agree on a strong and robust treaty and to do so on the basis of consensus. Therefore, Morocco argued, consensus does not necessarily mean the lowest common denominator and that “resorting” to voting is not the answer to blocked progress; that it could further jeopardize the process.

Iran’s delegation argued that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an example of why states should not “fear” consensus. In 1996, after the Conference on Disarmament had spent several years negotiating the Treaty, consensus on its adoption was blocked by India. The Australian delegation introduced the final treaty text to the UN General Assembly in a subsequent session, where the Treaty was adopted. The Iranian delegation argued this was proof that consensus does not have mean the end of the ATT.

(Note: What the Iranian delegation failed to mention is that the CTBT has a serious loophole: it does not prevent subcritical testing, which allows for “improvements” of nuclear weapons without necessitating an explosive test. This was the basis of India’s objection to the Treaty. Furthermore, while the General Assembly adopted the CTBT, it still has not yet entered into force 16 years later because the requisite states—including Iran—have not yet ratified it.)

*NGO access and participation*

The delegations of Bangladesh, Denmark, Ghana, Ireland, Morocco, Niger, Poland, Senegal, Uruguay, Zambia, and Zimbabwe welcomed the continuing participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups in the ATT process. The delegation of Ghana issued support for Norway’s proposal that all meetings should remain open until otherwise specified.

Denmark, Ghana, Ireland, Poland, Senegal, and Zambia called for NGOs to have more opportunities to address the conference than just one meeting. In fact, the Zambian delegation called on the ATT negotiating conference to “defer to best practice of the United Nations in humanitarian negotiations including allowing NGOs to take up the floor in all open meetings as often as they wished and on any article or articles rather than restricting them to one stand-alone meeting.”

The Moroccan delegation, agreeing that NGOs have valuable expertise to contribute to the process, said it was “surprised” to hear calls for increased NGO presentations. Instead, the delegation argued, the conference should take better advantage of this expertise by making it available to the negotiation process throughout all of its organs. Morocco suggested that any committee negotiating draft text should be able to invite one or two NGO representatives to answer relevant questions by delegations in a limited time.

Pakistan and Zimbabwe said they support the current draft rules on NGO participation.

*Chair’s text*

The delegations of Pakistan and Syria called for the thematic compilation of views of all states to all PrepComs to be submitted as background documentation to the negotiation conference. Pakistan’s delegation argued that while some countries believe the views of all delegations have been taken on board in the Chair’s text from July 2011, it does not share this view. It complained of having submitted proposals to the Chair’s February 2011 paper that were not reflected in the July version.

On the other hand, the delegations of CARICOM, Denmark, and Zambia argued that Chair’s text is a good basis for moving forward in July at the negotiating conference. •

## Harmonizing differences and levelling the playing field

Katherine Prizeman | Global Action to Prevent War

Wednesday's discussions illustrated that many delegations are keen to address differences in opinion bearing in mind that this week represents the final opportunity to scrutinize such differences before official negotiations initiate. The Pakistani delegation made clear during Wednesday morning's session that some delegations remain generally dissatisfied with the preparatory process and head into the July negotiations with trepidation and disappointment. The Pakistani delegate argued that although the PrepCom was intended to serve as a vetting forum to harmonize differences of opinion on all aspects of the treaty's framework, this mission has not been successfully accomplished. The delegate explained that opportunities have been lost and the July negotiating conference will now have to mend these schisms before more substantive work on treaty elements can move towards consensus, even as the issue of consensus still remains highly controversial and unresolved itself.

Several delegations, including Pakistan, Syria, and Venezuela, have placed a premium on equality in all aspects of the process and have asked that a summary document of all states' opinions be compiled to adequately address and portray the vast spectrum of positions that still remain regarding the treaty elements. The Venezuelan delegate referred to a policy of 'no state left behind,' such that all visions and opinions are equally addressed as well as state sovereignty rightfully protected heading into the negotiating conference. Furthermore, the Pakistani delegate expressed dissatisfaction with the reflection of states' views in the most current Chair's Paper from July 2011. As such, the Chair has been asked by some to provide a comprehensive report of all opinions that sufficiently underscores the variety that still exists. It seems that the desire to clearly reflect the differences in opinion is indicative of some states' wish to make clear that there should be no illusions that the PrepCom has yielded a common, universal position on any of the treaty elements or framework. These assertions also seem to indicate that some states feel this lack of harmonization will create significant challenges for the negotiating conference and will set back progress in July.

Another important issue discussed during Wednesday's proceedings was 'leveling the playing field' among delegations. Chair Ambassador Moritán referred to this issue in his opening remarks, noting that there is still the need to address the unequal

capacity among delegations by finding mechanisms that ensure small delegations are on an equal footing when it comes to being informed on substance as well as procedure throughout the negotiations. This is an important undertaking for July, especially in light of the possibility of consensual decision-making, insofar as all delegations will have the responsibility to negotiate in good faith, which will require vast energy and capacity. The more capacity delegations have, the more likely informed decisions will be made and the treaty will progress in a positive direction for the majority of states.

'Harmonizing' differences of opinion and 'leveling the playing field' are broad issues that have permeated much of the ATT process to date. Some states have requested a comprehensive paper reflecting all issues addressed over the course of the four preparatory sessions that can serve as a reference document for the negotiating conference. This is often meant as an alternative to the Chair's text—a collection of views rather than his "summary". However, it is still unclear whether a composite could actually help reconcile views, though it could very well prove to be an interesting and helpful document. As the UK delegation pointed out earlier this week, states already had an opportunity to submit their views in writing, which were published in the UN Secretary General's report in 2007—suggesting that delegations use this document rather than mandate the Secretariat to compile a brand new document. It could be argued, however, that at least some state positions have surely changed over the last several years making the positions reflected in the 2007 document outdated and in need of revision. As a general rule, it would be wise to be as clear and informed as possible regarding these divisions in the lead up to the July conference so that strategies for mending these differences in opinion can be thought about well before the start of the conference and such a summary document would be useful for strategizing and planning. The work to harmonize such opinions should not end this week. Furthermore, the role of civil society could also be better utilized for delegations that lack personnel capacity. Non-governmental experts and practitioners could serve as beneficial sources of information on substance and procedure as well as consultants on possible scenarios forward. This strategy could be one of the mechanisms useful for filling such capacity gaps in the lead-up to and during negotiations. •

## Initial reactions to the Draft Report

Nathan Sears | Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Wednesday afternoon's discussion of the "Draft Report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty ("Draft Report")" was largely amicable and constructive. In this meeting perhaps more than any other, UN member states demonstrated their willingness to work cooperatively towards consensus. The benefit of this great demonstration of consensus-building was that the Chair articulated eight points that would be the basis for a redraft, while leaving the substantive matter of a Secretariat's document up to further consultation.

First, it was generally accepted that Paragraph 17 should not only refer to the "first, second and third sessions" but additionally the fourth session of the PrepCom in reference to its substantive work. Second, it was clarified that Paragraph 17 and the first sentence of Paragraph 19 were not redundant, but that the words "held further discussions" could be added to Paragraph 19 to clear up the issue. Third, there was acceptance of the proposal made by the Islamic Republic of Iran to change the wording of Paragraph 18 from "civil society" to "non-governmental organizations". Fourth, the suggestion of the Russian Federation to delete the second sentence of Paragraph 20, so that that Paragraph 20 would read that the Chair's non-paper "has been agreed". Fifth, it was generally accepted that Paragraphs 20 and 21 could be merged in order to avoid redundancy. Sixth, in Paragraph 20 where it says that the Chair's non-paper "serves as a background document for the Conference," it would instead read "as one background document". Seventh, Paragraph 21 could omit the word "additional" from the current articulation "additional proposals". Eighth, it seemed to be agreed that Section IV could be appropriately entitled, "Decisions and Recommendations of the Preparatory Committee" in place of "Recommendations of the Preparatory Committee".

The greatest point of contention during this constructive afternoon session was the final sentence of Section III, which reads, "In addition, the Preparatory Committee requested the United Nations Secretariat to produce, as one of the background documents, a concise document reflecting the proposals and views of Member States expressed during the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and submit it well in advance of the Conference." One concern was the seeming contradiction between the need to capture all of the alternative proposals

and views of member states throughout the course of the PrepCom and the need to be concise. Some states, such as the delegations of Malaysia and Indonesia, suggested excising the word "concise" from the current formulation of the text in order to not lose the context of states' positions because of the need to economize the length of a document. The removal of the word "concise" seemed to the Chair to be uncontested.

A number of member states, such as Algeria and Egypt, highlighted the extreme importance of this document to their governments. As the delegate of Egypt put it, it is very difficult for delegations to convince their capitals that their views have been considered if they cannot see them demonstrated in the background documentation. From this perspective, the proposed document will seek to fill the perceived gap between the Chair's non-paper and the views of member states' not reflected therein. Nevertheless, the delegate of Ireland rightly requested clarification on what would be the mandate guiding the proposed document. The Secretariat offered its assurance that its mandate to produce such a document would be undertaken with the utmost respect for impartiality in the summarizing, reformulating, and disregarding of the content to be included. The final words on the matter were given to the delegates of Algeria and Sweden. The delegate of Algeria noted that it was the Algerian delegation that had first proposed this document, and "very rigorously insisted" upon its inclusion in the background information. The delegate of Sweden then noted that his delegation had then reacted to Algeria's proposal by requesting that such a document reflect the level of support for alternative proposal and views.

It seems clear that additional meetings of this PrepCom will give further consideration to the matter of the proposed document in Section III of the Draft Report. It has been argued that such a document should be prepared in order to ensure that the views of all states are reflected within the background documentation for the conference—the only way to equally ensure an objective and non-discriminatory conference that affords the greatest opportunity for consensus-building. Sweden's proposal that such a document also indicate the level of support for alternative proposals and views seems equally just, objective, and non-discriminatory, and a good basis for the future work of the Conference. •

## Principles and practices in good defence procurement

Deepayan Basu Ray and Tobias Bock

Government departments and agencies spend billions of dollars every year procuring the goods and services they need. Maximising the value obtained for this money (and ensuring that it is spent on appropriate and approved public projects) depends crucially on the effectiveness, efficiency, and integrity of public procurement systems. These systems also contribute to the achievement of security, good governance, and socio-economic development goals. Ineffective public procurement systems can significantly undermine all these factors.

In many countries, defence procurement accounts for a significant share of public procurement expenditure. Defence procurement raises a number of specific challenges to the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of systems. For example, the need to protect national security may in some cases genuinely limit the extent to which procurement systems can be transparent and open to scrutiny. Defence and security activities are in some countries treated as “no-go areas” for parliamentary, civil society, or other forms of oversight. Arms and equipment procurement may in some countries be funded through secret budgets for which external transparency and accountability mechanisms are highly constrained or wholly absent. In some countries, arms producers may enjoy special and preferential treatment in domestic defence and security procurements. And defence procurement is in many countries particularly reliant on single- or sole-source procurement. The lack of effective competition in such procurements severely weakens the negotiating strength of the purchaser, reduces transparency, and often results in higher prices and/or lower quality.

Given these constraints on transparency, and accountability, it is not surprising that the international arms trade is particularly vulnerable to corruption. Evidence of this has been widely documented by Transparency International, Oxfam, and others. To highlight some of this work, SIPRI, Oxfam, Transparency International UK, and the Mission of Norway are hosting a side event on **Thursday at 1.15 in Conference Room D** to highlight some “Good Principles and Practices in Good Defence Procurement”. The side event will focus on lessons learned from a range of ongoing procurement reform programmes and from examples of good practice in defence procurement. The panellists will outline a range of good practices which can help maximise the

efficiency, effectiveness and integrity of the processes involved. The goal of this side event is to encourage discussions and exchange of information on the key principles that will be presented to the meeting. •

### Sweden’s proposal

Nathan Sears | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Wednesday afternoon’s session of the PrepCom ended with a flashback to the last statements made at the PrepCom’s third session: with the delegation of Algeria “very rigorously insist[ing]” on the addition of a background document that shows all of the alternative proposals and views of members states made during the PrepCom; and the delegation of Sweden requesting that such a background document take into account the level of support by member states for these various proposals and views. The question that now requires further consultation sessions at the PrepCom is how a mandate for such a document can be created that accommodates both of these views.

One potentially useful modality that could balance these requests is Sarah Parker’s “Analysis of States’ Views of an Arms Trade Treaty.” This report sought to give a statistical summary of the views of over ninety member states on an Arms Trade Treaty, following the UN Secretary General’s invitation for the submission of states views. The report outlines in a coherent and organized manner the various views of member states on substantive issues concerning a potential ATT, and indicates the number of states supporting each view. For example, the report shows that sixty-two states indicated in their individual submissions that small arms and light weapons (SALW) should be included within the scope of a treaty.

This could be a very useful modality for the Secretariat to report the alternative proposals and views of member states that have been given during the four sessions of the PrepCom in the broadest possible manner, while importantly maintaining the document’s impartiality and economizing its length. Many delegations have called for the inclusion of such a document to be included within the background documents of the conference. This document could be a good tool for consensus-building, especially if incorporates a statistical analysis of positions. •

## **Transparency and accountability issues on the ATT**

Camlus Omogo | Security Research and Information Centre, Kenya

Along with the heated discussions on the inclusion of a host of issues within the scope and criteria of an ATT—such as ammunition, technology transfers, import, transit/transshipment, as well assessment if the transfers risk interfering with socio-economic development, respect of international humanitarian and human rights law, and perpetuating gender-based violence—another interesting discussion is on the implementation of an arms trade treaty (ATT).

What actually is the issue with implementation? Although states generally agree on many issues around implementation, one interesting debate regarding implementation that is causing jitters behind the scenes and on the floor is the question of transparency and accountability. It is actually not so much about accountability as it is about transparency. The concern is on the type of weapons and transfers that are supposed to be covered while reporting. The debate is on “what should be reported and how”. There seems to be considerable feeling that states would be willing to report, but only on certain types of weapons and transactions and in so far as such reporting will not lead to disclosure of their military strength and thereby compromise their right to arm themselves and ensure self-defense. Some delegates argue, for instance, that disclosing the type and quantity of weapons purchased or donated to a country goes beyond mere reporting to include exposing the soft underbelly of a state to “potential enemy”. It may even lead to an arms race as countries strive to outdo each other in terms of weapons possessed. In addition, there is a feeling that the moment a state declares the type of weapon it has exported or imported it is easy for the enemy to determine the weakness of the weapons and

institute counter-measures, which further reduces the military strength of a state. The lingering view is that “sometimes the military might is in the secrecy of the weapons you possess,” but this will be taken away unless the element of reporting is carefully considered. Although there are merits in the arguments against reporting everything, it is also important to note that a lot of illegal transactions and corruption have occurred under the veil of “military secrecy”. Thus, a considerable debate will be on the need to balance the need to transparent reporting and what should be contained in the report.

Another related discussion among a majority of states is the need for a non-discriminatory treaty. This discussion cannot come at any better time, especially for African countries that are getting concerned about the implementation of the Rome Statute. It is no secret that there is a growing feeling among African states that the Statute is discriminately being implemented, mostly targeting African leaders. Whether this feeling has merit or not is not the issue; the issue is that it has increased the watchfulness against an ATT, and indeed any future international instrument, containing elements that would provide the potential for discriminative application. States are vigilant against a treaty that would encourage victimization of certain states or regions and thereby compromising their right to self-defense. The hope is that these fears and concerns will be carefully considered and addressed by states. For African states, this is an excellent opportunity to ensure that most, if not all, their needs for a legally-binding international instrument are addressed, in a non-discriminatory manner, in an ATT instrument. •

Please see the **Reaching Critical Will** website for:

- Documents
- Statements
- Background materials
- NGO materials
- Past editions of the ATT Monitor

**[www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org)**

Please see the **ATT Monitor blog** for:

- More reports and analysis
- Breaking news and press releases

**[attmonitor.posterous.com](http://attmonitor.posterous.com)**

## If you're serious about the 'Women, Peace and Security' agenda, then prove it

Rebecca Jerome | IANSA Women's Network

Many governments claim they are very committed to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Yet, somehow, the Arms Trade Treaty is being treated differently and is considered to represent a separate set of issues, even though one of its outcomes will surely be to help prevent insecurity and conflict.

### *Stating the obvious: the ATT is about peace and security*

Unsurprisingly conventional arms, and in particular, small arms and light weapons (SALW), play a central role in armed conflict. Despite this obvious fact, discussions and actions to deal with the presence and use of SALW often remain absent in debates around peace and security and explicit links are still not being made. It is as if the presence of small arms is inevitable, somehow unavoidable, and this prevents them from being recognised as facilitators of human rights violations, tools of intimidation, domination, and violence. It is clear that women's security is at risk in many ways during armed conflict, and for many gender-specific reasons. In the words of UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, addressing the Security Council on 7 August 2009, "Like a grenade or a gun, sexual violence is a part of the arsenal of parties to armed conflict to pursue military, political, social and economic aims. Beyond the enormous toll on victims, sexual violence in armed conflict hurts recovery and peace-building."

In Resolution 64/48 on the ATT (2009), the General Assembly recognised that "arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are essential for the maintenance of international peace and security".

The ATT is a key opportunity to make the Women, Peace and Security agenda a reality and to show serious commitment to protecting women and girls.

Including gender-based violence in the criteria means that licensing authorities should pay specific attention to gender-based violence and the risks of approving a potential transfer, including import, export, re-export, temporary transfer, transshipment, loan, gift, and aid, on the rights of women. This is consistent with States' "Women, Peace and Security" commitments because it ensures that a gender perspective and consideration of women's rights is integrated into the ATT, an important initiative "for the maintenance of international peace and security," as stated by the UN General Assembly.

### *It's not just about "principle"*

Some UN member states and civil society colleagues say that, in principle, it would be 'nice'

to see gender-based violence mentioned in the text, but claim that the most important part of the treaty is its "technical aspect". Of course, the technical aspect is important, but so is the human impact and potential of the ATT to prevent violence and save lives. If there is systematic and widespread gender-based violence, according to a government's risk assessment, should the licensing authority approve the arms transfer? Moral and technical issues simply cannot be separated. They are intrinsically linked. Surely one of the central objectives of the treaty is to prevent arms from being transferred where atrocities are being committed?

### *Gender-based violence is not "subjective"*

Including gender-based violence in the criteria of the ATT means respecting existing international law on the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, obligations shared by all UN Member States. These rights are not explicit within the UN Charter or the Geneva Convention and other instruments of international law traditionally used by diplomats in the disarmament community but they have been elaborated by the Security Council resolutions and other international law. Therefore they are part of the international legal framework that is relevant to the ATT, and must be considered and included.

In October 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1325, which, for the first time, recognised women's needs in wartime and post-conflict situations, in all their roles from victims to peacebuilders. The Resolution addresses all UN Member States and all parties to armed conflicts to focus on peace and security matters in a coherent and gender-sensitive manner. Since then, four other UN Security Council resolutions have been passed to strengthen the international agenda on women, peace and security.

UNSCR 1325 calls upon all parties to armed conflict to fully respect international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians. UNSCR 1820 stresses that "sexual violence, when used or commissioned as a tactic of war in order to deliberately target civilians or as a part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations, can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace and security." UNSCR 1889 strongly condemns all violations of applicable international law committed against women and

*continued on next page*



*Women, peace and security (cont.)*

girls in situations of armed conflicts and post-conflict situations, and demands all parties to conflicts to cease such acts with immediate effect.

A strong and effective ATT will support and complement the broader goals of UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security by reducing conflict and fostering an environment for post-conflict peace-building.

To date, 34 countries have National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 and many more have committed to do so.

Conflict environments, characterised by a breakdown in the rule of law and a prevailing climate of impunity, create the conditions whereby both State and non-state parties, emboldened by their weapons, power, and status, essentially enjoy free reign to inflict sexual violence. This has far-reaching implications for efforts to consolidate peace and secure development. In a number of contemporary conflicts, sexual violence has taken on particularly brutal dimensions, sometimes as a means of pursuing military, political, social, and economic objectives, perpetrated mainly against civilians in direct violation of international humanitarian, human rights and criminal law.

Every day women are suffering from the misuse and abuse of small arms in our homes, communities, and countries. The international community, the UN Security Council, the delegates here in New York, can approve the strongest text to provide the most rigorous provisions in support of women, peace and security.

Now, an Arms Trade Treaty that really does support and complement the women, peace and security agenda can become a reality. Now is the time to show your commitment.

*For more information on the links between Women, Peace and Security and SALW control, see:*

- *Joined-Up Thinking: International Measures for Women's Security and SALW Control* (2010) By Cynthia Dehesa and Sarah Masters <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/549>
- *Women peace and security: The role of an Arms Trade Treaty* (2009): <http://www.iansa.org/women/documents/ATT-IANSAWomen.pdf>
- *The Arms Trade Treaty: An Important Opportunity to Prevent Gender Based Violence at Gunpoint* (2012): [http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/iansa\\_wn\\_att\\_position\\_paper\\_feb\\_2012\\_final.pdf](http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/iansa_wn_att_position_paper_feb_2012_final.pdf) •

## The IANSA Women's Network

