



Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

**ATT Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation,
Sub-Working group on current and emerging implementation issues,**

**Item 3. The risk of conventional arms being used for GBV or VAWC,
proposal on the possible role of gender focal points**

Geneva, 26 February 2025

delivered by

Henriëtte van Gulik

**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of The Netherlands to the
Conference on Disarmament**

Thank you, Facilitator.

My delegation would like to thank the Permanent Mission of Mexico for hosting an informal conversation on ***Addressing barriers to women's full, meaningful, equal and effective participation in ATT meetings***, last Monday, and for circulating a proposal to designate Gender Focal Points in the context of the Treaty.

To enhance synergies on gender equality and diversity between the various conventional arms instruments, I would like to share some personal experiences as one of the Gender Focal Points of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).

The past two years, the Netherlands has served as a Gender Focal Point of the *Committee on the Enhancement of International Cooperation and Assistance* and of the *Victim Assistance Committee*.

The Fourth Review Conference of Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in Oslo in 2019, decided to establish Gender Focal Points as part of the APMBC machinery. In the working methods of the so-called Oslo Action Plan Gender Focal Points were created in each of the Committees of the Convention: and I quote the relevant language:

“Appoint a Focal Point among its members to provide advice on gender mainstreaming and ensure that the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities are taken into account in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan”.

Gender and diversity actions and indicators were incorporated throughout the Oslo Action Plan, thus acknowledging the importance of gender and diversity mainstreaming in the implementation of the Convention. The current Siem Reap Angkor Action Plan adopted in Cambodia last November also includes actions and indicators on gender equality and diversity.

Since 2019 the AMPBC Gender Focal Points have organized panel discussions, workshops and side events. They have also published working papers with recommendations on gender and diversity

mainstreaming for the effective implementation of the Convention and the Action Plan. The GFPs also fulfilled the role as a resource person for States Parties on gender and diversity issues.

In 2023, The Netherlands was a senior member and Gender Focal Point of the Cooperation and Assistance Committee. In this role we have developed a Committee workplan on gender and diversity, which was annexed to the report of the Committee, submitted to the Meeting of States Parties.

Last year, the APMBC Gender Focal Points Japan, Peru, Thailand and the Netherlands have initiated a joint cross-regional statement on Gender and Diversity, linking it to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the Sustainable Development Agenda.

This joint statement was delivered for the very first time in the APMBC context at the Intersessional Meeting in June. The initiative was replicated at the Review Conference in Cambodia with 60 cosponsors from all regions of the world.

Based on my experience I am certain that Gender Focal Points could contribute to the implementation of Article 7.4 of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Voluntary Guide and other recommendations that have been developed within the framework of the Treaty since CSP5.

Therefore, my delegation welcomes Mexico's proposals and fully supports the suggestion that the Secretariat undertake consultations with stakeholders to define the process for designating Gender Focal Points during the current ATT cycle. To draw on experiences and good practices from other disarmament and arms control fora, we suggest that current and former Gender Focal Points from other related mechanisms could be involved in these consultations, and we would be happy to support in making these connections.

Thank you.