



ICRC

Tenth Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty

19-23 August 2024

International Committee of the Red Cross

Statement on Treaty Universalization

Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) expresses its appreciation to you, Ambassador Razvan RUSU of Romania and Ambassador Seong-mee YOON of the Republic of Korea (ROK) for your work as Co-chairs of the Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU). We would also like to offer our sincere condolences to the ATT family on the tragic passing of our dear colleague and friend Stephan Ott.

This year, in December, we celebrate the 10th anniversary of entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty and we congratulate and thank all the ATT member states for their commitment to reduce the human cost of uncontrolled arms transfers. We would also like to congratulate Gambia and Malawi for becoming the 114th and 115th States Parties to the ATT since the last CSP. However, there is still a long way to reach the universalization of the treaty. Over 40% of States across the globe are not yet party to the treaty. As eluded by our President yesterday, we urge the world to recommit to a robust protective framework that saves lives and preserves humanity. To this end, the ICRC and the broader Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement remain deeply committed to advancing the ATT's universalization.

The ICRC lends its support to the views and proposals of the chairs stated in the Draft WGTU workplan for ATT universalization efforts. We believe the priorities and focuses identified by the WGTU will provide a robust framework for enhancing ratification and accession, as well as maintaining the current momentum toward universalizing the ATT.

The ICRC welcomes the references to other stakeholders, including civil society in the workplan, and would like to add that the involvement of the larger Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can play a crucial role in sustaining the dialogue and providing continued prominence to the treaty at the national level. The 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent will take place in two months and will bring together the parties to the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is pertinent to note that some states have adopted pledges on ATT universalization and implementation at previous International Conferences. A draft resolution titled "Towards a universal culture of compliance with international humanitarian law", which directly mentions "the hope that other IHL treaties will also achieve universal acceptance", will be proposed for adoption at the upcoming 34th International Conference.

We look forward to continuing working with member states and the Movement, including the implementation of these voluntary pledges, and we invite States and other stakeholders to keep reporting on their pledges and make further pledges on ATT universalization and implementation at the 34th International Conference.



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The ICRC supports the draft list of practical ratification/accession and domestication questions prepared by the chairs and look forward to the views and experiences shared by States Parties and other stakeholders. The ICRC stresses the importance of understanding different approaches to ratification or accession, and the sharing of experiences among stakeholders. The ICRC has prepared a factsheet on ATT, which provides a summary of the ATT and points to avenues for support in the accession, ratification, and national implementation of the treaty, and stands ready to support States in this process. In addition, we have been supporting States for the past ten years through compatibility studies, bilateral discussions with relevant ministries and bodies, and by preparing tools to facilitate and enhance dialogue both within and between States.

The ICRC continues to raise awareness of the treaty through various meetings and conferences. For instance, in August 2024, a meeting was held in Cambodia on the Universalization of the Treaty for South East Asian States and in July 2024, the Pacific Island Roundtable was held in New Zealand to universalize the ATT and other IHL treaties in Pacific Island States.

Finally, as we mark a decade since the adoption of the treaty, efforts should intensify to increase the rate of accession in the coming years. The ICRC urges all states that are not yet party to the ATT to accede to the Treaty at the earliest. In particular, we urge the twenty-seven Signatory States to complete the ratification process and bolster the ranks of existing States Parties, and we encourage States Parties to act willingly as regional universalization champions. With a view to fostering progress towards universalization, we encourage States Parties to set themselves ambitious and time-bound objectives, and to commit to undertake concrete actions to achieve them.

We will continue to work tirelessly to support States Parties in their implementation of the ATT to the highest possible standard. The faithful implementation of the ATT is the most compelling testimony to its effectiveness and will go a long way in attracting other States to join.

Thank you.