



General Statement delivered by South Africa during the 10th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

19-23 August 2024

Thank you Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to join States Parties in expressing heartfelt sympathy and condolences for the passing of Mr Stephan Ott. He will be sorely missed for his remarkable dedication to the work of the Arms Trade Treaty. We equally thank the delegations that have expressed condolences for the passing away of our late colleague, Mr Rob Wensley who was well known in the ATT community.

Mr President,

South Africa wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation expresses its gratitude to the Working Group Chairs and facilitators for the work executed during the CSP10 cycle of the ATT. We appreciate the efforts in elaborating the multi-year workplans for the (a) Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation (WGETI), (b) the Working Group on Treaty Universalisation (WGTU) as well as (c) the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting (WGTR) in order to foster the exchange of national implementation practices. We believe that the recommendations presented by the respective Working Groups should be carefully considered by States Parties as we implement the Treaty for the next decade.

Ten years since the establishment of international arms control and regulation, efforts towards universalisation of the Treaty must translate into more signatories and ratifications as well as effective implementation at national, regional and international levels. In advancing Treaty Universalisation, South Africa wishes to congratulate our fellow African compatriots, the Gambia and Malawi for acceding to the Treaty and becoming the 114th and 115th State Parties to join the Arms Trade Treaty. Having two more African States joining the Treaty demonstrates Africa's commitment to the implementation of the Treaty to eradicate the scourge of arms

proliferation on the continent. This further illustrates the efforts in ensuring that the African Union Master Roadmap continues to address obstacles such as the persistence of the illicit transfer of arms that continue to pose serious threats to the African peace and security agenda. Our commitment to Silencing the Guns on the continent and to address the illicit transfers and illegal arms transactions worldwide remains steadfast.

We encourage the sharing of experiences and lessons drawn from different regions and to work towards strengthening efforts to mitigate challenges and filling the gaps in the effective implementation of the Treaty.

Mr President,

We are aware that many States Parties, including those from the developing world, face serious challenges in implementing their Treaty obligations. The task of adequately addressing weaknesses and loopholes in national arms control systems requires significant resources. It is for this reason that South Africa has consistently strongly advocated the need for international cooperation and assistance, particularly in support of developing countries, in the full implementation of the Treaty obligations in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

South Africa reiterates the importance of the Voluntary Trust Fund and the Sponsorship Programme as being key to enhancing, without prejudice, developing country participation in Treaty awareness that contributes to the effective implementation of the ATT at the national level.

South Africa appreciates contributions made by States Parties towards the Sponsorship programme to encourage wider participation of all States parties in ATT meetings. My delegation equally appreciates the use of the Development Assistant Committee (DAC) list of the Organisation for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a selection criteria to promote transparency in the selection processes.

Mr President,

My delegation wishes to thank the Management Committee for its report and recommendations on the Review of the ATT Programme of Work. We take note of the recommendation; just as proposed in CSP9, that the inter-sessional programme of the Treaty be streamlined into one: in-person Working Group session with an option of online

participation. Given the 10-year milestone that the Treaty has reached, and being mindful not to overlook the current geopolitical developments, South Africa proposes that careful consideration be given by the Management Committee on how to advance the Treaty in a balanced manner, looking at the proposed topics suggested in the various multi-year workplans, the Voluntary Guidelines under Articles 6&7 (on prohibitions, export and export assessment), and the financial status of the Treaty as well as the time given to address these important issues under the Treaty.

Mr President,

Regarding your proposed theme that speaks to Inter-agency cooperation, South Africa believes that the topic is relevant, timely, and important; and should therefore be linked to previous topics addressed during the past CSPs which all contribute towards the effective domestication and implementation of treaty provisions.

My delegation thanks the United Kingdom for the great initiative of having a joint Political Declaration to mark the commemoration of the ATT's success over the past 10 years. We appreciate the consultations held during the month of July to accommodate proposals and views from States Parties including my delegation. We note, however, that some of the proposals made by my delegation in the declaration which we deem important, were not taken on board. Notwithstanding this, South Africa could support consensus on the Joint Declaration, especially given that it is an initiative that acknowledges the work carried out over the past 10 years and that States Parties could certainly build upon moving forward.

Mr President,

In conclusion, South Africa wishes to appreciate the commendable work carried out by Mr. Dumisani Dladla as his tenure as the Head of the Secretariat comes to an end. Mr Dladla's unwavering commitment, vision and dedication have been instrumental in guiding us through both challenges and successes of the ATT. South Africa is proud of the work that he has done including his unshakeable belief in the values that underpin this Treaty.

My delegation reiterates that the objective and purpose of the Treaty, as embodied in Article 1 of the ATT, will only be achieved when all States Parties move in concert in Treaty implementation and in this regard. We also have confidence that through **this debate**, we

would be able to work towards a productive and successful conclusion of the Tenth Conference of States Parties.

I thank you.

End.