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Agenda item 99 (x)

General and complete disarmament: the Arms Trade Treaty

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 2023

[on the report of the First Committee ([A/78/409](#), para. 89)]

78/48. The Arms Trade Treaty

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [61/89](#) of 6 December 2006, [63/240](#) of 24 December 2008, [64/48](#) of 2 December 2009, [67/234](#) A of 24 December 2012, [67/234](#) B of 2 April 2013, [68/31](#) of 5 December 2013, [69/49](#) of 2 December 2014, [70/58](#) of 7 December 2015, [71/50](#) of 5 December 2016, [72/44](#) of 4 December 2017, [73/36](#) of 5 December 2018, [74/49](#) of 12 December 2019, [75/64](#) of 7 December 2020, [76/50](#) of 6 December 2021 and [77/62](#) of 7 December 2022 and its decision 66/518 of 2 December 2011,

Recognizing that disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation are essential for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Recognizing also the security, social, economic and humanitarian consequences of the illicit and unregulated trade in conventional arms,

Bearing in mind that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict and armed violence,

Recognizing the legitimate political, security, economic and commercial interests of States in the international trade in conventional arms,

Underlining the urgent need to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, and to prevent their diversion to the illicit market, or for unauthorized end use or end users, including through improvements to stockpile management, thereby preventing the exacerbation of armed violence, the commission of terrorist acts and the violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law,

Emphasizing the responsibility of all States, in accordance with their respective international and regional obligations and commitments, to effectively regulate the international trade in conventional arms,

Recalling the contribution made by the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its



Aspects,¹ as well as the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,² and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons,³

Welcoming the conclusion of the work of the open-ended working group, established pursuant to resolution 76/233 of 24 December 2021, to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework to address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management, and the submission of its final report,⁴ which is complementary to the Arms Trade Treaty,

Highlighting the relevance of the Arms Trade Treaty,⁵ including its links and synergies with other relevant instruments on conventional arms, to efforts to meet Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁶ and specifically target 16.4, which aims at significantly reducing illicit arms flows by 2030,

Recalling the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, in particular the section of the agenda entitled "Disarmament that saves lives",

Recognizing the negative impact of the illicit and unregulated trade in conventional arms and related ammunition on the lives of women, men, girls and boys, and that the Arms Trade Treaty was the first international agreement to identify and call upon States to address the link between conventional arms transfers and the risk of serious acts of gender-based violence and serious acts of violence against women and children,

Recognizing also the important role that civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, industry and relevant international organizations play, by raising awareness, in efforts to prevent and eradicate the illicit and unregulated trade in conventional arms, including in preventing their diversion, and in supporting the implementation of the Treaty,

Recalling the adoption by the General Assembly and the entry into force of the Treaty on 2 April 2013 and 24 December 2014, respectively, and noting that the Treaty remains open for accession by any State that has not signed it,

Welcoming the latest ratification of the Treaty by Andorra, bearing in mind that the universalization of the Treaty is essential to achieving its object and purpose,

Noting the efforts by States parties to the Treaty to continue to explore ways and means to enhance national implementation of the Treaty through the working group on effective treaty implementation and the voluntary trust fund for the implementation of the Treaty,

1. *Welcomes* the decisions taken by the Ninth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in person with a livestreaming option from 21 to 25 August 2023, which included a thematic discussion on the role of industry in responsible international transfers of conventional arms, the priority theme for the

¹ Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9–20 July 2001 (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV, para. 24.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2326, No. 39574.

³ See decision 60/519 and A/60/88 and A/60/88/Corr.2, annex.

⁴ A/78/111.

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 3013, No. 52373.

⁶ Resolution 70/1.

Conference, and notes that the Tenth Conference of States Parties will be held in Geneva from 19 to 23 August 2024;

2. *Takes note* of the decision of the Ninth Conference of States Parties that welcomes the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights⁷ and encourages States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty and other stakeholders to continue discussions on how the Guiding Principles, human rights and international humanitarian law instruments apply in the context of the Treaty, as appropriate;

3. *Welcomes* the continuing progress by the standing working groups on effective treaty implementation, including the important work undertaken in the context of its sub-working groups on articles 6 and 7, article 9 and article 11, on transparency and reporting, and on universalization in advancing the object and purpose of the Arms Trade Treaty, and further takes note with appreciation of the revision of the Treaty programme of work, on a trial basis for one year, decided by the Ninth Conference of States Parties;⁸

4. *Recognizes* that the consolidation of the institutional structure of the Treaty provides a framework for supporting further work under the Treaty, in particular its effective implementation, and in this regard expresses concern about the unpaid assessed contributions of States and the potential adverse implications that this situation entails for the Treaty processes, and calls upon States that have not yet done so to address their financial obligations under the Treaty in a prompt and timely manner;

5. *Calls upon* all States that have not yet done so to ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Treaty, in accordance with their respective constitutional processes, in order to achieve its universalization;

6. *Calls upon* all States parties to submit and encourages them to make available, in a timely manner, and to update, as appropriate, their initial reports, as well as their annual reports for the preceding calendar year, as required under article 13 of the Treaty, thereby enhancing confidence, transparency, trust and accountability, and welcomes the ongoing efforts of the working group on transparency and reporting to facilitate compliance by States parties with their reporting obligations;

7. *Calls upon* those States parties in a position to do so to provide assistance, including legal or legislative assistance, institutional capacity-building and technical, material or financial assistance, to requesting States in order to promote the implementation and universalization of the Treaty;

8. *Stresses* the vital importance of the full and effective implementation of and compliance with all provisions of the Treaty by States parties, and urges States parties to meet their obligations under the Treaty, thereby contributing to international and regional peace, security and stability, to the reduction of human suffering and to the promotion of cooperation, transparency and responsible action;

9. *Recognizes* the complementarity among all relevant international instruments on conventional arms and the Treaty, and to this end urges all States to implement effective national measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit and unregulated trade in conventional arms and ammunition in fulfilment of their respective international obligations and commitments and to prevent their diversion;

10. *Looks forward* to the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in June 2024, and its potential synergies with the Treaty;

⁷ A/HRC/17/31, annex.

⁸ See ATT/CSP9/2023/SEC/773/Conf.FinRep.Rev2.

11. *Encourages* further steps to enable States to increasingly prevent and tackle the diversion of conventional arms and ammunition to unauthorized end uses or end users during the entire life cycle of the items, and recognizes that enhancing reporting rates, transparency and information-sharing, in line with Treaty obligations, is fundamental to achieving this goal;

12. *Appreciates* the continuing work of the Diversion Information Exchange Forum, and encourages States parties and signatory States to actively use the Forum and to share, on a voluntary basis, concrete and operational information about cases of suspected or detected diversion, and acknowledges that this is an important step towards tackling diversion by enhancing information-sharing and international cooperation, and a tool to improve practical implementation of the Treaty;

13. *Recalls* the adoption of action-oriented decisions on gender and gender-based violence endorsed by the Fifth Conference of States parties, encourages and welcomes efforts of States parties to contribute to the progress on these two aspects, and in that respect encourages States parties and signatory States to ensure the full and equal participation of women and men in pursuing the object and purpose of the Treaty;

14. *Welcomes* the continued support through the voluntary trust fund for the implementation and universalization of the Treaty, and encourages all States parties in a position to do so to contribute to the fund;

15. *Encourages* eligible States to make best use of the voluntary trust fund, as well as other international, regional and national outreach and assistance programmes, and share information on their implementation efforts on a voluntary basis;

16. *Encourages* States parties and signatory States in a position to do so to provide funding to the Treaty sponsorship programme to support and maximize the scale and diversity of participation of experts from States in meetings under the Treaty for those States that would otherwise be unable to attend;

17. *Encourages* States parties to strengthen their cooperation with civil society, including non-governmental organizations, industry and relevant international organizations and to work with other States parties at the national and regional levels, and invites those stakeholders, in particular those that are underrepresented in Treaty processes, to engage further with States parties with the aim of ensuring the effective implementation and universalization of the Treaty;

18. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, the sub-item entitled “The Arms Trade Treaty”, and to review the implementation of the present resolution at that session.

*42nd plenary meeting
4 December 2023*