Statement by the Netherlands

Fourth Conference of States Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty

Universalization

Thank you Mr. President.

The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to make additional remarks in its national capacity.

Firstly, let me thank the President of the ATT for his role as Chair of the WG on Treaty Universalisation. We also would to like thank ambassador Klaus Korhonen, the CSP3 President, for his role as Co-Chair of the Working Group. Your combined experience and efforts have been very valuable in moving the issue of universalisation forward. We thank you for addressing the issue with the responsible persons in their own countries, engaging on a political level and all the multilateral efforts you have conducted in this regard. A combination of these efforts has indeed resulted in progress on and sustained interest in this issue.

In that context, the Netherlands would be in favour of continuity of efforts of past, present and possible future presidencies on this issue and would support proposals in that regard.
As indicated in our general statement, universalisation is one of our priorities for the ATT in the coming years. The Treaty aims to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating international trade in conventional arms. Hence, its successful implementation depends on many countries joining the ATT and abiding by the standards that it sets. In that sense, universalisation also contributes to the objectives of the Treaty itself.

With regard to the recommendations made in your report, the Netherlands supports your proposal to re-endorse the Initial Work Plan. You further suggest to focus on a number of issues in particular with respect to this Work Plan. On the second point of your focus, indeed it is beneficial, when facilitating access to high-profile stakeholders, to take advantage of WGTU Co-Chairs’ states of origin or to seek assistance of States Parties from targeted regions. But also, let’s keep an open mind and see where other countries that have special ties with some of the targeted countries for universalisation can assist where they can. We further agree with the last point that parliamentarians play an important role in universalisation efforts and we would encourage their involvement to help convince their peers to initiate processes to join the ATT.
Mr Chair,
Lastly, we also support the recommendations on the development of the toolkit for universalisation. The elements proposed in Annex B are helpful, because apart from mentioning the benefits, it also goes into the concerns. We feel it is indeed useful to address these heads-on and not try to hide it.

We thank you again for your work and look forward to continue our engagement on the issue of universalisation.

I thank you.