



Towards the Arms Trade Treaty Negotiations: Commonalities of Common Positions

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OPENING REMARKS

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Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues

It's a real pleasure to welcome you all, attending this seminar organized by UNIDIR with the support (financial and logistical) of Finland.

UNIDIR has been dealing with the ATT process for a while now, through many research projects, analyzing the views submitted by the UN Member States in response to the UNSG's consultation, supporting the work of the GGE, the OEWG, the Preparatory Committee, and producing and commissioning background papers on many issues related to an ATT in the framework of the ATT/EU project and the projects funded by Finland.

It's obvious that the process towards an Arms Trade Treaty is a global initiative that touches upon all UN member states and all regions. An element which has always seemed important was the regional aspect, as we strongly believe that the regulation of conventional arms transfer through a strong, effective ATT, requires taking into account specific situations and priorities in different parts of the world; we were driven by this concern of appropriation and adaptability while conceiving the EU/ UNIDIR projects putting emphasis on regional inputs.

Several regional organizations have been active in the EU-UNIDIR seminars to raise awareness and then support the ATT negotiations; they have also made statements during the Prepcom and organized regional meetings on their own about the proposed ATT. At least four regions either agreed on or drafted a Common Position on the future Treaty: AU, CARICOM, ECCAS and ECOWAS reflecting their aspirations and expectations towards such an instrument.

In implementing our mandate as a Research Institute within the UN (to support ongoing negotiations) we've drafted this project in order to assist in the preparations of the Conference and to allow the smoothest and most effective input of different regions to the negotiations,



Analyzing the different regional approaches to an ATT would allow deeper understanding of the following issues:

- Geographical and political contexts of the regional Common Positions, together with regions' unique problems related to illicit arms trade and trafficking, human security or armed violence.
- General regional and sub-regional positions and converging views that seem to exist on certain points about the Treaty, which could be reinforced and clarified before the negotiations.
- Diverging views and issues, where regions seem to have conflicting or even opposing positions. These could be analyzed and determined, whether they are real obstacles to the Treaty or whether in reality there is some leverage for negotiations.
- Points and arguments that currently remain under-developed and rarely discussed, but which nevertheless will be of importance to the Treaty and its negotiations.
- Regional differences and priorities in States' capacity to implement the future ATT.

We would like to offer an open space to share all these views under Chatham house rules.

As a follow-on to the project funded by Finland, "An ATT – let's talk about it", which consisted of a series of seminars organized on different themes of an ATT (non-state actors, ammunition and SALW, technological developments and transfers of technology), the proposed seminar could trigger dialogue between these various regions and would add a region-specific analysis to the elaboration of the future Treaty's elements. as well as strengthening the process towards an ATT

Following our agenda, we'll have the first section devoted to some of the regions with a common position ; CARICOM, ECOWAS ECCAS,AU; some of the secretariats were invited, but at the last stage couldn't attend our mtg and we're really grateful to Amb Sinclair from CARICOM, to xxxxxxxxxx, for being with us today

The floor will also be open to other speakers



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After some discussions, the 2nd part of our seminar will be devoted to the presentation by Elli of a background paper analyzing the regional common position.

In the 3rd part of this afternoon session, we'll be hearing Mr Xiaoyu from Regional Branch ODA, with a quick off presentation about The role and impact of regional level action within UN processes related to disarmament peace and security.

We will then be discussing and strategizing on how these regional common position would feed in the process underway.

Without further delay, I'll give the floor to Amb Sinclair for his presentation.