

# GENDER & THE ARMS TRADE TREATY

- > The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is the first legally binding multilateral instrument to recognize the connection between international arms trade and gender-based violence (GBV).
- > Article 7(4) of the ATT requires that States Parties in their export assessments 'take into account the risk' of the arms covered by the treaty 'being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of GBV or serious acts of violence against women and children.

- > Building on this provision, the Fifth Conference of States Parties (CSP5) in 2019 examined gender and gender-based violence in the context of the ATT and adopted [decisions and recommendations](#) to improve gender-balanced representation, facilitate a better understanding of the gendered impact of armed violence and to strengthen the implementation of GBV-related risk assessment.



## WHAT IS GBV?

- > GBV refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power, and harmful norms.
- > The nature and extent of [specific types of GBV](#) vary across cultures, countries, and regions, and includes physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial and other types that are experienced on the basis of gender. Rape, forced pregnancy, sexual violence and exploitation, abuse, enforced prostitution, sexual slavery and femicides are examples of GBV.
- > Femicide is the gender-related killing of women and girls. Small arms are used in [almost one-third](#) of all femicides.
- > In countries with the [highest rates of femicide](#), more than half of those deaths are perpetrated with small arms.

- > Not all countries collect gender-disaggregated data on armed violence, but it is well known that small arms are often used to commit or facilitate GBV. A 2020 [report](#) showed that 60% of sexual violence survivors treated by Médecins Sans Frontières in the Democratic Republic of the Congo specified the presence or use of a weapon.
- > Understanding GBV and its impact requires an intersectional perspective. An individual's risk of being targeted for GBV, as well as their ability to report it and access services afterwards, can be affected by other forms of discrimination in addition to gender. These include discrimination based on race, sexual orientation, poverty, status, religion, education, disability, geographic location, and indigeneity
- > Due to stigma associated with GBV, survivors often face dilemmas in deciding whether to disclose the abuse they have suffered and seek help. This reticence results in significant underreporting of GBV.

## IDEAS FOR ACTION



- > To ensure effective implementation of Article 7(4) and to tackle the gendered impacts of armed violence, States and ATT stakeholders can:



**IMPLEMENT** the decision taken at the ATT CSP5 collect gender disaggregated data within their national crime and health statistics, including gender disaggregated data on victims of armed violence and conflict, and make this data publicly available.



**MOVE BEYOND** data collection by sex to encompass individuals of different gender identities and expressions and ensure that disaggregated data is used effectively to inform GBV risk assessment process.



**ENHANCE** reporting on the implementation of the GBV risk assessment criteria under Article 7 by including specific data and descriptions relating to gender and GBV in initial and annual reports.



**CONTINUE** to provide training for export licensing officials on gender and GBV, including on the direct and indirect indicators of GBV to support comprehensive and consistent application of the ATT risk assessment.



**CREATE** data sharing protocols within national law enforcement agencies that combine crime data with weapons and ammunition to better assess the gendered impacts of diverted arms and ammunition.



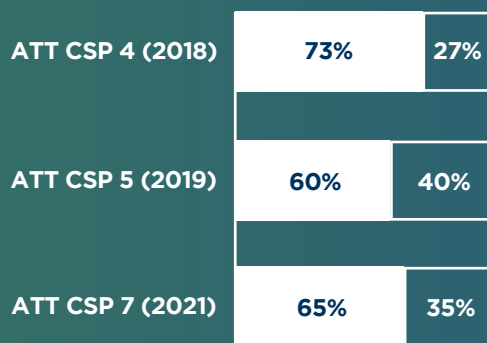
**MONITOR** progress on all commitments made during ATT CSP5 on gender by using relevant indicators, such as the ones outlined in the ATT Gender Action Plan developed by Control Arms.



## GENDER EQUALITY IN CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL

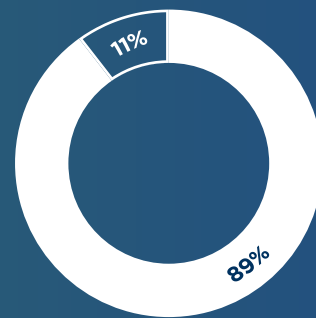
- Following a recurrent pattern in arms control and disarmament diplomacy, women are underrepresented in official meetings of the ATT. At the ATT Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh Conference of States Parties (CSP), women represented 27%, 40%, and 35% of national delegates, respectively.
- Women delegates were represented at their greatest level in 2019 comprising 40% of delegates overall. On that occasion, gender and GBV were the thematic priority of the ATT CSP5 and the Latvian CSP Presidency actively encouraged States to include women and gender experts in their delegations.
- The lack of women in leadership roles demonstrates the consistent gender imbalance in government representation at ATT meetings. In 2021, only 30% of States delegations were led by women. Up to today, all ATT CSPs have been presided by men.
- Research shows that women are grossly underrepresented in technical arms control roles, including functions that support the implementation of ATT provisions, e.g., stockpile managers, armourers, ammunition technical experts, and explosive ordnance disposal specialists.
- After reviewing 149 technical trainings in weapons and ammunition management (WAM), a UNIDIR study found that only 11% (269 out of 2,402) of the participants were women.
- Improving women's access to WAM technical roles increases their decision-making power and the potential to transform gender relations at all levels.

**GENDER BALANCE AT ATT CSP MEETINGS (2018-2021)<sup>1</sup>**



■ MEN ■ WOMEN

**GENDER BALANCE AMONG WAM TRAINING PARTICIPANTS (2015-2021)**



## IDEAS FOR ACTION

- To improve gender balance and ensure women's meaningful participation in the ATT and in conventional arms control more broadly, States and ATT stakeholders can:
  - REVIEW** institutional policies and practices in national security institutions and ensure that they promote gender equality and include protection against discriminatory practices and harassment.
  - OFFER** gender training to all members of national security institutions and one-to-one gender coaching to senior officials of security sector institutions and support initiatives for civilian training – especially women – in technical arms control.
  - FACILITATE** dialogue between Women, Peace, Security (WPS) experts and ATT stakeholders by creating joint commissions and/or bringing WPS experts into ATT delegations and vice versa.
  - ENHANCE** visibility of women technical experts by inviting them to engage meaningfully at ATT-related events.
  - ENSURE** inclusive participation in ATT meetings, including survivors and people affected by of armed violence, as well as their representative organizations.

<sup>1</sup> Data gathered from Still Behind the Curve (2019) and ATT Secretariat presentation (2022). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no meeting in 2020.