

# CONCLUSION

COME AS YOU ARE



UN Photo: Eskinder Debebe

**The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will not completely eliminate the illicit trade in arms and ammunition. This treaty is not the answer to all the problems that may result from irresponsible arms transfers. Nor is it a narrow, isolated instrument with only a single outcome. Instead, the ATT offers a broad range of benefits to many stakeholders, many of whom have yet to realise its potential.**

**For many states, reducing the inflow of illicit arms still leaves a basic problem: there remain too many unlawful weapons in circulation. If implemented effectively and widely—perhaps even universally—the ATT can improve many facets of life, from reducing armed criminality and the recruitment of child soldiers to boosting tourism and the economy as a whole.**

**The ATT can fully deliver these benefits only if all states become parties to the treaty and then if they implement the treaty in line with its object and purpose. For the treaty to be most effective, universalisation is necessary to remove gaps in the regulatory framework.**

- **In Section 1** we described the object and purpose of this international trade treaty, then showed how it defines basic terms such as 'conventional arms' and 'transfer'.
- **In Section 2** we defined 'responsible trade' as due diligence, offering benefits for populations at risk, the arms industry, investors, governments and people in general.
- **In Section 3** we showed how transparency fostered by the ATT will help to identify trends in the arms trade, illicit flows and points of weakness in implementation.
- **In Section 4** we outlined how the ATT reinforces processes designed to prevent atrocities, combat gender-based violence and promote international humanitarian law.
- **In Section 5** we described how the ATT can enhance human rights protections and reinforce international human rights law through the application of the ATT's risk assessment.
- **In Section 6** we described how the benefits of the ATT flow to education, public health, tourism, investment and poverty alleviation, all of which help states meet the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **In Section 7** we outlined benefits of the ATT not only for those in the firing line, but also for those in the legitimate arms and ammunition industry by standardising regulations, enhancing reputation and limiting the competition from the black market.
- **In Section 8** we explored the value of the ATT to regions. In addition to influencing international stability, the treaty offers another framework for regional engagement and cross-border cooperation.
- **In Section 9** we showed how states can reap broader global benefits as the ATT enhances collaboration, forges new relationships and strengthens a nation's reputation as an active player in the legitimate arms trade. Without a seat at the table, states miss an opportunity to control the flow of weapons and the future direction of the treaty.

# ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENCES AND SUPPORTING GROWTH

**The ATT acknowledges difference. It recognises that many states do not export arms and may instead need assistance to improve, for example, brokering or transit controls. It encourages willing states who face constraints to join the treaty process now, then work towards compliance once inside the system. In fact, some states have already taken a seat at the table without being able to fully implement the ATT.<sup>1</sup>**

**The treaty also supports capacity development, inviting states to benefit from working groups which share lessons learned about effective implementation.<sup>2</sup>**

**The ATT Voluntary Trust Fund was established to grow states' capacity, so that they can identify and address gaps in national arms control systems.<sup>3</sup>**



UN Photo: Martine Perret



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But perhaps the most valuable benefit of the ATT is that it provides a forum in which bilateral, regional and global relationships can develop. These relationships then allow for collaborative approaches to reducing the flow of illicit arms. The treaty provides a framework in which states can discuss challenges, identify gaps and share solutions. Such collaborations may extend into other forums, some arms-related (for example, the UNPoA), but also others which address the particular interests of each State Party.

Treaty universalisation—building the largest possible community of ATT States Parties—is essential to combating the illicit arms trade and has become a primary focus of the ATT community. While key major arms exporters remain noncommittal, small and medium states grow in importance as, one by one, they become States Parties and together weave a global net in which to catch illicit arms transfers.

The international arms trade is a global system, one that requires each participant to play its role. In return, the broader benefits of the ATT extend to all stakeholders, all governments and all citizens. If your state is not already a State Party, we encourage you to ‘come as you are’. Join the treaty for its many advantages, then help to shore up your neighbourhood against illicit and irresponsible trade in conventional arms.



## CONCLUSION: COME AS YOU ARE

- 1 See eg New Zealand is a State Party and currently developing brokering legislation, Arms Trade Treaty Baseline Survey, 'Assessing ATT Implementation in the Asia-Pacific Region' (2017) 8. <[http://www.armstrade.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ATT-BAP\\_Assessing-ATT-Implementation-in-the-Asia-Pacific-Region.pdf](http://www.armstrade.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ATT-BAP_Assessing-ATT-Implementation-in-the-Asia-Pacific-Region.pdf)>.
- 2 Ad Hoc Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation Ad Hoc ATT Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation, Co-chairs' Draft Discussion Paper, Annex A, 17 May 2017.
- 3 ATT Secretariat Voluntary Trust Fund Calls for Project Proposals for 2017 Implementation 1.

# **REINVIGORATING THE NARRATIVE**

**THE BROADER BENEFITS OF  
THE ARMS TRADE TREATY**



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