First anniversary of the opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty

By

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Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium
United Nations Headquarters
3 June 2014
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank the organizers of this event for bringing us together to mark a number of deposits of instruments of ratification on the Arms Trade Treaty, and to celebrate the first anniversary of its opening for signature.

One year ago today, 67 States, more than a third of Member States of the United Nations, signed that historic treaty. Since then, in just one year, the number of signatories to the Treaty has grown to 118.

I commend the Governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Jamaica, Luxembourg, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Samoa for depositing their instruments of ratification to the United Nations today.

This joint deposit will bring the total number of ratifications to date to 40. Only ten more are needed to reach the 50 ratifications required for the ATT to enter into force ninety days later.

I am confident that we will reach this milestone in the very near future.

This rapid pace of signature and ratification is testament to the collective will of the international community to put an end to irresponsible transfers of conventional arms and their diversion, which causes destruction and havoc to countless civilians around the world. Unregulated arms transfers to conflict zones, tyrants and dictators, terrorists and organized crime groups must become a thing of the past.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome the presence among us of so many representatives from civil society.

The progress made so far on the ATT is due not only to the political will of States, but also to the continued commitment of civil society to show the necessity of regulating the global arms trade. Civil society organizations have played an indispensable role in keeping the momentum of the ATT and in encouraging States to sign and ratify it. Indeed, the ATT showcases the positive things that can be achieved through the United Nations when governments, international organizations and civil society work together towards a common goal.

Of course, our ATT work is not complete yet. Further efforts are needed to achieve the entry-into-force of the Treaty before the end of this year, and thereafter, we will have to work hard to support a vigorous implementation of the treaty and to promote its universalisation.
The United Nations is assisting those efforts, including through the development of a practical implementation tool-kit, and the establishment of the UNSCAR trust facility supporting conventional arms regulation.

At the same time, with the entry-into-force on the horizon, we must also start thinking about the immediate next steps to be taken, such as the preparation for the First Conference of States Parties, or “CSP1”. In this regard, I welcome the initiative taken by Mexico to organize informal consultations of the signatories to begin outlining a road map for organizing CSP1, hopefully in 2015.

I also commend those States that have offered to host or fund the formal preparatory meetings for CSP1 after the Treaty’s entry into force. I cannot over-emphasise the importance of these preparatory meetings, as this process will be expected to yield the building blocks for the key procedural and substantive decisions that will have to be made at CSP1.

Please be assured that the United Nations will remain ready to provide whatever assistance the signatories and the States Parties of the ATT deem necessary.

In closing, I would like to call on those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the treaty without delay. For the Arms Trade Treaty to be truly effective, we need to aim to bring on board all States, large and small, and certainly as many of the major weapons exporters and importers as possible.

Thank you.