

Opening Remarks

by

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**Special Event to Mark the Opening of the Arms Trade Treaty for Signature
New York
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Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this special event to mark the opening of the Arms Trade Treaty for signature. This event is being organized around the ATT signing ceremony, to serve as a testimony to the great importance that the United Nations and the international community attributes to this historic day.

This 3rd day of June represents the junction between the outcome of the complex negotiation process and the opening of a new chapter in which States will sign up to an international contract bringing responsibility and transparency to the global arms trade. And I am pleased to see that a large number of States made the point of signing the ATT today.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Arms Trade Treaty is the first-ever legally binding regulation of the conventional arms trade negotiated within the United Nations. Throughout its negotiation, the United Nations advocated that the ATT had to be a treaty that would make a difference for the millions of people that suffer on a daily basis the consequences of unregulated arms transfers.

The ATT that was adopted on 2 April is not a perfect treaty – as no multilateral treaty can ever be perfect. But it certainly is a robust treaty. It covers a wide array of weaponry, including small arms. It includes ammunition as well as parts and components within the treaty.

It clearly prohibits exports of arms and ammunition in violation of Security Council arms embargoes or that could be used against civilians and in the commission of serious violations of international law.

It requires States to regulate arms brokering and to assess the risk that exports of arms and ammunition would be used in the commission of grave violations of international humanitarian law or human rights law.

And it encourages international cooperation and assistance in order to ensure that all States Parties will have the information and the capacity to implement the Treaty.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to pay tribute to all those who worked incessantly to make the ATT a reality.

- All the States that participated in the discussions and negotiations that eventually led to this landmark treaty.
- The many members of civil society who kept the momentum alive through their enthusiastic campaigns.
- The regional organizations who contributed regional and sub-regional perspectives in aid of the process.
- The many international organizations that provided intellectual inputs and various contributions.
- The various parts of the United Nations Secretariat and partners within the United Nations that supported the negotiations.

- And last, but not least, to Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia, who is here with us today, for his outstanding stewardship of the Final Conference.

This has been a collective effort, and I think we all deserve to be proud of the outcome of these seven years of hard work.

Our immediate task now is to encourage a high number of States to sign and ratify the Treaty so as to expedite its entry into force. The aim of this event is to kick-start this new chapter, and to reaffirm the United Nations' unwavering support to the ATT.

Thank you.