

Joint Press Communiqué

by

Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom

on the occasion of

the deposit of their instruments of ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty

New York, 2nd April 2014

One year ago, on 2nd April 2013, the United Nations General Assembly voted by an overwhelming majority to adopt the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). This was the culmination of seven years of efforts to achieve a comprehensive Treaty setting the highest possible common international standards for effectively regulating the international trade in conventional arms. The Treaty embodies the commitment of the United Nations and its Member States to human rights and international humanitarian law, and to the fight against the irresponsible and illicit trade in conventional arms and their diversion.

By globally regulating the international trade in arms, Nations demonstrate their common responsibility to save lives, reduce human suffering and make the world a safer place for all. This Treaty will fill a significant gap in international law and enhance accountability and responsibility in the international arms trade.

Our first task is to push for its early entry into force: we commend those States that have acted swiftly and have already deposited their instruments of ratification. **Today, as we mark the first anniversary of the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, we, a group of European Union Member States comprising Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom, alongside the nation of El Salvador have jointly deposited our instruments of ratification.** Other EU Member States are currently in the process of finalizing their national procedures for ratification and will soon add their names to this list of countries.

Only nine months after this important Treaty was opened for signature, our ratifications mean that we are over half way to the fifty ratifications required for the entry into force. With our joint deposit, we send a strong signal that we – countries that fought for the Treaty - will spare no efforts to achieve the Treaty's early entry into force. We are confident that entry into force towards the end of this year 2014 is well within reach.

We strongly advocate universal adherence to and full implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. We stand ready to assist others in setting up or improving their respective transfer control systems, for example through the dedicated EU-ATT Outreach.

The Arms Trade Treaty is the remarkable result of a long process of cross-regional cooperation between States, and civil society, with NGOs playing a significant role in this process. The Arms Trade Treaty can only make a real difference if it is properly implemented. We will continue to work with all partners to ensure the Treaty's full and effective implementation at global level.

We must now work together to seize the historic opportunity offered by the Arms Trade Treaty. We owe it to future generations to make this Treaty a success. We reiterate our firm commitment to save lives, reduce human suffering and make the world a safer place.