

**Report on NGALIM Eugene Nyuydine, Chairperson of Peace and Security Cluster Participation in the Senior Government Officials Meeting on the ATT, Addis Ababa and the Preparatory Conference (Prepcom) of the First Conference of State Parties on the ATT, Geneva**

**Senior Government Officials Meeting on the ATT, Addis Ababa, June 25 – 26, 2015:**



***Group picture of the Participants of the Senior Government Officials Meeting***

As one of the organs of the African Union, ECOSOCC was invited amongst AU member states by the Peace and Security Department to participate in the African Union Senior Government Officials Meeting on the ATT held in Addis Ababa on June 25 – 26, 2015. The Chairperson of the Peace and Security Cluster represented ECOSOCC in this meeting. Other participants for this meeting included: Regional Economic Communities (RECs); Regional Bodies with Small Arms Mandate; UN Agencies and International Organizations; Research groups, NGOs and CSOs; and Facilitators of the Working Groups of the first CSP.

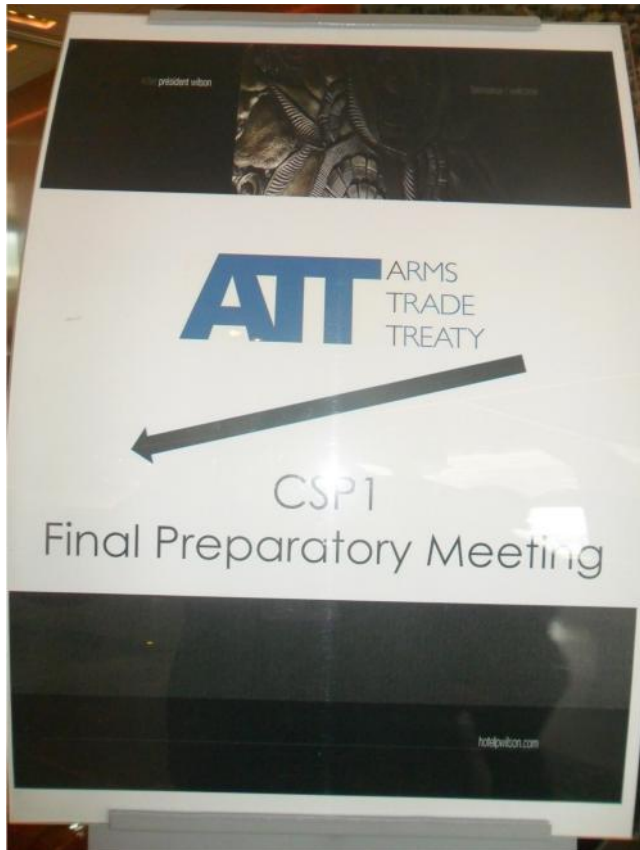
The meeting was held within the framework of the continental instruments addressing the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of conventional arms, as well as the African Common Position on an ATT. The two days meeting that was opened by Dr. Admore Mupoki Kambudzi who delivered the statement on behalf of the Director for the Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission, permitted participants to revisit the historical context of the ATT that led to its adoption by the UN member states on April 2, 2013 and is currently signed by 130 member states and ratified by 69 member states. Amongst the AU member states, 37 have signed, while 10 has ratified. Considering that the UN needed 50 signatories for the treaty to go into force, the treaty entered into force on December 24, 2014. On this basis, the first Conference of State Parties in pursuant of Article 17 of the treaty has been scheduled for Mexico City from August 24 – 27, 2015.

On the above basis, the Addis Meeting permitted the AU to assist member states to make informed decisions regarding the ratification and implementation of the treaty thus contributing to national and regional efforts to address illicit trade in, and diversion of conversional weapons as well as to facilitate active participation of state parties in the first CSP.

The methodology of the meeting was presentations in plenary followed by discussion. Presentations included: Pre-existing regional and international normative framework of SALW; Principles and provisions of the ATT; the implementation of Regional Instruments and the ATT; national experiences and best practices in the ratification and implementation of the ATT; transparency in armaments and reporting under the international framework; International assistance in the implementation of the ATT; and preparatory process for the First Conference of State Parties. The most heated of these sessions were that of international assistance in the implementation of the ATT and the preparatory process of the Conference of State Parties. The sessions elaborated on the existing international mechanisms currently available to assist states in ratifying and implementing the ATT and how AU Member States could access such assistance; and the items of the agenda of the CSP1 and explain the objectives of the preparatory process and the progress made so far by the working groups on the different aspects including rules of procedure, structure and budget of the Secretariat and the reporting matters.

The meeting that was closed by Dr Tarek A. Sherif, Head of the Defense and Security Division of the Peace and Security Department provided a clear understanding of the entire process running up to the Conference of State Parties where a number of procedures including the rules, finance, and secretariat and reporting of the ATT will be adopted.

**Final Preparatory Meeting of the first Conference of State Parties (CSP) on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT): Geneva, July 06 – 08, 2015**



As a member of the Control Arms Coalition I was invited by Control Arms under the sponsorship of UNDP first as the Executive Director of the Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace (CAMYOSFOP) and secondly as the Chairperson of the Peace and Security Cluster of the AU ECOSOCC to participate in the final preparatory meeting of the first Conference of State Parties on the Arms Trade Treaty held in the Wilson hotel in Geneva from July 05 – 08, 2015. Other participants for this meeting were: The state parties to the ATT; signatories and non-signatories of the treaty, international institutions and other stakeholders working on issues of the ATT.

**NGO FORUM: JULY 05, 2015**

Before the prepcom proper the over 45 civil society organizations meet in the NGO Forum on July 05 to deliberate on the issues of the prepcom especially the procedural rules, financial rules, the secretariat and reporting mechanisms of the ATT.



*Family Picture of Participants of the NGO Forum*

The meeting coordinated by Control Arms as in past meetings, an NGO day before the Prep Com enabled detailed discussion and agreement on policy positions, and related Control Arms messages, achieving a collective agreement on the drafting and delivery of interventions, and discussion of longer term plans for universalization and implementation.

### **PREPCOM: JULY 06 – 08, 2015**

The final preparatory meeting of CSP1 that took place in the President Wilson hotel from July 06 - 08 was attended by close to 100 governments, including States Parties and signatories, representatives from the UN, industry and over 45 NGO representatives.

The meeting was dominated by often tense discussions on the Rules of Procedure (RoP) and the ATT Secretariat, as well as discussions on Financing and Reporting. It also included a panel discussion that examined different models for intersessional work, based on the experience of other treaties, and sessions that provided both substantive and logistical information about the first CSP, scheduled for 24 – 27 August in Cancun, Mexico.

The most progress was made on the RoP where by the end of the final day there was a draft that appeared to command consensus. Least progress was made on the ATT Secretariat, where there is no clearer sense of location, and on Reporting, where a new draft template presented proved controversial, and concerns were raised over the increasingly closed nature of the consultations. Financing discussions were relatively smooth, but as they are very linked to the costs of the ATT Secretariat, not much was agreed on. Again, as indicated above, the most tensed debates in the RoP were focused on Rule 5 (participation), Rule 33 (decision-making) and Rule 41 (intersessional decision-making). These were further revised and updated to be submitted to States Parties for adoption on the first day of the CSP.

Debate about the nature and extent of **civil society participation** was once again a central issue throughout all sessions on RoP. New Zealand noted at the outset that the draft language they had proposed to allow for “umbrella groupings” of NGOs and industry to attend CSPs without the need to apply annually was not included, despite support from a range of governments, support for the amendment grew, with new wording around “international coalitions and associations of industry”. Negotiations focused around whether such groups could have a standing invitation to attend, or whether they need to apply each year. The final version of the RoP presented on the last day – and which will be submitted for adoption in Cancun – continues to allow for the participation of international NGO coalitions and associations of industry as Observers at CSPs, but will require these coalitions to apply to attend each year to the President of the Conference.

On decision taking the majority of governments accepted that CSP should take decisions on consensus basis. There is also growing agreement that the voting threshold for matters of substance should be a 2/3 majority (Rule 33).

Concerning the location of the annual CSP there were different ideas, with a number of countries supporting the idea of rotating CSPs to aid universalization, while Italy and France opposed this.

**Concerning the Intersessional decision-making** an entire session was dedicated to it during the Conference plenary. The relevant draft rule was revised early on in the Prep Com (draft Rule 41) to provide for some element of decision-making. The draft rules have used the term “administrative” which, as a few States pointed out, is not very clear.

The question of the location of the Secretariat and the head of the Secretariat was also another heated debate. Three locations, Geneva, Viana and the Port of Prince are the cities running for the location. In order to get a consensus on at least two locations, the Conference President, Ambassador Lomónaco of Mexico, organized a series of one-on-one “confessionals” with States Parties present to obtain their preference for the ATT Secretariat’s location. However, this did not work in practice as all three candidates stand firm in their bids.



Amb. Lomónaco further proposed that decision on the location, as well as remit of the ATT Secretariat, could be postponed and that instead, States Parties could appoint a Head of Secretariat during the first CSP.

Concerning finance, many aspects of financing have become integrated with the discussions on the ATT Secretariat and the draft RoP. The draft financial rules propose the creation of a **budget management committee**.

[Control Arms](#) stressed that the rules and budgetary processes put into place by States Parties must ensure the success of the entire ATT system including the work of its ATT Secretariat and meetings. It also emphasised that when voluntary funds are provided, they are done so with no risk of politicization or to infringe on the independence of the ATT Secretariat.

## Outcomes

On the final day of the Conference, the Chair presented a document of decisions and recommendations for States as they move toward the CSP. They include considering the following for adoption at the CSP:

- The latest version of the draft RoP with the understanding that further minor adjustments could still be incorporated
- A Directive for the tasks of the ATT Secretariat, noting the emphasis by some delegations that tasks must be considered before size is decided.
- A TOR for a Management Committee
- The current draft of financial rules and a draft budget for the period between the first and second CSPs.
- Draft templates for reporting while acknowledging that these may change over time to reflect practice and experience.

As well, the recommendation of the Chair to post for a short-term Head of ATT Secretariat was approved, and an Evaluation Committee comprised of Argentina, the Czech Republic, Japan, New Zealand, and Nigeria was established to manage recruitment of the Head of the Secretariat.