



National workshop to promote the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and support Nepal's accession to the Treaty

Report



Funded by the European Union

Background

From 24 to 25 November 2021, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) in partnership with the civil society organization Women for Peace and Democracy in Nepal (WPDN), organized a national workshop to promote the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and support Nepal's accession to the Treaty. The workshop took place at the Hotel Club Himalaya, Nagarkot, Nepal. The event aimed to educate participants about the ATT context, provisions and processes as well as to raise awareness among key stakeholders of the Treaty's benefits for Nepal, potential challenges, and possible ways to address them.

This event was organized in the framework of the In-Country Training Programme (ICTP) on gender mainstreaming small arms control, which is part of a [global project](#) of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in support of gender mainstreamed policies, programmes and actions in the fight against small arms and light weapons (SALW) trafficking and misuse, with funding from the European Union¹. The project also promotes the implementation and universalization of multilateral instruments and treaties on SALW and seeks to contribute to international peace and security, in line with the [United Nations Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament](#), Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16, and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. The project is being implemented in six countries² in the Asia-Pacific region, including Nepal.

Participants

In total thirty-one participants (**18 women, 13 men**) took part in the workshop representing the following agencies: Federal Parliament of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Nepali Army, Armed Police Forces, UN Country Team in Nepal, Amnesty International, Media Advocation Group (MAG), Ban Landmines Campaign Nepal (NCBL), and the Action Group on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. Opening and closing remarks were provided by the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Sewa Lamsal, the Deputy Head of the European Union Delegation to Nepal, Mr. Stéphane Maïcon, the Executive Chair of Women for Peace and Democracy in Nepal (WPDN), Ms. Shobha Shrestha, and the Director of

¹ [European Union Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2018/2011 of 17 December 2018](#).

² Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste.

UNRCPD, Dr. Yuriy Kryvonos. Experts and panelists included: Dr. Yuriy Kryvonos (UNRCPD), Dr. Paul Holtom, (the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research- UNIDIR), Ms. Elli Kytomaki (Legal expert), Ms. Shobha Shrestha (WPDN), Ms. Karin Olofsson (The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons – PFSALW), and Ms. Ida Scarpino (UNRCPD).

Workshop Methodology

The workshop consisted of thematic presentations by the experts, question and answer segments and targeted presentations by the participants on national issues.

Summary of the Presentations and Main Discussions

- Introductory presentations focused on the process of The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which aims to reduce human suffering caused by illegal and irresponsible arms transfers, improve regional security and stability, as well as to promote accountability and transparency by state parties concerning transfers of conventional arms, from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships.
- UNIDIR provided the audience with an overview of the seven years of the ATT's implementation, highlighting achievements and challenges. Among the achievements, was the increasing number of State Parties (110), the establishment of the ATT Secretariat and assistance mechanisms for states, and the strengthening of the national arms control system. Challenges remain with regard to the universalization of the Treaty: not all major exporters of conventional arms are state parties, nor major importers. Across the Asia-Pacific region there are sixteen states who are state parties and fourteen who are signatories³. While these numbers are relatively low compared to other regions, China's accession in 2020, gives hope for future positive trends in the region. Finally, states parties have not been consistent with national report submissions, which are essential to promote cooperation, transparency and responsible arms trade.
- UNIDIR also presented perspectives moving forward, such as the upcoming Eighth Conference of State Parties (which will take place in Geneva under the presidency of Germany from 22 to 26 August 2022), and the ATT Secretariat's initiatives to support states with the accession and implementation of the Treaty thanks to the support from the European Union⁴. These include capacity building for national points of contact, the establishment of an expert roster for advice and training, and the development of a database to match needs with resources.
- Within the objective to promote the discussion around the national gains from joining the ATT, UNRCPD presented a set of reasons for joining the ATT. The Treaty is an important step forward for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security, as it binds its States Parties to common standards for the regulation of the cross-border movements of conventional arms and ammunition. The Treaty is seen as an indicator of a country's commitment to conduct its affairs in a transparent, responsible and accountable manner. This way, the ATT allows transparent and positive considerations for arms export requests. Finally, joining the Treaty will facilitate the access of state parties to several multilateral cooperation and funding mechanisms for strengthening their national arms control system.
- More in-depth presentations provided by UNIDIR, UNRCPD and the legal expert, reviewed in detail the ATT commitments and processes. One starting point for the discussions was to present the requirements or recommended actions that all States should adopt when

³ See [Status of ATT Participation](#)

⁴ [Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2021/649](#)

considering joining the ATT from necessary legislative structures. For example, the establishment of a national control list on conventional arms.

- The ATT requires all states-parties to adopt basic regulations and approval processes to regulate the flow of weapons across international borders, establishes common international standards that must be met before arms exports are authorized, and requires annual reporting of imports and exports to the treaty secretariat. Experts clarified that the Treaty does not impact a state's domestic gun control laws or other firearm ownership policies, nor places restrictions on the types or quantities of arms that may be bought, sold or possessed by states. The implementation of the ATT remains a national prerogative.
- As an exercise to promote wider information-sharing, participants answered questions about Nepal's legislation on arms and implications for becoming a state party to the ATT. In particular, participants addressed current strengths and challenges and discussed possible good practices in moving forward towards Nepal's ratification of the Treaty. As a peace-loving nation, it was noted that Nepal already has several quality legislative acts and regulations in place to control the illicit flows and misuse of weapons. Inter-ministerial co-operation and in some cases a lack of knowledge and the need for materials in local language were noted to be among the main challenges to be faced on the road towards ratification. Participants highlighted the need to develop a joint roadmap and increased political will to join the Treaty in a timely manner.
- Some challenges were also noted to relate to the multiple reporting requirements relevant to Nepal in its arms control commitments. As commonly mentioned in other countries, these different tasks require inter-departmental cooperation, sometimes with quite tight deadlines. However, as the presenters demonstrated, once the basic information is gathered and for instance the first reports submitted, it is often enough just to provide updates and combine reporting tasks of say, the [UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects \(PoA\)](#), the [Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition \(Firearms Protocol\)](#) (PoA), [UN Register of Conventional Arms \(UNROCA\)](#) and the ATT, saving significant efforts. In this regard, UNRCPD and UNIDIR reiterated their support and offered to provide technical assistance with national reporting under the different frameworks.
- A few sessions also focused on the synergies of the Treaty with other global instruments on small arms control such as the UN PoA, the Firearms Protocol, as well as its convergences with global agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, and Women, Peace and Security.
- The ATT recognizes the link with sustainable development in both its preambular paragraphs and in the operative articles.
- The Women Peace and Security agenda and arms control and disarmament have become increasingly connected within international norms and agreements. The ATT is a prime example: it is the first legally binding instrument to recognize the link between gender-based violence and the international arms trade (Article 7.4).
- WPDN provided an overview of the scale and the impact of small arms proliferation and armed violence, and its gendered implications, with a focus on the increasing rate of violence against women (VAW).
- Coinciding with the launch of the "16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV) Campaign", the workshop raised awareness of the ATT's compliance with gender-responsive

control of SALW and ammunition and showed the Treaty as an effective instrument tackling armed GBV.

- The ATT requires states parties to consider the risk of small arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of VAW before authorizing their export. This is a landmark recognition as acts of violence against women and children are often facilitated by the irresponsible and unregulated transfer of arms. Article 7.4 is an operative part of the treaty. If implemented robustly, it will have a real impact on the arms trade, save lives and reduce gender-based violence.
- The PFSALW highlighted the instrumental role of Member of Parliaments (MPs), and civil society in advocating for universalization and monitoring the implementation of international treaties, including the ATT. MPs and civil society have different mandates but complementary roles. Parliamentarians are essential for the universalization and national implementation of international arms control instruments such as the ATT, given their legislative, oversight and awareness-raising roles (for example drafting of bills, organizing dialogue initiatives, hearings, shadow reports & budgets). Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) provide an independent analysis of issues related to arms control and armed violence while advocating and providing access to knowledge that is sometimes lacking on behalf of governments and parliaments. Women's rights organizations/CSOs are instrumental in providing MPs with support and knowledge on the impact of armed violence on women and in drafting effective strategies to address these issues in policy making.
- The PFSALW presented examples of joint engagement between MPs and CSOs, including efforts related to the accession and implementation of the ATT worldwide and provided the audience with useful information and contact details to become a member of the Forum and stay engaged.

Main Outcomes

- The feedback collected at the end of the workshop indicated that participants overall found the workshop relevant and useful for their daily work activities. Participants highlighted that their knowledge of the ATT and its linkages with key global agendas was strengthened.
- The workshop brought together national governmental agencies, parliamentarians, and civil society representatives, with different responsibilities regarding arms trade and implementation of converging agendas, thus facilitating connections and increasing the understanding of the need for coordination and diversified partnerships.
- Through the presentations and lively discussions among the participants and the international experts, many issues were clarified and new cooperation channels were identified.
- UNRCPD emphasized the commitments that the government made under global instruments such as the UN PoA and presented mechanisms to assist member states with the implementation of global agreements on conventional arms control and practical tools such as the [Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium \(MOSAIC\)](#). These were seen as valuable ways to support Nepal in its current arms control commitments and when developing new initiatives.
- Participants received information on existing cooperation and funding mechanisms to access and implement the ATT such as, the [Voluntary Trust Funds](#), the [Sponsorship Programme](#) to facilitate the participation of State representatives in ATT meetings, the [UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation \(UNSCAR\)](#), as well as available tools and

guidelines ([Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation – WGETI](#); [Implementation Toolkit](#)).

- Many participants highlighted their willingness to stay informed about UNRCPD activities in the future and were open to discuss possible assistance available regionally and internationally to support Nepal in its efforts to increase human security and arms control.
- A further follow-up workshop with relevant government officials, as well as a specialized workshop for parliamentarians from relevant committees was discussed. Translation of relevant documentation to Nepali can facilitate momentum among government, MPs and civil society on the importance of the accession to the Treaty. Communication materials on the advantages to join the Treaty would also be useful.
- The workshop also served as the platform to raise awareness of the importance for Nepal to accelerate the validation of the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 - Phase II, which is currently under the second review by the Cabinet, and to promote its implementation in synergy with the SALW control agenda. The linkages between the WPS and SALW control agendas will be further explored in the context of the upcoming national training on gender mainstreaming small arms control, scheduled for 6-8 April 2022, in Nagarkot. The training will be organized as part of the second activity of the EU-funded project on gender and small arms control.



ANNEX I – List of Participants & Contacts

S.N	Name	Position	Department / Organization	Email	Phone
Parliamentarians & Politicians					
1	Hon. Anil Kumar Jha	Member of Parliament	Representing Rautahat-1 constituency	anilkjha@gmail.com	
2	Hon. Amrita Thapa	Member of Parliament	Women Wing of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP)	athapamagar2007@gmail.com	
4	Hon. Dimple Jha	Member of Parliament		dimpalkjha@gmail.com	9841990334
5	Punam Jha Maitali	Politician	Loktantrik Samajwadi Party Nepal		9804864977
Security & Defense Forces					
6	JEEBAN PRASAD DAHAL	Brigadier General	Nepali Army	jeebandahal@yahoo.com	9860237769
7	Rajani Thapa	Deputy Superintendent (DYSP) Head, Gender Section	Armed Police Forces	apf.rajani@yahoo.com	9851107075
Civil Society					
8	Purna Shova Chitrakar	Coordinator	Ban Landmines Campaign Nepal (NCBL)	purnashova@gmail.com	9851003622 (M) 1 4275213 (o)
9	Bikram Dhukuchu	Chairperson	Amnesty International	bikram@amnesty.org.np	

10	Babita Basnet	Executive Director	Media Advocacy Group (MAG)	basnetbabita7@hotmail.com	9851075373
11	Pinky Singh Rana	Chairperson and Founder	PSR Research and Consultancies; Saathi – 1325 Action Group	pinky_s_rana@hotmail.com	9841 201897
Government					
12	Sewa Lamsal	Joint Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	sewa.lamsal@mofa.gov.np	
13	Yagya Joshi	Section Officer	Ministry of Home Affairs	yagyarajmohal1@gmail.com	9851310597
14	Kalpana Archaya	Under Secretary	Ministry of Defense	kacharya80@gmail.com	9841359824
Diplomatic Representation					
15	Stéphane Maicon	Deputy Head of Delegation	European Delegation to Nepal	Stephane.Maicon@eeas.europa.eu	1 4429445, 4429446
UN Agencies					
16	Adrian Morrice	Sustainable Peace and Development Advisor	UNRCO	7uriy7.morrice@un.org	985-1128014
International Experts					
17	Paul Holtom	Head of the Conventional Arms Programme	UNIDIR	paul.holtom@un.org	+41 79214 4754
18	Elli Kytomaki	Independent Expert		elli.kytomaki@gmail.com	+44 7447944314
UNRCPD					
19	Yuriy Kryvonos	Director	UNRCPD	7uriy.kryvonos@un.org	+977 98 0101 8512
20	Ida Scarpino	Project Coordinator	UNRCPD	ida.scarpino@un.org	+977 981 899 4232
21	Sudan Rai	Admin. Assistant	UNRCPD	sudan.raai@un.org	+977 9808614098
22	Megan Williams	Intern	UNRCPD	megan.williams@un.org	+977 9818994830
23	Aruna Shrestha	Executive Assistant	UNRCPD	aruna.shrestha@un.org	

24	Ageen Shrestha	Finance Officer	UNRCPD	ageen.shrestha@un.org	
25	Jit Tamang	Driver	UNRCPD		9851110283
WPDN					
26	Shobha Shrestha	Executive Director	WPDN	shresthashobha@gmail.com	+977 985 105 2664
27	Shreya Bajracharya	Program Manager	WPDN	renew@wpdnepal.org.np	
28	Rajesh Khadka	Admin/finance Officer	WPDN	financeadmin@wpdnepal.org.np	
29	Sushmita Karki	Program Officer	WPDN	renew2@wpdnepal.org.np	
30	Luna Kadayat	Program Officer	WPDN	sewam@wpdnepal.org.np	
31	Shristi Shrestha	Program Officer	WPDN	nerp@wpdnepal.org.np	
32	Badal Shah	Admin Assistant	WPDN	info@wpdnepal.org.np	
33	Narendra Maharjan	Communication Assistant	WPDN	communications@wpdnepal.org.np	



ANNEX II – Photo Gallery



Picture 1 – Group Photo: Thirty-one participants from governmental departments, the federal parliament, civil society, UN agencies and the European Union attended the workshop in Nagarkot, Nepal.



Picture 2 - H.E. Ms. Sewa Lamsal, Joint Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, delivered the opening remarks in which she underscored Nepal's commitment to acceding the Treaty.



Picture 3 – Dr. Yuriy Kryvonos, Director of UNRCPD, presenting the reasons and consequences of joining the Arms Trade Treaty.



Picture 4 – Ms. Elli Kytomaki, Legal Expert, presenting how Joining the ATT helps advancing the Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Picture 5 - Dr. Paul Holton presenting the provisions of the ATT with a focus on the key elements of a national control system.



Picture 6- Ms. Shobha Shrestha, Executive Chair of WPDN, presenting the scale and impact of small arms proliferation in Nepal.



Pictures 7-8-9-10: Open discussion regarding Nepal's legislation on small arms while highlighting current strengths, challenges and good practices moving forward.



Picture 11: Ms. Ida Scarpino, UNRCPD, presenting the areas of convergence between the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the Arms Trade Treaty.



Picture 12: Ms. Karin Olofsson, PFSALW, connected virtually from Sweden discussing with the audience after her presentation on opportunities for collaboration between MPs and CSOs for acceding the ATT.



Pictures 13-14: Participants joined the Office for Disarmament Affairs' 16 Days of Activism campaign to end violence against women.



Picture 15: Mr. Stephane Maicon, Deputy Head of the European Delegation to Nepal with Ms. Shobha Shrestha and Mr. Yuriy Kryvonos during the closing ceremony.



Picture 16: Representatives from Parliament, ministries, UN agencies and civil society.