



Arms Trade Treaty Diplomatic Conference 2-27 July 2012 Summary Report: Plenary Session: Morning- 3 July 2012

The ATT Diplomatic Conference scheduled to open on Monday, 2nd July was delayed until Tuesday, 3rd July. At 10:45am, the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon delivered his opening address and invited His Excellency Ambassador Roberto García Moritán to take his seat as President of the Conference.

Ambassador Roberto García Moritán will therefore continue to preside over the ATT negotiation process. He reminded participants that the potential ATT is a uniquely important treaty with “a special nature and characteristics” and whose purpose is to have a positive impact on armed violence. He added that “protecting the life of people on Earth” and “making it a safer and better world” is the ultimate goal of the Treaty. He finally insisted that illicit arms trafficking, particularly Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), is a major problem and requires immediate action to “build a wall against the evils”.

He insisted that the treaty should be legally binding and built upon a strong humanitarian component such as International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. He underscored the fact that the international community “need[s] a fabric of collective commitment of nations” to make sure that conventional weapons do not end in the wrong hands. He called on delegates to strengthen arms trade regulation as “the existence of norm and codes of conduct is the best prescription against armed violence”.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon took the floor and praised “the vision, commitment and leadership” of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán and reiterated his faith in the ability of the later to lead successfully the ATT negotiations. He reminded the meeting that “the whole international community is watching” and that “citizens of the world are pressing the United Nations, and Member States, to address the issues”.

He re-affirmed his view that the entire ATT process is ambitious but achievable and urged delegates to work and agree with a legally-binding treaty by the end of this month. He further celebrated the positive engagement of civil society in the process and highlighted how it “captured the imagination and hope of people all over the world”.

He insisted that addressing conventional arms trade is urgent and that action must be taken now “to end the widespread human suffering caused by the unregulated international arms trade”. He further highlighted that “the world is over-armed and peace under-funded” and that this situation is unacceptable. As a matter of fact, as he said it simply, “sixty years of United Nations peacekeeping have cost less than six weeks of current military spending”.

At 11:45 am, a handful of NGO representatives handed over the NGO petition for an ATT to Mr. Ban Ki Moon. Jasmin Nario Galace, co-chair of the IANSA International Advisory Council and Associate Director of the Center for Peace Education, IANSA Women Network member, handed the petition on a piece of ammunition box plank.