

UN Arms Trade Treaty

ATT CSP3

Geneva, Switzerland,

September 11, 2017

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am Torb Lindskog, President of the World Forum on Shooting Activities, an international organization representing more than 100 million hunters, sport shooters and civilian firearm owners.

As an Economic and Social Council NGO, the WFSA has been involved with the ATT process since its inception. Our organization, and many of its member association, have spent untold hours studying the papers and proceedings trying to highlight, either directly or through our member associations' respective delegations, the pitfalls and outright threats that the treaty, as formulated, will pose to law-abiding firearm owners and manufacturers throughout the world.

The role our organization plays in the international arena, including here at the UN, is to bring forward the voice of those who lawfully use and manufacture civilian firearms. Those voices include the 'hundreds' of millions of hunters, sport shooters and civilian firearm owners who have absolutely nothing to do with the illegal trade and diversion of conventional arms which this Treaty purports to address.

In its preamble, the treaty signifies an intent to respect these lawful uses and our voices; but a treaty's preamble has no force in law. Time and again we bear witness to attacks on those who lawfully produce, trade, and own firearms. We fear, especially as many of the treaty's words and terms remain undefined or modified through interpretation, that the Arms Trade Treaty will be used as a vehicle to infringe upon the lawful production, trade, and use of firearms by the 100 million members WFSA represents instead of the harder task of focusing on criminals involved in illegal trade.

We appreciate the opportunity to attend the meetings and play a proactive role. We would like to point out that the Treaty overlaps other UN agreements and initiatives, thus failing to reach its aim of both preventing and eradicating the illicit trade in conventional arms. It also fails to prevent their diversion.

Firearm owners face many difficulties when lawfully carrying their firearms around the world. Moreover, you can imagine the difficulties manufacturing companies face when exporting civilian firearms worldwide due to a lack of consistent regulations among States.

We are well aware of the huge difficulties our world faces in terms of security, but these are universal problems not specific to firearms, and certainly not those firearms that are legally owned and traded. Firearms are a tool, a tool that can be used by lawful hunters to provide sustenance for their families as well as a tool lawful owners can use to protect themselves, their families, their homes, and their livelihoods. As noted in the Preamble, the ATT's intent is to respect the lawful use of small arms by civilians.

Simple, well defined legislation with rules incapable of misinterpretation that respect lawful firearm manufacturers, lawful firearm owners, and national firearm legislation that can be followed all over the world could accomplish this, but to be successful such an effort would require consensus.

I assure you that the men and women of the WFSA also strive not only to prevent, but to eradicate the illicit trade and diversion of conventional arms. We stand ready to assist and offer our expertise towards achieving this objective. Thank you, Mister/Madam Chairman.