

3 September 2012

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Sir Jeremy Greenstock GCMG  
Chairman, UN Association of the UK  
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*Dear Jeremy,*

Thank you for your letter of 31 July about the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), and for UNA-UK's ongoing support for the ATT.

As you may already be aware, I was in New York on 2 July where the negotiations for an ATT were taking place. This was the culmination of six years of engagement and the UK Delegation worked hard to secure a robust and effective, legally-binding Treaty. As you kindly recognised, throughout this six year period the UK has championed a strong ATT, and has led international efforts to secure one.

We were, of course, disappointed that we did not secure such a Treaty at the end of the Diplomatic Conference because certain states pressed for more time. However, we recognise that to be fully effective, the Treaty will need very broad – ideally universal – participation. Our judgement is that the text provides a solid base to work from. Whilst it reflects the compromises necessary to bridge the wide variety of national positions, the draft is robust and if adopted, would bring about a very significant improvement on the current situation by establishing, in particular:

- A first ever set of global commitments on national arms export controls. A global baseline for regulating arms exports;
- The first ever international legally binding agreement on the transfer of small arms and light weapons;
- A mandatory requirement for arms exports - including ammunition and military parts and components - to be assessed on the basis of criteria including human rights, and a mandatory refusal if they pose unacceptable risks;
- Mainstreaming sustainable development and anti-corruption into arms export controls;
- A requirement for countries to regulate brokering;
- Mandatory reporting on authorisations or actual transfers of conventional arms.



The UK will continue to work with industry and civil society to drive forward the international effort towards achieving the Treaty. The UN General Assembly in the autumn, to which the Chair is sending his report, will be the next opportunity to address the issue amongst the whole UN membership. Our priority will be to bank the progress we have made to date and push on to agree a Treaty. We remain optimistic.

Civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGO) like Amnesty International, Oxfam and the International Action Network on Small Arms, continue to play a very important advocacy and campaigning role on the ATT. We will continue to work with these partners to achieve our shared goal of securing a robust and effective Arms Trade Treaty. As we move into the next phase of the process, NGOs will continue to have an important role to play in influencing the sceptical states and ensuring that the progress that has been made is not lost.

We believe that an ATT is coming and we will keep going until it is agreed. The human cost of uncontrolled arms flows is too high not to.

*Warm regards*

*Alistair*

ALISTAIR BURT

*We will keep you in touch with all this.*

*Thanks for support.*