

PRESS RELEASE

BY THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVES OF ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, COSTA RICA, FINLAND, JAPAN, KENYA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Seven High Representatives welcome the opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty and encourage its early entry into force

Today, the Arms Trade Treaty will open for signature at the United Nations. This is a welcome and extremely important milestone. It is the culmination of seven years of efforts to achieve a comprehensive Treaty to set common standards for effectively regulating the international conventional arms trade. The Treaty clearly shows the commitment of the United Nations to human rights and international humanitarian law.

We, the High Representatives of the seven co-author countries of the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty, are heartened by the large number of States that will sign the Treaty today, many of which will be represented at Ministerial level.

It is vital that the Treaty comes into force as soon as possible and is effectively implemented. It is only then that the international community will have an effective tool to address the unregulated and illicit conventional arms trade that causes unspeakable human suffering throughout the world and undermines peace, security, stability and human rights. The co-authors, mindful of the many challenges that still lie ahead, will continue to work hard with other governments and civil society to achieve early entry into force and effective implementation of the Treaty.

We urge all States to make every effort to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. On 2 April 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted the Treaty by an overwhelming majority. We need to carry forward that same commitment now and get the largest possible number of States to sign and ratify the Treaty, so that it can be swiftly and effectively implemented. It is only then that the Arms Trade Treaty will be able to save lives and help achieve a safer, more just world.

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