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European Union statement on ATT process

The European Union welcomes Ambassador Garcia Moritan to this FSC meeting and thanks him for his presentation.

The transfers and destabilizing dissemination of conventional arms represents an increasing risk for peace and security: they fuel armed conflicts, terrorism and organized crime, result in serious human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, destabilize regions and countries and undermine economic development. The international community must respond.

For this reason, the European Union considers that the establishment of the highest possible common international standards in terms of the import, export and transfer of conventional arms must be a key priority objective for the security of all States, while respecting their sovereignty.

In its European Security Strategy adopted on December 12th 2003, the European Union called for an international order founded on effective multilateralism and the United Nations Charter.

Since 2005, the European Union supports the principle of an international treaty establishing, in the framework of the United Nations, common legally

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binding norms for the global trade of conventional weapons, in conformity with the responsibilities incumbent on States by virtue of international law.

It welcomed the overwhelming support, in 2006, for Resolution 61/89 of the United Nations General Assembly, which constituted the first step towards the future adoption of a legally binding, global instrument for the arms trade. The EU has confirmed that it is willing, along with its Member States, to play an active role in this process.

The European Union was pleased to contribute to the report by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) which was agreed in Summer 2008.

The European Union hopes that the UNGA will, on the basis of this report by the GGE, continue the ATT process in the United Nations and looks for the support of all OSCE participating States in this venture.

In support of this process, the Union has planned a series of regional seminars in 2009, aiming to facilitate exchanges of views between interested parties, experts and civil society.

The candidate countries Turkey and Croatia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area Iceland, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

* Croatia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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