



2025/2367

21.11.2025

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2025/2367

of 20 November 2025

on Union support for activities of the ATT Secretariat in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 28(1) and Article 31(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Whereas:

- (1) The Arms Trade Treaty (the 'ATT') was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 2 April 2013 by way of Resolution 67/234 B. The ATT was subsequently opened for signature on 3 June 2013 and entered into force on 24 December 2014. All Member States of the Union are parties to the ATT.
- (2) The ATT aims to establish the highest possible common international standards to regulate, or improve the regulation of the legal trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and prevent their diversion. Key challenges are its effective implementation by States Parties and its universalisation, bearing in mind that regulating international arms trade is by definition a global endeavour. To contribute to addressing those challenges, the Council adopted Decisions 2013/768/CFSP⁽¹⁾, (CFSP) 2017/915⁽²⁾ and (CFSP) 2021/2309⁽³⁾. Those Decisions concern, *inter alia*, Union outreach activities in support of the implementation of the ATT, thereby enlarging the export control-related assistance portfolio of the Union with activities specific to the ATT.
- (3) The ATT established a Secretariat to assist the States Parties in its effective implementation (the 'Secretariat'). The Secretariat is responsible for receiving, making available and distributing the reports mandated by the ATT; for maintaining and making available to States Parties the list of national points of contact; for facilitating the matching of offers of and requests for assistance for ATT implementation and promoting international cooperation as requested; for facilitating the work of the Conference of States Parties, including making arrangements and providing the necessary services for meetings under the ATT, and for performing such other duties as decided by the Conferences of States Parties. The Secretariat also administers the Voluntary Trust Fund established by States Parties under Article 16(3) of the ATT to assist States Parties in its implementation, and the ATT sponsorship programme established to facilitate the participation of States Parties' representatives in ATT meetings.
- (4) In the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy of 2016 and in the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence of 2022, the Union commits itself to promoting a rules-based international order with multilateralism as its key principle and with the UN at its core. The Union strongly supports expanded State participation in, and universalisation, full implementation and enforcement of, multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control treaties, including the ATT. In the context of those overarching policy goals, support for the Secretariat would significantly contribute to the specific aim of strengthening the multilateral system underpinning a responsible trade in arms.
- (5) The Secretariat is well placed to liaise with all multilateral, regional, national and civil society stakeholders executing projects in support of ATT universalisation and implementation. The Union is a longstanding provider of export control assistance in dual-use goods, supporting the development of legal frameworks and institutional capacities for the establishment and enforcement of effective export controls on dual-use and military goods. The Secretariat should ensure that its projects complement existing Union dual-use and arms-export control assistance programmes, such as those provided for in Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2309.

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision 2013/768/CFSP of 16 December 2013 on EU activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, in the framework of the European Security Strategy (OJ L 341, 18.12.2013, p. 56, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2013/768/oj>).

⁽²⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/915 of 29 May 2017 on Union outreach activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (OJ L 139, 30.5.2017, p. 38, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2017/915/oj>).

⁽³⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2309 of 22 December 2021 on Union outreach activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (OJ L 461, 27.12.2021, p. 78, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/2309/oj>).

(6) The Council adopted Decisions (CFSP) 2021/649 ⁽⁴⁾ and (CFSP) 2023/2296 ⁽⁵⁾ in order to provide specific support for capacity building for ATT national points of contact, for the setting up of an expert roster to build the capacity of local and regional ATT experts to provide advice and training on ATT implementation, and for the establishment of a database to match needs and resources for assistance in ATT implementation.

(7) Decision (CFSP) 2023/2296 is to expire on 30 November 2025. In view of the persistently difficult financial situation of the ATT as a result of a number of States Parties remaining in arrears with regard to their contributions, the continuation of the support provided for in that Decision is important. Such support should focus on training for national and regional experts who can deliver quality training and implementation assistance for States Parties, including on Voluntary Trust Fund projects, as well as on improving the fulfilment of ATT reporting obligations by States Parties, including through an increased rate of submission of ATT annual and initial reports. In addition, support should be provided for the maintenance by the Secretariat of the database to match needs and resources,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. For the purpose of supporting the effective implementation and universalisation of the Arms Trade Treaty (the 'ATT'), the Union shall support the Secretariat established by the ATT (the 'Secretariat') to undertake activities with the following objectives:

- to support States Parties to the ATT in strengthening their arms transfer control systems for the effective implementation of the ATT;
- to strengthen the institutional setup of the Secretariat as the principal body to assist States Parties in implementing the ATT.

2. In order to achieve the objectives referred to in paragraph 1, the Union shall support the following project activities:

- (a) training for national and regional ATT experts to provide support to States Parties in implementing the ATT at a national level;
- (b) strengthening of States Parties' understanding of ATT reporting obligations and their capacity to meet such obligations, including through the development of a voluntary guidance document and training materials, practical workshops, and coordination of other international assistance;
- (c) maintenance of the database for matching offers of and requests for assistance to implement the ATT.

A detailed description of the project activities referred to in the first subparagraph is set out in the Annex.

Article 2

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative') shall be responsible for implementing this Decision.
2. The technical implementation of the project activities referred to in Article 1(2) shall be carried out by the Secretariat.
3. The Secretariat shall perform its tasks under the responsibility of the High Representative. For this purpose, the High Representative shall enter into the necessary arrangements with the Secretariat.

Article 3

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the project activities referred to in Article 1(2) shall be EUR 993 533 (the 'expenditure').
2. The expenditure shall be managed in accordance with the procedures and rules applicable to the Union's budget.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/649 of 16 April 2021 on Union support for activities of the ATT Secretariat in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (OJ L 133, 20.4.2021, p. 59, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/649/0j>).

⁽⁵⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2296 of 23 October 2023 on Union support for activities of the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (OJ L 2023/2296, 24.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2296/0j>).

3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure. For this purpose, it shall conclude the necessary agreement with the Secretariat (the 'agreement'). The agreement shall stipulate that the Secretariat is to ensure the visibility of the Union's contribution, appropriate to its size.

4. The Commission shall endeavour to conclude the agreement as soon as possible after the entry into force of this Decision. It shall inform the Council of any difficulties in that process and of the date of conclusion of the agreement.

Article 4

1. The High Representative shall report to the Council on the implementation of this Decision on the basis of regular reports prepared by the Secretariat. The reports shall form the basis for the evaluation carried out by the Council.

2. The Commission shall provide information on the financial aspects of the implementation of the project activities referred to in Article 1(2).

Article 5

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

It shall expire 24 months after the date of conclusion of the agreement, or six months after the date of its adoption if the necessary agreement has not been concluded within that period.

Done at Brussels, 20 November 2025.

For the Council

The President

K. KALLAS

ANNEX

Union support for Activities of the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat in Support of the Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty**1. Background**

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Secretariat was established under Article 18 of the ATT to assist States Parties in the effective implementation of the Treaty. The ATT Secretariat operates 'within a minimized structure', as mandated by Article 18 of Treaty and within a set budget approved by the annual Conference of States Parties (CSP). Accordingly, there is a limit to the capacity the ATT Secretariat has to provide implementation support or assistance beyond the core tasks identified by the Treaty. Nevertheless, through the process of fulfilling its mandate and supporting the ATT process and given its proximity to the Treaty and implementation efforts, the ATT Secretariat is in a unique position to identify areas or gaps where implementation support is needed.

Building on the progress achieved during previous phases of EU support to the ATT Secretariat, this project aims to address three critical and interrelated areas of ATT implementation: the prevention of diversion of conventional arms, the provision of tailored assistance to strengthen national systems, and the enhancement of transparency and information exchange.

Diversion remains a major obstacle to responsible arms trade. Despite the obligations set out in Article 11 of the ATT, many States Parties continue to face significant capacity challenges in preventing, detecting, and responding to diversion. Key obstacles include limited interagency coordination and information sharing between national and international stakeholders, insufficient technical and human resources, and a lack of robust risk assessment and post-delivery verification tools. Moreover, due to its politically and operationally sensitive nature, only a limited number of delegations have been willing to share concrete diversion cases at the ATT Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF). This hesitancy hampers the Forum's potential to facilitate practical cooperation, build trust among States Parties, and identify concrete measures to close existing loopholes in arms transfer chains. Nevertheless, representatives from regions most affected by diversion have expressed a willingness to share information on diversion with countries in their region. A working paper presented by France and Brazil at the 11th Conference of States Parties (CSP11) emphasized the importance of regional and subregional meetings to enhance understanding of diversion challenges and promote effective measures to prevent, detect, and address it. Therefore, there is an unrealized opportunity that the Secretariat could support.

Simultaneously, the need for tailored assistance to strengthen national systems among several States Parties remains a widespread and persistent challenge. Entries submitted to the ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database reflect requests for support in establishing or updating control lists, but also in related areas such as establishing robust frameworks to regulate arms transfers, and enhancing record-keeping systems. While the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) plays a key role in responding to such needs, many States continue to face difficulties in identifying the precise type of support required. In this context, further operationalizing the ATT Matching Database, including by identifying possible assistance providers, matching those with States Parties with assistance needs and facilitating activities resulting from those matches could complement funding mechanisms like the VTF and enhance their impact.

Finally, transparency requires continued attention, not only through the submission of initial and annual reports, but also through the broader exchange of information on matters of mutual interest between States, as well as related discussions within the ATT Working Groups. Building on the achievements of the previous project phase and responding to the recommendations of the Chair of the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting at the CSP11, the Secretariat considers that the enhancement of its IT infrastructure constitutes a significant step forward, as it will optimize report submission, improve accessibility and usability of reporting tools, and strengthen information exchange, thereby advancing the overall transparency objectives of the Treaty.

This concept paper presents priority areas where focused support can substantially enhance Treaty implementation. The ATT Secretariat is uniquely positioned to lead these efforts, but requires additional resources to meet these implementation needs.

2. Overall Objective

To contribute to international and regional peace, security, and stability, and to reduce human suffering, by supporting the effective implementation of the ATT through strengthened regional cooperation, tailored technical assistance, and enhanced transparency and information exchange.

3. Expected Outcomes

- a) Increased national and regional capacities to identify diversion risks, trends, and mitigation practices.
- b) Increased effectiveness of international cooperation to preventing diversion and enforcing transfer controls, through joint initiatives, partnerships and timely information exchange.
- c) Enhanced sharing of operationally-relevant information for countering diversion via the DIFE and other ATT information platforms.
- d) Wider and sustained use of the ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database, leading to concrete matches between States' identified needs and available resources for ATT implementation.
- e) Enhanced institutional, legal and technical capacity to implement the provisions of the ATT.
- f) Greater visibility of ATT implementation efforts at national and regional levels.
- g) Improved accessibility and usability of reporting tools and resources, leading to more timely, complete and comparable ATT Annual and Initial Reports.
- h) Broader and more substantive exchange of information on matters of mutual interest regarding the implementation of the ATT and related discussions in the ATT Working Groups.

3.1. Intermediate Measurable Outcomes

To measure progress toward the above outcomes, the following intermediate measurable outcomes are expected by the end of the action:

- a) 5 regional / sub-regional diversion prevention workshops delivered.
- b) 50 national officials trained in diversion prevention and mitigation measures.
- c) Informal guidance notes and briefing materials for use by technical providers and implementing partners developed.
- d) Up to 10 requests entered in the ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database matched with assistance providers and resultant activities facilitated.
- e) Up to 5 requests from ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database addressed by the Secretariat.
- f) Increased number of timely and complete submission of ATT Annual and Initial Reports through improved access to and simplified use of reporting tools and resources.
- g) Increased engagement and exchange of information in the ATT platform.

4. Expected Outputs and Activities

4.1. Regional workshops on diversion

Capacity building for national officials aimed at enhancing understanding and building confidence to share information on arms diversion prevention, to foster greater engagement in the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIFE), including through the presentation of cases and experiences both at the regional level and in Geneva.

The following activities are proposed:

- a) Organize, hold and facilitate five (5) regional/sub-regional workshops on diversion prevention, serving as confidential platforms for structured dialogue between States.
- b) Develop key insights from regional and sub-regional workshops – including diversion risks, mitigation strategies, and region-specific challenges – to shape and inform broader DIFE discussions, fostering cross-regional learning and thematic continuity.
- c) Support DIFE participants in sharing information voluntarily and anonymously by equipping them with relevant good practices, examples, and lessons learned from regional workshops, thereby encouraging active and confident engagement in DIFE sessions.

4.2. Tailored-assistance to implement the ATT

The ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database was developed under phase I and further refined during phase II, following consultations with key stakeholders. To continue its operationalization, the ATT Secretariat will identify possible assistance providers and facilitate matches, as well as the activities resulting from those. The Secretariat will also build on existing guidance documents to develop relevant materials for assistance providers, and respond itself to assistance requests by delivering short, focused technical engagements. All activities will be closely coordinated with the requesting State, the EU ATT OP and the VTF, resulting in an improved capacity to effectively implement the Treaty's provisions.

The following activities are proposed:

- a) Facilitation of match opportunities with relevant donors, technical providers, or implementing partners (States, international and regional organisations, civil society, industry) and of up to ten (10) resultant assistance activities, including financial and substantive support.
- b) On the basis of training and guidance materials developed in previous project phases and the ATT Working Groups, preparation of informal guidance notes and briefing materials for use by technical providers and implementing partners responding to assistance requests.
- c) Provide tailored support in response to five (5) requests entered into the ATT Matching Needs and Resources Database about key areas of the Treaty, in particular Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13. The tailored support will consist of time-limited technical advisory support (remote or in-country), focusing on the national needs and challenges, aligned with the Secretariat's role and capacity.

4.3. Enhanced national reporting and information exchange

Building on achievements from previous project phases, the ATT Secretariat will facilitate the submission of ATT Annual and Initial Reports and strengthen the exchange of information between States Parties, signatory States, and other ATT stakeholders.

The following activities are proposed:

- a) Continue capacity building in national reporting through the refinement and dissemination of existing training materials to help national officials better understand ATT reporting requirements and processes. This will include an e-learning module, as well as user-friendly and interactive resources.
- b) Further enhance the format of the ATT Annual and Initial Reporting Templates to improve clarity, usability, and accessibility.
- c) Enhance the ATT IT infrastructure to support meaningful exchange of information on matters of mutual interest, as well as discussions within ATT Working Groups.

5. Beneficiaries

The project will directly benefit the following actors involved in ATT implementation by strengthening their technical capacity, coordination mechanisms, and access to practical tools:

- a) National authorities, including licensing, customs, and enforcement officials.
- b) Designated national focal points for ATT implementation.
- c) Regional and international organizations engaged in arms control.
- d) States Parties and Signatories seeking assistance.

6. Coordination with other relevant assistance activities

The ATT Secretariat is familiar with other funding mechanisms engaged in supporting ATT implementation-related projects, such as the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) and the EU ATT Outreach Project. The ATT Secretariat has worked closely with the managers and implementers of both funds – namely BAFA and Expertise France – in an effort to avoid duplication of funding. This cooperation has involved regularly sharing confidential information on applications received and projects approved by the different funds.

With the launch of Phase IV of the EU ATT Outreach Project, the ATT Secretariat will continue to build on and strengthen the well-established relationships with BAFA and Expertise France to ensure complementarity between the ATT Secretariat's EU-funded project and the evolving work under the EU ATT Outreach Project.

The ATT Secretariat will also continue to seek input from the implementing partners of the EU ATT Outreach Project when identifying government representatives and other individuals to participate in its proposed activities. To further strengthen coordination with the EU ATT Outreach Project, the Secretariat will explore opportunities to align workplans and calendars, including the potential organization of joint events, where appropriate.

In summary, the ATT Secretariat sees significant opportunities for continued dialogue and partnership with the EU ATT Outreach Project, particularly under Phase III, to ensure complementarity and advance their shared objective of effective ATT implementation.

7. Visibility Toolbox

- a) Inclusion of information related to the EU funded project in the ATT Secretariat annual reports to the CSPs.
- b) Provision of updates by the ATT Secretariat on the EU funded project at one ATT informal preparatory meeting in each CSP cycle.
- c) Facilitating the participation of the EU delegation at any event, mission, workshop conducted by the ATT Secretariat either nationally or regionally.
- d) Ensuring that all material produced under the EU funded project clearly indicates that it has been funded by the EU.
- e) Ensuring that at all events, trainings, workshops organized under the project it is clearly stated that these have been funded by the EU.

8. Impact Assessment

A results-based monitoring framework will track outputs and assess the impact of regional workshops and national missions, allowing adaptive management throughout implementation.

9. Reporting

Reporting arrangements for the project will be instituted according to the provisions of the contract between the ATT Secretariat and the European Union.

10. Duration

Duration of the project will be 24 months.