

**Joint Communiqué**  
**by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and**  
**the Minister for Trade of Sweden**

**A strong Arms Trade Treaty for a safer world: let's finish our work**

The world still needs an Arms Trade Treaty – one that has the strength and breadth to make a real impact on the problems caused by the poorly-regulated trade in conventional arms. Millions of people around the world suffer the consequences of uncontrolled proliferation and illicit trafficking. Not only are hundreds of thousands of people killed or injured every year but the economic and social prospects of future generations are also undermined. There is a clear case for governments to act and finish the job started six years ago.

In July, we came close to adopting a Treaty that would have tackled these problems. Our countries worked hard at the United Nations Conference in New York to negotiate the first ever comprehensive and global Treaty governing the trade of conventional arms. Good progress was made and whilst we were disappointed that we could not conclude the negotiations, we are by no means discouraged. The reasons to act have not diminished.

Over the past years the overwhelming majority of UN Member States have expressed their commitment to agree an ATT. Their number continued to grow during the negotiations in July, and at the end of the conference over ninety countries supported a declaration urging a swift continuation of the process.

Our objectives have not changed. We believe that States have a responsibility to ensure that arms are not transferred if there is a clear risk that they could be used in serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. The Arms Trade Treaty should be legally binding, but nationally enforced. It should cover all types of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, and all types of munitions. We also want to see a treaty that seeks to increase transparency and prevent the diversion of arms from the legal market to illicit trafficking networks.

During its 67<sup>th</sup> session, the General Assembly of the UN needs to decide how to finish this work. We believe the best way to achieve our objectives is for the negotiation process to continue in the framework of the United Nations, and include all relevant stakeholders. It must build on the progress already achieved in July, taking the latest draft Treaty text as the basis for any future discussions. We would like to see a new mandate from the General Assembly of the United Nations to hold a second conference as early as possible in 2013.

As some of the largest exporters in Europe we bear a special responsibility in this matter. We want to conclude a strong, robust, effective and legally binding Arms Trade Treaty in order to make the world a safer place and reduce the number of innocent victims of armed violence.

Today, we call upon governments, civil society, the defence industry and individual citizens to lend us their support for continuing negotiations and agreement on an ATT in the framework of the United Nations. We want a new round of negotiations as soon as possible. An ATT is overdue and we stand ready to complete our work and bring this process to a successful conclusion.

*Mr Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs (France)*

*Mr Guido Westerwelle, Foreign Minister (Germany)*

*Mr Giulio Terzi, Minister of Foreign Affairs (Italy)*

*Mr José Manuel García-Magallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs (Spain)*

*Mrs Ewa Björling, Minister for Trade (Sweden)*

*Mr William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (United Kingdom)*