

WILPF STATEMENT ON THE WORKING PAPER BY THE PRESIDENT OF CSP9 - "THE ROLE OF INDUSTRY IN RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL TRANSFERS ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS"

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Delivered by Laura Varella

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) welcomes the choice by the Korean Presidency of the role of industry in international transfers as the CSP9 President's priority theme. Unfortunately, the President's paper seems more concerned with "reputational risk" to weapons manufacturers than it does with the human suffering caused globally by their war profiteering.

In WILPF's very [first resolution](#) in 1915, our organisation called on states to create an international agreement that would "take over the manufacture of arms and munitions of war and should control all international traffic in the same." Together with this call, the women who wrote this resolution added that they saw "in the private profits accruing from the great armament factories a powerful hindrance to the abolition of war."

It seems clear today that war profiteering is still an obstacle to peace. The Arms Trade Treaty has existed for almost ten years now, yet armed sales continue to cause grave harm around the world and military spending increased 3.7 per cent this year, reaching a record of \$2240 billion. It is against this backdrop that state parties to the ATT must ask themselves now: what is the responsibility of the industry in international arms transfers?

We welcome the recognition in the President's paper that the arms industry needs to take measures to ensure that arms transfers are conducted in accordance with national laws and regulations, as well as regional and international norms and standards. We also welcome the examples of areas in which industry is called to take action, such as robust corporate due diligence, record-keeping, and information-sharing.

However, WILPF believes that discussing the responsibilities of industry is essential to address the impact of arms transfers and to fulfil the ATT's central purpose of reducing human suffering. In light of this, rather than just considering the benefits for industry of engaging in the ATT, states should articulate how industry can better comply with the ATT's objective and purpose. Addressing the humanitarian and human rights impacts of arms transfers was the main motivation for the creation of the ATT, and although in recent times discussions have drifted away from that, this year's priority theme provides an opportunity to re-centre the reduction of human suffering at the heart of the ATT.

This theme should not be considered in silo from other relevant international law developments including under international human rights law, particularly within the field of business and human rights. Analysis and recommendations made by the UN Human

Rights Council and its procedures, as well as by UN Treaty Bodies should be fully taken into account to interpret the ATT and states' obligations pertaining to the regulation of the arms sector. The same is valid for the arms industry's own obligations including with regard to corporate human rights due diligence. Such documents, as well as the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights 2022 guidance on the arms sector, should be part of the possible list of reference documents proposed by the Presidency.

The paper would also benefit from an acknowledgement of the symbiotic relationship between the state and arms industry. They are not, in many cases, separate entities; weapons manufacturers are, in many countries, corporate political actors, determining government budgets, lobbying for contracts and funding, and supporting violent foreign policies. The arms industry in these cases contributes directly to the construction of so-called national security policies, as well as militarised views of citizen identity. As such, industry engagement in these discussions should be organised with safeguards preventing corporate influence and setting out transparency measures over industry participation in these discussions. Civil society organisations and other experts on this issue should also be actively consulted and included in these discussions on industry responsibility.

WILPF believes the points we have raised in this statement should be taken up in the recommendations to CSP9. As the ATT celebrates the 10th anniversary of its adoption next year, this is an opportune moment for states to reflect on how the Treaty has been implemented and what efforts are needed to achieve its objectives. In assessing which actors should be more engaged in this work, we must not forget those that motivated the Treaty's adoption in the first place: people that suffer the horrors of violence and war and bear the direct impact of the destruction caused by weapons. We hope that those voices are heard and keep guiding the work of this Treaty.