

DECLARATION

**COMMON SECURITY THROUGH DISARMAMENT
FOR THE CONCLUSION OF A COMPREHENSIVE ARMS TRADE TREATY**

Cooperation with civil society built up the political pressure that led to the ban on anti-personnel mines in 1997.

A further milestone in humanitarian arms control followed in 2008 with the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which comes into force on 1 August 2010. Further steps are needed, however, on the path to a complete and comprehensive ban on cluster munitions. We call on the biggest producers, exporters and users of cluster munitions, such as the USA, Russia, China, India and Pakistan, who have not yet signed the convention, to accede to it.

The focus of our struggle is now on the successful conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty. The aim of this treaty is to oblige as many countries as possible to observe the fundamental principles governing the limitation and control of arms transfers and thus to set out internationally binding guidelines for all arms exports. These principles include compliance with international law, respect for human rights in the country of destination, a guarantee of the final destination of the weapons, consideration of existing or pending conflicts, and prevention of the supply of weapons to terrorist groups.

Internationally binding export rules are a crucial element in the fight against the transfer into crisis areas of small arms and light arms – “weapons of mass destruction in slow motion”, as Kofi Annan called them – which are the main type of weapons in most violent conflicts and internal wars.

Small arms and light arms threaten human lives, exacerbate conflicts, trigger flows of refugees and hinder the economic and social development of countries. Unscrupulous government and non-government players use small arms to commit serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The international community of states is thus responsible for advancing effective control of such weapons, which can prevent violent conflicts, consolidate peace and avert human rights abuses.

- We are confident that the negotiations on the international Arms Trade Treaty, agreed by the UN General Assembly in 2008, will help to restrict arms exports.
- We urge all countries to engage in constructive negotiations.
- Small and light arms should be part of the Arms Trade Treaty so that an overall framework can be established for international arms transfers.
- The Arms Trade Treaty should take due account of existing international and regional arms trade control mechanisms and not fall short of present standards.
- An Arms Trade Treaty must oblige both producer and target countries to ensure greater transparency in the field of international arms trading.

We call for the negotiations to be joined as partners by amnesty international, Oxfam and the International Action Network on Small Arms, the instigators and organisers of the ongoing Arms Trade Treaty campaign initiated in late 2003, and other national and international disarmament NGOs.

In addition to the conclusion of an Arms Trade Treaty, existing regional and global arms trade control instruments must be strengthened, faster progress made in incorporating international standards into national law and guarantees provided of their implementation.
