

**UN Arms Trade Treaty
3rd Preparatory Committee
New York, July 11-15, 2011**

DRAFT #2

Statement of the World Forum on the
Future of Sport Shooting Activities
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Mr. Chairman, the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities is an ECOSOC NGO representing more than one hundred of million hunters and sport shooters. We also represent most civilian firearms and ammunition manufacturers in the world.

Mr. Chairman, today's intervention is one more in a long series of WFSA statements at UN meetings going back almost 15 years. These include meetings on the Programme of Action, the United Nations Firearms Protocol, the Marking and Tracing Instrument and the Arms Trade Treaty itself. Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I will be repeating two points made at the last ATT Preparatory Committee meeting earlier this year.

Before I do that, Mr. Chairman, let me make a general observation on the whole UN effort in regard to small arms and light weapons, which are a substantial focus of the ATT.

The United Nations has been engaged in the small arms and light weapons issue for more than 15 years. The initiative essentially began in 1995 and continues to the present.

Mr. Chairman, it is striking, even into the second decade of this endeavor, how the UN fails to acknowledge two undeniable facts. First, that over 60% of all of the so called "firearms" in the world are owned by civilians and second, that these firearms are legally owned. Let me repeat that: over 60% of the firearms in the world are legally owned by civilians. Firearms already existing in the hands of civilian owners are not relevant to an international trade treaty and their status should remain strictly the concern of the domestic law of the various UN states.

This brings me to repeat two important points.

First, Mr. Chairman, civilian firearms must be excluded from the scope of any future ATT. Military firearms defined as those capable of fully automatic fire should be the only firearms included in the category of small arms and light weapons, if there is to be such a category. In one of your early papers, Mr. Chairman, there was an exclusion of sporting rifles. In a later paper even this exclusion was dropped. We would implore this committee to adopt a realistic and practical attitude on this issue. There is a well-established legitimate international trade in firearms and ammunition for civilian consumption that is already subject to a proportionate level of control. We urge the UN to focus on military SALW in any ATT and acknowledge that civilian firearms should be excluded from ATT controls.

Second, Mr. Chairman, the other point is ammunition. Perhaps we have not been clear in our earlier statements. Any ammunition marking and tracing scheme is simply impractical. Notwithstanding what is done in one small jurisdiction, the physical marking on ammunition remains prohibitively expensive, especially given the quantities produced by major manufacturers.

Mr. Chairman, the major impracticality we are talking about is in the record keeping management of any tracking scheme. The bookkeeping involved in tracking billions of rounds of ammunition produced every year is incomprehensible. Nor has any practicable process been put forward for accounting for the consumption of ammunition.

Mr. Chairman, we use the term impractical – those who want to include ammunition within the ATT claim that marking and tracing of ammunition is not impossible. There is a vast difference between not impossible and practical. Please listen to those who actually manufacture ammunition when we say it is impractical.

Thank you.