

ATT Reporting Challenges

AUGUST 2021

**Arms
Trade
Treaty**

Baseline Assessment Project

REPORTING CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY STATES PARTIES

Mandatory ATT reporting is not universal and compliance with reporting obligations has varied from year to year. Over the past five years of ATT reporting, Stimson has conducted interviews with and surveys of States to discuss challenges to ATT reporting. Respondents have identified several obstacles that

obstruct their ATT reporting efforts or prevent them from fulfilling their ATT reporting requirements. These obstacles have contributed to a range of issues, such as incomplete reporting compliance, stagnant reporting levels, limited public transparency in ATT reporting, and difficulty in assessing the treaty's implementation.

States have identified **FOUR MAIN TYPES OF CHALLENGES** to completing or submitting the required ATT reports:

1

Awareness and Understanding of ATT Obligations, in which States have expressed uncertainties about what, how, and when to report.

3

Internal and Bureaucratic Challenges, in which States have noted the obstacles posed by poor coordination across government offices or agencies as well as complications accessing, compiling, and assessing relevant information.

2

Capacity and Resource Challenges, in which States have described the negative impact of limited time, personnel, and/or information management systems on their reporting efforts.

4

Political/Security Challenges, wherein States' reporting efforts are hampered by concerns related to what information is shared and with whom as well as competing government priorities.

In some cases, these reporting challenges have been compounded by the wide-ranging impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on government operations and priorities, as well as on global momentum towards comprehensive ATT implementation. The long-term impact of the pandemic on reporting remains to be seen.

Awareness and Understanding of ATT Obligations

- ▶ Uncertainty/confusion regarding reporting requirements and deadlines
- ▶ Uncertainty in how to collect relevant information in ways that align with reporting deadlines
- ▶ Confusion arising from reporting templates/the online reporting tool
- ▶ Uncertainty about how to submit updates to the ATT Secretariat

Capacity and Resource Challenges

- ▶ Limited capacity and resources
- ▶ Limited availability of relevant information
- ▶ Lack of national point(s) of contact
- ▶ Lack of time to complete report(s)
- ▶ Underdeveloped/lack of internal systems to collect, compile, and store relevant information

Internal and Bureaucratic Challenges

- ▶ Poor coordination between government agencies or lack of interagency process to facilitate report completion
- ▶ Difficulty accessing and compiling relevant information
- ▶ Difficulty conducting assessments of a national transfer control system
- ▶ Difficulty preparing statistical data for ATT annual reports

Political / Security Challenges

- ▶ Confidentiality concerns
- ▶ Concerns related to the release of information regarded as sensitive
- ▶ Reporting fatigue
- ▶ Political interference

ASSISTANCE FOR OVERCOMING REPORTING CHALLENGES

States Parties can access various resources to assist them in overcoming the challenges that States have identified. Using existing tools, States can access resources to help them fulfil their ATT reporting requirements.

The Working Group on Transparency and Reporting has provided an FAQ document to assist States Parties in completing their ATT annual reports as well as a working paper with advice on the measures that States Parties can take to advance ATT reporting compliance:



FAQ

FAQ DOCUMENT

[Reporting Authorized or Actual Exports and Imports of Conventional Arms under the ATT – Questions and Answers](#)



WORKING PAPER

[National-Level Measures to Facilitate Compliance with International Reporting Obligations and Commitments](#)

The **Voluntary Trust Fund** is one way for States to request assistance to help develop and strengthen national processes that can support reporting efforts. Examples of such assistance include projects designed to help targeted States establish internal reporting processes and procedures as well as strengthen inter-agency cooperation to enhance national reporting.

States may also request assistance for partner countries or regional organizations to support fulfillment of treaty reporting requirements. For example, the **European Union's ATT-Outreach Project** provides national trainings to non-EU countries to strengthen their national transfer controls and support ATT implementation. In addition, States may participate in **bilateral assistance programs** to support ATT implementation, including support for reporting.

Stimson has developed training tools to support States Parties in completing their ATT reporting requirements, including guidance documents on both the ATT initial and annual reports. Guidance for the initial report details specific topics and ATT commitments, offers examples for how to respond to relevant questions, and provides insights on potential sources of information for responding to relevant questions. Guidance for the annual reports includes insights on multilateral transparency instruments, synergies between ATT annual reporting and the UN Register of Conventional Arms, data collection sources and methods, and identification and categorization of major conventional weapons as well as small arms and light weapons.

Stimson's training tools can be found in:

- ▶ Arms Trade Treaty-Baseline Assessment Project (ATT-BAP), **Guidance for Completing the Initial Report on Implementation Measures**, 2016
- ▶ Arms Trade Treaty-Baseline Assessment Project (ATT-BAP), **Annual Report Guidance Booklet**, 2017