



**Statement by H.E. Dell Higgle
Ambassador for Disarmament**

**Fifth Conference of States Parties to
the Arms Trade Treaty**

**International Assistance (ATT
Voluntary Trust Fund)
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Thank you, Mr President.

At the end of this week, New Zealand will pick up the reins of the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund following on from a very active and impactful period of German stewardship. We are delighted that, thanks in no small part to Ambassador Beerwirth and Team Germany, the VTF remains in such good financial health. This has been made very apparent to us all from the Secretariat's report this morning. Thank you for your presentation Dumisani, and for all the work the Secretariat does on the fund.

We also convey our strong gratitude to all those States – most recently the Republic of Korea – that have provided financial contributions to the Fund. We certainly encourage others to consider doing so in future - as well, of course, as inviting repeat contributions from existing donors!

In the three years of the Fund's existence so far, it has been able to support a wide range of valuable projects around the world – projects that have undoubtedly enhanced the implementation of our Treaty as well as fostering its path toward universalisation. Just in the immediate past funding cycle, the Fund has been able to support 20 projects (projects spanning 19 States).

It is clear, then, that many States see value in the potential of the VTF to enhance domestic implementation of the Treaty in their country and, indeed, often in their region.

As Chair of the VTF, New Zealand plans to build on the work of our German predecessor by working on further guidance material – perhaps of an audio-visual nature, in order to assist potential VTF applicants with a view to ensuring that all applications are both tailored appropriately to the applicant state and convey the promise of being a good use of the Fund’s resources.

New Zealand will be beginning our outreach on this issue with an event in New York which we will convene during First Committee and which, in addition to profiling the Fund in general, will explore what further guidance on the application process is most needed by States.

As has been noted this morning by Ambassador Beerwirth, we envisage that the fourth VTF project cycle will be structured similarly to the previous three cycles. Accordingly, the fourth “Call for Project Proposals” is planned for October 2019, and will invite States to submit applications to the Fund by January 2020 - well in advance of CSP6.

We look forward to engaging with States Parties, and certainly also with *prospective* States Parties, on project proposals. We look forward, too, to the ongoing good health of the VTF and the strong contribution it can make to the delivery of the key goals and objectives of our Treaty.