

Report On the fourth Annual Conference on ATT in Tokyo, Japan

A high-power Liberian delegation headed by Commissioner Ben Knuckles left Liberia for Tokyo, Japan to attend the fourth Annual Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. Hon Kongo, Head of Liberian Embassy Mission In Japan welcome the delegation on behalf of the Liberian Government, thanked the Japanese People and Government for the invitation and hosting the Liberian delegation to this very important Conference. Commissioner Ben Knuckles also acknowledged the Chairperson Amb. Takamizawa of Japan and President of the fourth Annual ATT Conference, his Deputies and the Secretariat for organizing and making this year's fourth Annual Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty a reality. While at the conference, the Liberian delegation paid special tribute to the fallen and former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, an African and international Peacemaker who ended his earthly journey in August 2018.



Commissioner Ben Knuckles - Liberia National Commission on Small Arms and Head of Liberian Delegation- Agent Titus Nyankun - National Security Agency /Stockpile - Madam Josephine Allady Special Assistant to the Head of Liberian Mission in Japan, Hon Kongo.

Commissioner Knuckles accompanied by Mr. Titus Nyankun of the National Security Agency representing future Arms Stockpile Control and Management, John Poku of the Kofi Annan Institute Accra, as part of the Liberian delegation, recognized the presence of the Head of Liberia's Mission to Japan, Hon Kongo and his abled Assistant Madam Josephine Allady at the conference. The fourth annual Arms Trade Treaty got underway Monday August 20, 2018, and ended on Friday August 24, 2018.

Hon. Kongo – Head of Liberian Mission in Japan along with Commissioner Ben Knuckles at the Fourth Annual ATT Conference in Tokyo, Japan



Liberia's participation in domesticating the ATT, as a proud party to the Arms Trade Treaty, remains a key priority to the Government of Liberia, as His Excellency President George M. Weah remains supportive of this worthy undertaking. Liberia continues to make all efforts from signing on to the treaty, to its ratification, to conducting a national assessment for identifying gaps and beginning the implementation process in compliance to the Arms Trade Treaty.



Commissioner Ben Knuckles Head of the Liberian Delegation along with Hon. Kongo Head of Liberian Mission in Japan and Josephine Allady Special Assistant Liberia Mission at the ATT Annual Conference Tokyo Japan

With support through the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF), Liberia is currently establishing the legal framework on the National Arms Trade and Transfer Act with corresponding regulations and other instruments to define formalize and realize domestic ATT compliance.

While Liberia National Commission on Small Arms and Stakeholders continue to work at the national level, Liberia strongly supports the regional approach to enforce compliance and encourage authorities of ECOWAS to integrate principles of the Arms Trade Treaty into the Convention on small arms and light weapons, ammunitions and other related material.

Since ECOWAS has expertise, solid structure and a strong Arms Exemption regime in place that compels compliance, Liberia calls on the Leaders of ECOWAS to expand the scope beyond Small arms and light weapons –SALW to make the Arms Trade Treaty a reality in the same manner and method applied to the Convention. Liberia as a unique situation had its first peaceful transition of power from Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to President George M. Weah since 1971.

With the UN Mission final exit in 2018 and one year since the lifting of the arms embargo, Liberians are responsible for handling security, strengthening, maintaining and sustaining the peace. While Liberia

continues to prioritize Arms Control Compliance via the ECOWAS Convention on Arms Trade Treaty, our concerns include continuity of the efforts and systems for compliance and arms control.

Commissioner Ben Knuckles, Head of the Liberian delegation to the fourth Annual Arms Trade Treaty held in Tokyo Japan concluded by saying, Liberia has begun to identify and develop younger generation of Arms Stockpile Experts who are decision makers, managers and technicians. As Liberia is looking for opportunities to provide advance, specialized training for other colleagues and Titus Nyankun head of armory National Security Agency, remains a priority to compliance on arms control.

Commissioner Ben Knuckles along with Mr. Podku - Kofi Annan School of Peace Studies-Accra, Ghana



Over sixty delegates took the floor during the debate but raised few concerns regarding arms transfer that are problematic with inadequate control and comes with a high cost for human life and dignity, which violates Internal Humanitarian Law. Other issues of concern coming out of the fourth annual ATT conference bordered on transparency, reporting, and universalization. The Conference also addressed issues associated with diversion of weapons, the challenges as well as best practices, measures and policies adopted by States. The panel also discussed ways to overcome implementation and challenges that affects low capacity States and as well provided simple but practical ways to address these risk including a signed declaration by the purchaser.



Commissioner Ben Knuckles –LiNCSA and Agent Titus Nynakun –National Security Agency At The Fourth Annual ATT Conference Tokyo, Japan

Thanking the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) for being a support to developing our ATT Law and regulations, Commissioner Knuckles spoke on domestic compliance and Liberia having a new National Arms Trade and Transfer Law by 2019 while we strongly support regional enforcement through ECOWAS.

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