



SPORTING ARMS AND AMMUNITION MANUFACTURERS' INSTITUTE, INC.

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Statement by Richard Patterson, Executive Director
Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, Inc.

Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Richard Patterson, and I'm the Executive Director of the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, also known as SAAMI. Since 1926 we have literally set the standards for safety, reliability, and interchangeability in the design, manufacture, transportation, storage, and use of firearms and ammunition. We are an accredited standards-setting organization, which means we have to follow the strict protocols established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). One cornerstone of developing useful and successful standards is the mandate of consensus. Consensus works, because none of us is as smart as all of us. Consensus works because it eliminates biases and personal agendas. Consensus works—and the resulting outcomes are universally adopted—because outcomes are universally accepted.

Sadly, there is a trend within the United Nations to abandon consensus when addressing SALW issues. The most recent example is the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). While western-based special interest groups got an instrument that more closely resembles their agenda, they had to abandon consensus and hold a majority vote to succeed. But did they really succeed? Today the ATT parties represent only 40 % of UN member states, 38% of the world GDP, and (according to the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database (2009-2013)) less than 30% of global arms exports. If you ignore for a moment the western states—the EU members and two other countries that already had export controls that meet the ATT requirements—you are talking about an instrument that has expanded basic export controls to encompass an additional 0 % of arms exports.

Consensus was broken and nothing—but additional bureaucratic paper-shuffling—has been achieved.

It is time to abandon majority vote on important SALW issues and instead seek the more credible protocol of consensus. Consensus works.

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