



**SAFERWORLD**

PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT. BUILDING SAFER LIVES

# LEARNING PAPER



UN General Assembly approves global Arms Trade Treaty on 2 April 2013. Leading the applause, Acting President, the late Stuart Beck, Ambassador of Palau to the United Nations. © UN Photo/Devra Berkowitz

## Saferworld's contribution to achieving the Arms Trade Treaty – 20 years of work

### Introduction

This is an account of how a small organisation can achieve big results at the global policy level, using limited financial and technical resources.

On 2 April 2013 a large majority of states<sup>1</sup> voted in favour of United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/67/234B to adopt the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The agreement of a global instrument like the ATT is a goal that Saferworld

<sup>1</sup> UN resolution A/RES/67/234B was approved by a recorded vote of 154 in favour, 3 against, and 23 abstentions. Subsequent to the vote, the delegations of Angola and Cape Verde informed the United Nations Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour, so the actual vote was 156-3-22. See: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/update/20130402/>.

has been working for since the 1990s, and the adoption of the Treaty is a major marker along the way to achieving the longer-term change Saferworld aspires to: to reduce violent conflict by preventing the irresponsible international transfer of arms.

In June 2013 the ATT opened for signature, with 67 states signing on the first day. Some 18 months later on 24 December 2014, with the 50th state ratification, the Treaty entered into force, and became international law. Since then 82 states have signed and ratified the Treaty, an unusually fast process for such an instrument.

The existence of an ATT in itself is a remarkable success for Saferworld and the coalition of non-

## governmental organisations (NGOs) in which Saferworld played a central part.

This account shows that Saferworld's commitment to the long haul, its willingness to work with and lead with others, including governments, and its in-depth technical expertise in the subject matter are crucial elements in this policy success. Since the Treaty was adopted, Saferworld has been working on implementation – and is still in it for the long haul.

## Objective of the paper

This paper summarises a longer evaluation study, mapping out key elements of a successful long-term policy and advocacy process. The summary illustrates important moments in the 20-year history of Saferworld's experience of working towards the adoption of a global legally binding agreement to control the international transfer of weapons. It also assesses Saferworld's work through a value-for-money lens. In doing so, it makes a qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of the organisation's work, and links this to the financial inputs and people that were responsible for sustaining Saferworld's commitment for over 20 years.

### From the beginning...

*"The need for responsible controls on international arms transfers underpinned Saferworld's very existence. From the early 1990s, working with NGO partners, we developed an EU-wide campaign in the belief that this would ultimately provide a platform for a global initiative. The involvement of Dr Oscar Arias and the development of an international NGO coalition soon followed, creating unstoppable momentum towards the conclusion of what we now call the Arms Trade Treaty."*

Paul Eavis, Director, Saferworld, 1996-2006

The evaluation study focused its analysis as follows:

1. The extent to which Saferworld's cumulative contribution to the process could be considered effective. To make this assessment the analysis examined the theory of change<sup>2</sup> implicit in Saferworld's work on a global arms transfer control agreement, looked in detail at strategic decisions in relation to the policy and advocacy timeline, and identified the organisation's key contributions.

2. How much the work cost over the extended time-frame. The evaluation had the benefit of access to annual Saferworld accounts dating back to 1993/94 and the accumulated historical memory of three current staff members. The data available provide a reasonable estimation of costs from which to make general, though significant, conclusions about the costs of Saferworld's work and how that relates to the policy success.

Overall, the analysis seeks to identify over 20 years what Saferworld contributed, the extent to which the organisation made, or contributed to, sound strategic decisions, whether those decisions were appropriate to the context, and how much it cost.

## Saferworld's theory of change and organisational growth

The evaluation exercise looked at the organisation's growth and development during the time period, given that work on arms transfer controls has been at the heart of Saferworld's programming since its establishment. It is worth noting that Saferworld's theory of change was, until the mid-2000s, not formally articulated as such; 'theory of change' is a relatively new term. That said, Saferworld staff (and in particular the Arms Team who are long-standing members of staff) clearly had a shared appreciation of the organisation's goals and how to work individually, as a team, and with others towards their achievement. Saferworld's theory of change – whether implicitly or explicitly – has been part of the fabric of the organisation and its working methods since its establishment in November 1989.

During the two decades preceding the adoption of the Treaty by the UN General Assembly, Saferworld changed markedly. When the idea of a campaign to create a global agreement on arms transfer controls was conceived in the early 1990s Saferworld had only recently been established. It was, and continued to be until 2000, an organisation with very limited capacity, staffing levels and funding. By the time the ATT was adopted in April 2013, Saferworld had grown significantly, with an annual income of over £9 million and more than a hundred staff. Yet, the core of its work on arms transfer controls has – in size, capacity and level of funding – remained relatively constant and small in scale.

It is also worth noting that Saferworld was first established as a think tank, seeking to influence others through inside-track dialogue centred on policy research, and while the organisation has now

<sup>2</sup> For discussion of role of theory of change in value for money assessment, see Department for International Development (DfID) (2013), Conflict, Crime and Violence Results Initiative, *Value for Money in the Business Case*. See also Vogel (2012), *Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development* (DfID).

developed a broader repertoire of interventions, policy research and dialogue remain central to its work. Indeed, on the issue of international arms transfer controls, this has been and continues to be Saferworld's distinct and primary way of working. Saferworld is not a traditional public campaigning organisation, unlike its main NGO partners in this work, Oxfam and Amnesty International. It is consciously, and necessarily, low-profile. From this approach stems the organisation's engagement in coalitions, bringing both in-depth knowledge of the issue of arms transfer controls, and the voices of those affected by armed conflict into the debate.

Saferworld's work on a global arms transfer control agreement, however, formed just one part of a broader programme of work on arms transfer controls. This included policy/advocacy at the national level in the UK and other countries, at the regional level within the EU and in Africa, and at the international level on arms transfer-related elements of other global small arms control processes, most notably the UN Programme of Action (UN PoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Saferworld's ATT policy/advocacy was therefore situated within a much larger body of issues.

## Methods to effect change

Saferworld's theory of change for this area of work provides a rationale for many of the key strategic choices that Saferworld made during the course of over 20 years. Its approach to influencing change has been consistent over time, with the organisation relying on a core set of primary strategies to achieve change. These were:

- *Developing and sustaining relationships through which to influence the attitudes and behaviour of governments and civil society.* This has involved developing personal and institutional relationships, engaging in sustained dialogue, sharing information and knowledge, and developing an understanding of others' interests and needs.
- *Coalition-building with other civil society organisations.* In the early years Saferworld worked to get other organisations involved in the issue of international arms transfer controls and helped found networks such as the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). Later, the Arms Team supported the effective functioning of the Control Arms coalition, helping to develop and lead on the implementation of parts of the coalition's strategy.
- *Researching and disseminating detailed, practical policy options that are timely, relevant to the debate and sensitive to the prevailing political context.* One of Saferworld's key strengths and the foundation

of its dialogue and engagement strategy has been the production of policy and research reports on a range of issues, often bespoke in nature.

- *Seminars.* Saferworld has a strong track record in establishing forums in which governments and civil society organisations can discuss international arms transfer controls in an informal context, enabling the dissemination and discussion of research and shaping of the terms of the debate. This has also fulfilled another key goal of Saferworld's – to build capacity and expertise among government and civil society actors to enable their effective engagement on arms transfer control issues.
- *Technical expertise.* Saferworld, and their partners and interlocutors, often refer to the organisation's 'technical expertise'. This expertise appears to be the central thread running through the core strategies of the organisation, and one of the foundation stones on which their reputation and legitimacy, in the area of arms control, is based. The term 'technical expertise' is understood, and used here, to refer to a high level of detailed knowledge of issues relating to the nature and functioning of the international arms trade and measures to regulate and control it.

This expertise has been acquired through long engagement in a wide range of arms control processes at national, regional and international levels, and the extensive body of policy research that long-standing members of staff have conducted.

## Saferworld's operational context

### Organisational background

When Saferworld first began working on this issue it was a small policy research organisation, with fewer than ten full-time paid staff. Arms transfer controls, primarily in a UK and EU context, made up perhaps a third of the organisation's programming. This began to grow significantly in the late 1990s,<sup>3</sup> mainly through an increasing focus on small arms control. During the 2000s, Saferworld's range of work expanded, with more programming on conflict prevention, security sector reform, and the establishment of a permanent presence in East Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and South Asia. This growth in size, geographical reach and the range of conflict prevention issues addressed continued until 2013, by which time

<sup>3</sup> The growth in the small arms work began around 1997 with Saferworld's first grant ever from a government (the Dutch). The first UK grant came in 2000 and was also primarily for SALW work.

Saferworld had staff in more than 15 countries with an annual income of £9.1 million.<sup>4</sup>

## The external environment

In the initial stages of work towards an ATT, Saferworld focused largely on raising awareness of the problem of weak regulation and control of arms transfers, and on convincing governments and other civil society organisations that action was needed. By the mid-to-late 1990s, as more civil society organisations rallied round the importance of the issue, governments started to take practical steps to strengthen controls on international arms transfers. This was particularly evident in the EU where member states agreed an EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. At the same time, public support from the Nobel Laureates for an International Code of Conduct<sup>5</sup> on arms transfers gave a significant boost to the profile of the issue worldwide.

By the late 1990s, disappointing lessons from the early operation of the EU Code of Conduct led Saferworld and NGO partners to question the potential utility and impact of an International Code that was just politically binding, rather than legally binding. This prompted a shift in campaign focus towards a legally binding agreement in the form of a 'Framework Convention on International Arms Transfers', based around a core set of principles, known as the Global Principles. Saferworld was a key actor, along with Amnesty International and the Arias Foundation, in the consultation process with key government interlocutors that resulted in this new approach.

At the same time, despite its limited ambition and the relatively low expectations as to what it could ultimately deliver, the UN process leading to the 2001 PoA on SALW provided an opportunity to further the international arms transfer control agenda at the UN. Saferworld was, at that time, well-placed to engage in the UN PoA process, with its programmes of work on SALW in Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and South Asia. As a result, Saferworld had a broad base from which to build support for an agreement on international arms transfer controls at a time when momentum behind the International Code and subsequently the Framework Convention appeared to be waning.

In the period up to 2006, when the 2006 UN General Assembly resolution established the UN ATT process, several elements combined to shift the landscape: in 2003, the NGO effort to establish a global legally

binding agreement was rebranded as the pursuit of an 'Arms Trade Treaty'; a public campaign, in the form of Control Arms, was launched, backed and coordinated by campaigning organisations Oxfam and Amnesty International; and the UN PoA Review Conference failed to produce an outcome,<sup>6</sup> underlining the need for Saferworld and NGO partners to commit their resources to achieving a separate UN process, one that would produce a legally binding agreement on international arms transfer controls.

Most notably, the UK government's public backing for an ATT in 2005 was a significant breakthrough. This demonstration of influential government support for the initiative strongly suggested that an ATT might be achievable, despite the many doubters. And so it proved, as the UK moved rapidly to establish a group of seven states – Kenya, Japan, Finland, UK, Australia, Argentina and Costa Rica – to co-author the 2006 UN General Assembly resolution which established the UN ATT process.

Once the process was underway, it gained real momentum when the United States, under the Obama administration, dropped its opposition to the Treaty.<sup>7</sup>

## External actors

The Arms Team's analysis of the external context has enabled it to engage with a large number of actors, both within government and civil society, who appear to have gone on to play significant roles at different points in the evolution of the ATT.

### Civil society

The complexity and global nature of the process to develop and agree a global arms transfer control agreement, and the length of time it took, meant that Saferworld had to engage with a wide range of civil society organisations (CSOs) in different ways – sometimes in a leadership role and other times in a supporting role. The Arms Team developed very close working relationships with individual NGOs, most notably Amnesty International, from the birth of the idea, and later Oxfam.

### Coalitions

Central to Saferworld's engagement with civil society has been the value it has attached to supporting and working within coalitions. While this is now commonplace, working practices were different in the

<sup>4</sup> Saferworld (2013), *Report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013*, p 9.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://fas.org/asp/campaigns/code/nobelcode.html>

<sup>6</sup> A Review Conference was held in 2006 to examine the first five years of implementation of the UN PoA on small arms. The conference failed to agree an outcome document, which reflected and compounded a sense of disillusionment with the UN small arms process.

<sup>7</sup> 2009.

late 1990s. The organisation recognised early how working with others through coalitions, particularly with those who have complementary skills and approaches, enables the pooling of resources and capacities. Saferworld played a central role in the UK Working Group on Arms Exports (coordinating an informal network of EU NGOs working on arms transfers), in the ATT NGO Steering Committee and then in Control Arms, as well as being a founding member and supporter of IANSA. Saferworld's actions demonstrate its belief that it is worth investing time and energy into the functioning of coalitions as a means of maximising the chances for change. This was borne out in the perception by others that the ATT NGO coalition was well-organised and wielded significant influence.

### **Supporter governments**

An essential element of Saferworld's theory of change is the importance it attaches to engaging closely with governments to achieve change. The Arms Team encouraged governments to support the idea of a global arms transfer control agreement, influenced them on particular elements of the negotiation process and content of the treaty, and discussed strategy with like-minded governments on how to influence opponents of the treaty. The team's approach to working with supporter governments was to play a positive, affirming role, developing close relationships of trust with officials, providing technical expertise and creating opportunities for the exchange of views.

### **Opponents**

Saferworld recognised the importance of engaging those sceptical of the ATT, whose opposition varied from the conceptual (i.e. opposed the idea in principle) to the specific (i.e. opposed to the inclusion of particular elements). However, a tactical decision was made during the UN process to engage mainly with supporter states and to expend less energy convincing the significant opponents, seeking instead to provide reasoned responses to their opposition. This did not mean disengaging from 'opponents' but rather listening, responding to their negotiating positions and working out what would be required to reduce the impact of their opposition so as to achieve a 'good outcome'. The hope was that the treaty would be strong enough to have the chance of meaningful impact but would also be one that, in time, some of the key opponents might be persuaded to sign up to. The consistency of this strategy is evident in Saferworld's engagement with key sceptical states,<sup>8</sup> in particular its

significant long-term programme of work in China,<sup>9</sup> (something no other organisation was doing) and in its focus on the implementation of the treaty<sup>10</sup> (both before and after the UN General Assembly vote to adopt the ATT).

## **Key strategic decisions**

During Saferworld's two decades of engagement, it made a number of key strategic choices, both independently and in collaboration with coalition partners. These concerned the overall focus and shape of the NGO campaigns; the type of contribution that Saferworld could make to the NGO coalition and the issues on which it could work; and the strategy of the NGO coalition in relation to the detail of the treaty and the treaty negotiation process. Saferworld has thus been a central player in all the major strategic choices made by the NGO campaign. When considered in light of the relative size and capacity of Saferworld, it shows an organisation operating particularly effectively. In no small part this influence has stemmed from its long-standing and consistent commitment to working on this issue and from the high regard that other NGOs hold for its contributions.

Saferworld's reasoning and decision-making is also consistent with its values and assumptions about change, and appropriate to the capacity and skills that staff possess. The organisation created space and seized opportunities to take forward work for which the Arms Team were particularly well-suited, for instance in relation to the scope of the treaty and the focus on implementation. To the extent possible to identify in a broad survey of 20 years of work, Saferworld made well-reasoned choices in relation to the prevailing context at the time.

*In Saferworld's view a 'good outcome' was one that included criteria based on states' obligations under international law, and in particular the 'golden rule' of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law; was comprehensive in scope, that is, it included SALW and ammunition; and which featured robust implementation provisions.*

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necessarily the best use of limited resources and so engagement became limited to Geneva and New York, rather than Delhi.

<sup>9</sup> Saferworld established a programme in China in 2008 to promote dialogue on effective international arms transfer controls with the Chinese officials and the policy community, which broadened to include work to promote EU-China-Africa dialogue on these issues.

<sup>10</sup> Throughout the negotiations and since the adoption of the Treaty Saferworld has organised a series of seminars for experts on various aspects of ATT implementation.

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<sup>8</sup> In addition to Saferworld's extensive programme in China, Saferworld led work to engage with Russia and India, states both sceptical of the idea of an ATT, in a joint project with Oxfam in 2010 and 2011. Saferworld sought to engage with Indian positions and to mitigate some of their antipathy. After a while it was decided that this was not

## ARMS TRADE TREATY TIMELINE

### ATT TIMELINE 1990S

**1992–1993** Idea of a campaign that would lead to a global arms transfer control agreement is born, first mooted in 1992 with the production of a Saferworld report, *Arms and Dual-Use Exports from the EC*.

**1994** NGO campaign launched for an EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports.

**1995–1997** Campaign for an International Code of Conduct launched by Dr Oscar Arias at the 1995 State of the World Forum, followed by establishment of a Commission of Nobel Laureates and the launch of an NGO draft of a proposed International Code of Conduct on Arms Exports.

**1998** Politically binding EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports adopted by EU Member States.

**1999–2000** Concern grows that a *politically binding* global agreement will have limited impact; instead, a global agreement would need to be *legally binding*.

### ATT TIMELINE 2000S

**2000** NGOs, led by the Arias Foundation, draft a Framework Convention on International Arms Transfers which articulates states existing obligations under international law.

**2001** NGOs reach out to and consult with 'friendly' governments to garner support for the Framework Convention; UN Programme of Action on SALW agrees language on export controls.

**2003** Control Arms campaign launched; NGOs draft Global Principles on International Arms Transfers summarising existing legal obligations of states.

**2005** UK Government announces support for an ATT.

**2006** In October, seven states co-author UN General Assembly resolution, 'Towards an Arms Trade Treaty', which is adopted in December.

**2007** Formal UN process begins to consult on 'feasibility, scope and draft parameters of an ATT'; Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on an ATT convened.

**2008** GGE report recommending continuation of work on an ATT within UN; Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) established to consider scope, feasibility and draft parameters of an ATT.

**2009** OEWG reports; new General Assembly resolution passed in support of ATT, for the first time with US backing.

### ATT TIMELINE 2010S

**2010** Formal negotiating process begins with First Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting in July.

**2011** Second and Third PrepComs held in February and July.

**2012** Fourth PrepCom held in February; first Diplomatic Conference held in July, fails to agree consensus-based document; Resolution agreed on second and final Diplomatic Conference.

**2013** Final Diplomatic Conference in March – again failed to achieve consensus; draft treaty text is submitted for vote in General Assembly and passed by large majority on 2 April; Treaty opens for signature in June.

**2014** 50th Treaty ratification deposited on 25 September; ATT enters into force on 24 December 2014.

## History and timeline

### Identifying the need for an ATT – 1993

- Saferworld, Amnesty International, the World Development Movement (WDM) UK and Campaign Against Arms Trade developed the idea of a global agreement (in some form) to regulate the transfer of conventional arms using a high common standard.
- Saferworld, Amnesty International, BASIC and the WDM, began campaigning for an EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports.

- The sharing of ideas and experiences of the EU Code campaign with partner NGOs in the Americas led to Dr Oscar Arias, former President of Costa Rica, supporting a new NGO campaign for an International Code of Conduct. Saferworld and partner NGOs in the UK and EU combined work on promoting the idea of an EU Code with that of an International Code and sought to build support for both initiatives simultaneously.

### Engaging other NGOs to work on the issue – mid-1990s

- Saferworld held seminars in the UK and Europe with key organisations such as Oxfam to raise awareness of arms control issues and promote action by other CSOs.
- Throughout the process, Saferworld placed a premium on working with other stakeholders – in government, non-government and parliamentary circles as well as in the defence industry – and on providing support to other organisations. For instance, the organisation played an active role in the establishment of IANSA, and in guiding the work of the leadership group of NGOs working on the idea of a global treaty.
- Given the impact on the ATT process of the range of skills and resources available within the NGO coalition, it appears that Saferworld's choice to invest in coalitions and collaboration was an effective one.

### From International Code to Framework Convention – 2000

- The initial campaign focused on the idea of a politically binding International Code of Conduct following on from the successful EU Code campaign.

- However, it became apparent to Saferworld and partner NGOs that, as a politically binding instrument, an International Code was unlikely to achieve the desired global impact on irresponsible arms transfers; they also considered that elements of the draft International Code supported by the Nobel Laureates were unlikely to gain widespread support.
- A core group of NGOs, led by the Arias Foundation and including Saferworld, worked with legal experts to draft a Framework Convention on International Arms Transfers based on states' existing obligations under international law. This became the focus of a revised campaign for a *legally binding* global agreement on international arms transfers.

### **United Nations Programme of Action on SALW – 2000 to 2006**

- At this point the support for a global arms transfer control agreement appeared to be stalling. Saferworld saw the UN PoA process on SALW control (agreed in 2001) as an obvious vehicle through which to pursue efforts to conclude some form of global arms transfer control agreement and made a conscious strategic choice to advance the agenda through this process.
- The hope was that the UN PoA would include language that could set in motion a formal process on transfer controls. Saferworld also worked at the regional level on small arms control instruments, in order to try to build a critical mass of support at regional and international levels.
- Saferworld was able to distil and share the core principles underpinning the Framework Convention – including the fact that states were already committed to responsibility and restraint in international arms transfers through an extensive existing body of international law. Along with other NGOs, the organisation successfully lobbied for the inclusion of language on export controls in the UN PoA, reflected in the wording of section 2, para. 11: *“To assess applications for export authorizations according to strict national regulations and procedures that cover all small arms and light weapons and are consistent with the existing responsibilities of States under relevant international law.”* The UN PoA process was, therefore, a crucial moment for Saferworld. It was during the UN PoA negotiations that many of the understandings that would go on to underpin the UN ATT process were built.

### **All arms not just SALW – 2001/2**

- Following the agreement on the UN PoA, NGOs needed to decide whether they should campaign for a treaty which only covered SALW or included a broader range of weaponry. Saferworld was clear that any treaty should seek to control all conventional arms.
- Within the NGO coalition, however, the debate was lively. Some organisations argued for a focus only on SALW, reasoning that a treaty with more limited scope would be easier to agree, and SALW were and are the weapons causing the greatest harm.
- However, as later events proved, a compromise at this early stage to significantly limit the scope of the treaty would have reduced the future room for negotiation and compromise, and would have resulted in a treaty with less coverage and therefore potential impact. Critically, in terms of the future scope of the ATT, a collective decision was made within the NGO coalition to campaign for a treaty on all conventional arms.

### **Establishment of the Control Arms Campaign – 2003**

- Establishment of the Control Arms campaign in 2003 by Amnesty International, IANSA and Oxfam followed significant work on Saferworld's part to bring Oxfam fully on board with the work towards what was now called an Arms Trade Treaty. Up until this point, Amnesty International had been the only global NGO to commit time and resources to this initiative.
- The commitment to pool the campaigning resources of both Oxfam and Amnesty International provided enhanced momentum and impetus, and was undoubtedly critical to the eventual success of the campaign. It allowed Saferworld to focus on technical and policy support, one of its key strengths.

### **Pre-2006 Resolution – should the ATT process be inside or outside the UN?**

- NGOs recognised that the global nature of the arms trade meant that a large majority of states would need to participate to ensure a meaningful reduction in the human suffering linked to irresponsible arms transfers.
- This key area of debate concerned the potential inverse relationship between the strength of any agreement and the number of parties to that agreement. By deciding to support a process within the UN, Saferworld and NGO partners had effectively

embraced the concept of universality. At the same time, however, they recognised that pursuit of a universal agreement could potentially lead to the conclusion of a relatively weak agreement, one that might undermine existing controls and good practice.

- Notwithstanding the risks, Saferworld committed to working with what would, in their view, represent an optimal agreement – whereby a large number of states would be persuaded to join the strongest possible agreement. Given the outcome, this is an approach which appears, to a large extent, to have been vindicated.

### ***Numbers of supporters or political significance of the supporters? – 2009 onwards***

- In 2009, Control Arms decided to focus lobbying efforts on securing the *greatest number* of states in support of an ATT, rather than to focus on the political weight and significance of the supporters.
- Underpinning this decision was the calculation that within a wider group of supporting states there would still be enough politically significant states to give the treaty authority.
- This approach led the coalition to develop close working relations with five key states: New Zealand, Norway, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, and Nigeria. This geographically diverse group of states had vocal, committed and capable diplomatic delegations who were actively supporting a progressive agenda and with whom NGOs could purposefully engage. This group became particularly important in rallying support in specific geographic regions.

### ***To stay in, or to withdraw from, the Control Arms Campaign – 2010***

- The complexity of the issues involved in agreeing a global arms transfer control treaty, the large number of interested parties within the NGO community, and the accompanying diversity of perspectives, background, interests and knowledge, coupled with the length and non-linearity of the process, meant that disagreements within the NGO coalition were unavoidable, and that compromises were necessary.
- In 2010, Saferworld came very close to withdrawing from the Control Arms Steering Board, on the grounds that too much time and attention was being taken up with Steering Committee administrative business, pulling Saferworld's focus away from substantive policy issues and advocacy

with governments. Ultimately, however, these issues were worked through and Saferworld determined that there was value in remaining active in the Control Arms Steering Board and continuing to play a key role in the functioning of the coalition.

- Control Arms subsequently and undoubtedly played a critical role in influencing the outcome of the negotiations. The coalition successfully navigated its way through the complex challenges of coordinating advocacy among the NGO community and, ultimately, managed its internal relationships well enough to continue to lobby coherently and effectively.
- Had Saferworld left, the coalition would have been weakened in terms of its capacity, technical expertise and by the absence of an important mediating element within the coalition.

### ***Establishment of Control Arms Secretariat – 2010***

- Up until 2010, two parallel, though closely coordinated and complementary, structures had organised NGO advocacy: the ATT NGO Steering Committee, originally set up when campaigning began for an International Code of conduct in 1997, and the Control Arms campaign, established in 2003.
- In 2010, these parallel structures were effectively merged and streamlined. The new arrangement comprised a Control Arms Steering Board and a new stand-alone Control Arms Secretariat, with the former providing strategic direction to and oversight of the latter, thus creating a proper campaigning organisation and structure.
- While considered by Saferworld to have made the campaign considerably more professional, coordinated and effective, the decision to establish a Secretariat compounded existing tensions within Control Arms, precipitating the withdrawal of Amnesty International and IANSA from the Control Arms Steering Board. Ultimately, these tensions were successfully managed and both organisations continued as members of Control Arms.

### ***Focus on implementation – 2010***

- From around 2010 Saferworld chose to focus significant attention on exploring how the provisions of a potential ATT would be implemented, and what provisions would be needed to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- This issue wasn't being taken forward by others, and was one which Saferworld was well placed to advance given its experience in working on

the practical detail of arms control regulation, and because of the organisation's long-term outlook and emphasis on the practical impact of the treaty. Taking a lead on this issue marked Saferworld out and supported its independent profile.

- By encouraging states to think about implementation, the intention was to focus states' attention on the process beyond the negotiating room and the potential long-term impact the treaty could have. A series of six seminars Saferworld held on different aspects of the implementation issue created space for government stakeholders to discuss a range of issues pertinent to the treaty negotiations – from matters of substance (the provisions of the treaty) to those of strategy (how to mobilise the necessary support).

### ***What should the scope of the treaty be? 2010–11***

- 'Scope' refers to the range of items and the types of arms transfer activities to which the treaty's provisions apply. The question of the scope of the treaty reflected the dilemma of how to balance the strength of the provisions of the treaty and the consequent likely level of support.
- Given that this issue required detailed technical understanding, Saferworld took a leading position in lobbying efforts on the scope of the treaty, with the organisation's strategy centred upon pushing for it to be as wide as possible.
- Despite acknowledged progress on this issue, such as China dropping its opposition to the inclusion of SALW in the scope of the treaty, the Conference President decided that a compromise would have to be made on scope to avoid holding up progress on other elements. While Saferworld and Control Arms advocated for the ATT to apply to the broadest range of conventional arms (including ammunition and components), in the end the treaty's explicit scope was limited to seven narrow categories of conventional weapons as listed in the UN Register,<sup>11</sup> plus SALW, their ammunition and components. However, the treaty does encourage States Parties to apply its provisions to "the broadest range of conventional arms".
- Only once the treaty negotiations were over did Saferworld and partners conclude that even with

this limited scope the treaty could still have meaningful impact. The emphasis is now on encouraging as many signatory and ratifying states as possible to see the Treaty as a 'floor' rather than a 'ceiling', and declare that they will apply the treaty's provisions to all international transfers of conventional arms.

### ***Participation on government delegations – 2012***

- Saferworld, along with other members of the NGO coalition, was invited to take up positions on the official delegations of a number of governments during both Diplomatic Conferences, at which the treaty text was developed and agreed. Saferworld participated on the delegations of Kenya and Palau.
- Saferworld's decision to participate was an obvious one, given its commitment to close engagement with governments, and the fact that both delegations were open to, and indeed welcomed, the organisation's input. Not all NGOs supported the participation of members of the coalition in government delegations, because of a concern of actual or symbolic co-option by government.
- For Saferworld, the generally open nature of the relationship with Kenya and Palau meant that the organisation was able to make substantive contributions to the negotiating positions of both countries. Saferworld's understanding of the nuanced detail of the treaty was particularly valued.
- Participation on these delegations also gave Saferworld access to parts of the negotiations which were otherwise closed to civil society participation or observation. This enriched Saferworld's understanding of the process and issues, and enabled them to shape the lobbying strategies of the NGO coalition.

### ***Persuade opponents or focus on supporters? – 2012***

- Until 2012, Saferworld and their coalition partners were actively engaging some governments who were opposed either to the ATT as a whole, or specific elements of it, to try to get them to change their position. Saferworld had previously focused work in India and Russia to this end, as well as in China.
- In 2012, they decided it was better to use their energies to engage those states that were supportive of the concept of an ATT in order to influence them to develop the strongest possible treaty. This decision to focus efforts on ensuring the depth and quality of the treaty, rather than the breadth

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<sup>11</sup> I. Battle tanks  
 II. Armoured combat vehicles  
 III. Large-calibre artillery systems  
 IV. Combat aircraft  
 V. Attack helicopters  
 VI. Warships  
 VII. Missiles and missile launchers

of support, made sense given that it was clear that a large majority of states wanted to achieve a 'good outcome' along the lines envisaged by Saferworld and its NGO partners.

- Saferworld did, however, continue to engage substantively with China, seeking to soften their stance and looking beyond the finalisation of the treaty to the potential for China to become party to the treaty in the future. This engagement was vindicated by China's constructive engagement in the UN ATT negotiations.

### **Consensus or back to General Assembly – December 2012**

- In 2009 a UN General Assembly resolution (A/Res/64/48) had established the timetable for the negotiation of the ATT. This resolution received the support of the US, more favourably disposed towards the concept of an ATT since the election of President Obama. However, in voting in favour of the resolution, the US was insistent that any eventual treaty concluded should only be agreed by consensus.

- It became apparent during the negotiations at the first Diplomatic Conference (DipCon) in July 2012 that the treaty text might not be agreed by consensus, given the trenchant opposition of some states, and that negotiations might consequently collapse. When they did, concerns loomed large that the final Diplomatic Conference might also meet the same fate.

- Following the failure of the first DipCon the ATT issue was returned to the UN General Assembly, where a resolution calling for a final DipCon in March 2013 was proposed. Debate at this point centred on what should happen in the event that this, too, failed to reach agreement by consensus. It was proposed that the draft text as it existed should be presented for consideration by the General Assembly should it fail to reach consensus, where it would require only a majority for approval. Saferworld supported this as an essential and logical step.

- There were, however, divisions within the NGO coalition on this subject, with some reasoning that it might alienate critical players like the US, and would also weaken the impact of any treaty by reducing the buy-in for and likely participation of other less supportive states.

- Ultimately, the NGO coalition, with very effective leadership from Oxfam, agreed to lobby for the possibility of a vote on the treaty text within the General Assembly should consensus prove elusive once again. General Assembly resolution

A/Res/67/234, which called for a final Diplomatic Conference on the ATT (March 2013), paved the way for a majority vote in the General Assembly to adopt the treaty on 2 April 2013.

## **Making the case for the effectiveness of Saferworld's work on the ATT: identifying key contributions**

The case for the effectiveness of Saferworld's work on a global arms transfer control agreement draws on an assessment of its implicit theory of change, a mapping of the key strategic decisions taken in pursuit of long-term goals, and an analysis of the quality and significance of the contributions that Saferworld made to the process.

### **What were Saferworld's key contributions to the ATT process?**

#### ***High level of technical expertise***

Saferworld's engagement was and continues to be founded on a high level of technical expertise on the issue of international arms transfer controls. This expertise is both organisational, and resides in individual staff, and comes from a strong track record in meaningfully contributing to other related processes, like the EU Code of Conduct, UK legislation on international arms transfers, and to a number of regional small arms control processes.<sup>12</sup> This confers it with both the legitimacy and authority to lead on issues relating to the development of the ATT.

The Arms Team produced a raft of consistently high quality policy research papers. This started in the early days of campaigning on the need for harmonisation of international arms transfer controls at the highest level, through advancing counter arguments to challenge the narratives of the ATT's opponents, to more recent work on the potential scope of the treaty and its implementation.<sup>13</sup> Saferworld also has a well-established track record in organising effective seminars to discuss both the treaty and other arms transfer control issues. The organisation is both well-respected for the practical, pointed and relevant research which it has produced to shape and inform discussions and valued for the

<sup>12</sup> Saferworld (2009), *Evaluation of the Impact of DfID Funded Activities of Saferworld*.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Saferworld (2012): *From Word to Deed: Proposals for an effective Arms Trade Treaty implementation regime*; Amnesty International et al (2009), *The Arms Trade Treaty: Countering Myths and Misperceptions*.

informal environment it has provided for officials, and civil society, to unpack key issues relating to the ATT.

This expertise has been significant in the contributions that the organisation made to the debate on particular elements of the treaty, including scope and implementation. The Arms Team played a central role during the treaty negotiating process in coordinating the NGO coalition's 'Rapid Response Policy Team', responding to developments in the negotiations and providing states and NGO partners with guidance on how to take forward specific issues, often drafting suggestions for treaty text as a lobbying point for NGOs or a contribution to states' positions.

Saferworld also contributed their expertise to the process through small group discussions and one-to-one conversations. It is evidence of the value placed on Saferworld's expertise – and the way in which it engaged constructively with governments – that the Arms Team were on occasion approached by diplomats to help develop text, or positions, on particular elements of the treaty. For example, Saferworld were approached by one key delegation to work out an acceptable position regarding language on the mitigation of risks.

Saferworld is recognised by many as having developed effective relations with key stakeholders involved in the treaty negotiations and for the quality of the dialogue they promoted. The expertise of the organisation has obviously contributed to the perception that it is a valued interlocutor. The measured manner in which they appear to have undertaken dialogue – by seeking solutions through listening and understanding concerns, and maintaining flexibility – is highlighted by interlocutors. Saferworld were described as 'honest brokers', 'having a measured voice', 'trustworthy' and 'genuinely committed to the outcome of treaty'.

### ***A consistent and continual engagement over a long period***

A second key contribution has been the consistency and continuous nature of Saferworld's engagement for over 20 years, from its conception as a campaign idea through to the agreement of the ATT, and beyond to its present work on the Treaty implementation. Saferworld, along with Amnesty International, BASIC, and WDM UK developed the initial idea of an international agreement to control international arms transfers. The influence that Saferworld has been able to assert has been founded on, and reinforced by, being part of the process from its very beginning.

In a long-term policy process such as the ATT, which is non-linear and in which a multitude of different factors influence how and when progress or setbacks will occur, an understanding of the whole history of the process can be critical. This is especially true for making informed judgements about what action to take to achieve the desired goal. Saferworld as an organisation, and key members of staff within the organisation, have had this historical perspective, which contributed to the ability of the ATT campaign to make informed decisions at key moments. They have brought a joined-up understanding of how critical moments, positive and negative, have been arrived at.

The quality of Saferworld's contribution to the ATT process stems from the *ability* of the key individuals working on the issue, which is widely remarked upon, and their *long-standing commitment* to the issue. They have a reputation as trusted, respected and committed actors. Work on the issue has also been consistently backed by Saferworld's leadership. Despite an evolving mission and huge change to the organisation's size, structure, methods and issue focus, the ATT has remained a natural fit, demonstrated by a willingness and ability to maintain a consistent level of funding (explored in more detail below). Longevity of engagement and depth of commitment mirrored by the work of its key staff are key to the effectiveness of Saferworld's work on the ATT process.

### ***Significant added value to NGO coalitions***

A third contribution lies in the significant added value Saferworld has brought to NGO coalitions, both substantively in the contributions they've made to NGO coalition strategies and outputs, and in the profile that their presence as part of a coalition has created. Saferworld's knowledge and understanding of particular issues covered by the ATT, as well as the organisation's long participation and resultant understanding of the history of the initiative, enabled it to contribute to NGO strategy and to take a lead at key moments. For instance, Saferworld played a leading role within the NGO coalition on the deliberations on the scope and implementation of any future treaty and, during the period when the feasibility of an ATT was being challenged, by analysing and addressing the potential counterarguments. Maintaining this profile as trusted, measured experts while at the same time playing, and being seen to play, a leading role within an NGO coalition has not been without its challenges, mainly in terms of protecting the organisation's independence and distinct reputation. Saferworld

sought to maintain a degree of independence and to sustain their reputation as technical experts by producing bespoke policy papers and running seminars independent of the NGO coalition.

### ***Inside-track approach***

A fourth contribution comes through an 'inside-track' approach to influencing states. Saferworld has been one of the few, and at times only, organisations developing close, long-term relationships with governments as a means of influencing their attitudes and behaviour on international arms transfer control issues. Acknowledged by governments as a trusted interlocutor, the Arms Team developed relationships with a wide range of governments involved in the ATT process, including those states wavering in their support or more actively opposing negotiations, as well as key supporters. Notably, Saferworld along with other members of the NGO coalition, were invited to be part of official diplomatic delegations at the negotiating conferences in 2012 and 2013, with Saferworld supporting the delegations from Kenya and Palau. While the nature of the relationships with these delegations were different,<sup>14</sup> in both cases the Arms Team was able to provide substantive input to the negotiating positions and statements of these countries, evidencing the organisation's adeptness at influencing government, and its high level of knowledge and understanding of the issues under negotiation.

As a consequence of playing this role Saferworld was better informed about government positions, with valuable insight on the negotiating positions and interests of different states and thus to some extent the shape of negotiations themselves. In playing this role Saferworld was also perceived by some governments as being an organisation to which they could turn for private discussions on particular technical issues or on the process of negotiation itself. In a complex, political process like the ATT, in particular as the negotiations proceed and the detail of the treaty is developed, it is apparent that an NGO advocacy campaign benefits not only from mass mobilisation and high profile public advocacy, but also significantly from more nuanced, detailed inside-track engagements with key interlocutors involved in negotiations of the type Saferworld undertook. In this regard, Saferworld played a significant role, in

<sup>14</sup> In Kenya, Saferworld had a long-standing relationship with the Government of Kenya, having worked closely on programmes of small arms control and community policing for over a decade. Indeed, the invitation to join the delegation, also taken up by other Kenyan NGOs, was made through the Steering Committee of the Kenya National Focal Point on small arms, of which Saferworld is a member. Conversely, Saferworld had not previously worked with the Government of Palau before the negotiating conferences.

particular in light of the relative size of the programme and the resources at its disposal.

### ***Catalyst for action, bridge between groups***

A fifth contribution comes from Saferworld being both a catalyst for action by others and as a bridge between groups (between NGOs, and between NGOs and states). By playing an inside-track role, Saferworld was able to have the ear of governments and be a bridge between the NGO community and governments. As such they enabled more effective communication of interests and motives. This was a critical contribution to the NGO campaign.

Saferworld also played an important mediating role within the NGO coalition, bringing different groups together and being able to find common ground. Perhaps in part Saferworld were able to do this because of the nature of the organisation, which was not tied to a narrow interest in one element of the treaty and was happy to play a behind-the-scenes role, in which public profile was less of a concern. Saferworld also played a role in encouraging other key organisations, such as Oxfam, to become part of the NGO campaign. In such a complex, long-term process where members of a coalition have a shared goal but often have overlapping and competing interests and motivations – different interpretations of how that goal should be conceived and different ideas about how to achieve it – the need for compromise is critical. It appears that Saferworld made a substantive contribution to enabling some of those necessary compromises to take place.

### ***China***

A final, sixth, contribution comes from Saferworld's programme of work in China, which has sought to engage the Chinese policy-making community on the ATT, and appears to have had a marked impact. China became an increasingly important player as the negotiations progressed. Evaluations of Saferworld's China programme<sup>15</sup> have remarked on the unique nature of Saferworld's interventions in China on the ATT, and the extent to which awareness of ATT-related issues and the ATT process has risen in part because of Saferworld. While Chinese accession to the ATT may be some way off, interest in the ATT within Chinese policy and government circles remains strong. Numerous factors influenced the increase in Chinese engagement in the ATT negotiations and it appears that Saferworld's programme has made a

<sup>15</sup> Huang, Chin-Hao (2011), *External Evaluation of Saferworld's Project: Building Dialogue Towards Effective Controls on International Transfer of Conventional Arms in China*, and Huang, Chin-Hao (2014).

positive contribution to the environment in which this occurred.

## Mapping the costs of Saferworld's ATT work

The evaluation attempted to piece together 20 years of programming, and at the same time collect documentary evidence of costs and the inputs and outputs which flowed from this expenditure. A detailed mapping of expenditure on inputs and the related outputs and outcomes was not possible. However, by examining 19 years of Saferworld's annual accounts and interviewing programme staff and financial managers with long institutional memories, it has been possible to collate broad estimates of annual expenditure on Saferworld's work on a global arms transfer control agreement, and make an assessment of the overall cost of achieving this policy goal.

## Saferworld expenditure on global arms transfer control agreement work

- Across the period during which Saferworld has been working on this issue, its annual expenditure on this programme of work has varied relatively little. As a share of the organisation's total expenditure, however, it has reduced very noticeably over that period. This is due to the very significant growth of the organisation, and the diversification and expansion of the types of work and locations in which it is working, many of which are by their nature more expensive, among other factors.
- Given the central role played by Saferworld in the NGO campaign, the contributions to the process that this report shows Saferworld has made, and their reputation as an actively engaged organisation on this issue, the overall level of expenditure is remarkably low. In 19 years of work, Saferworld spent a total of only £1,023,301. This gives a mean annual expenditure for this period of only £53,858.
- Expenditure per annum on this programme of work has also remained consistent. Expenditure in 1993/4 and 2012/13 was notably higher than in other years, and in 1999/2000 no organisational funds were spent specifically on work in this area. However, for the majority of years, variance from the mean expenditure was not more than £14,000. This consistency of funding – albeit at a low level, which no doubt constrained Saferworld's desired level of activity – is important. Saferworld's ability to play a central role in this process has, as stated above, been in no small part founded on their consistent and long-term engagement, enabled by a constant level of funding. This long-term engagement has been a

factor in developing the knowledge, understanding and expertise to play an influential role, and to retain key staff with the expertise to deliver real outcomes. The links between consistent funding, long-standing staff and effective delivery of outcomes are crucial to Saferworld's understanding of value for money in policy work.

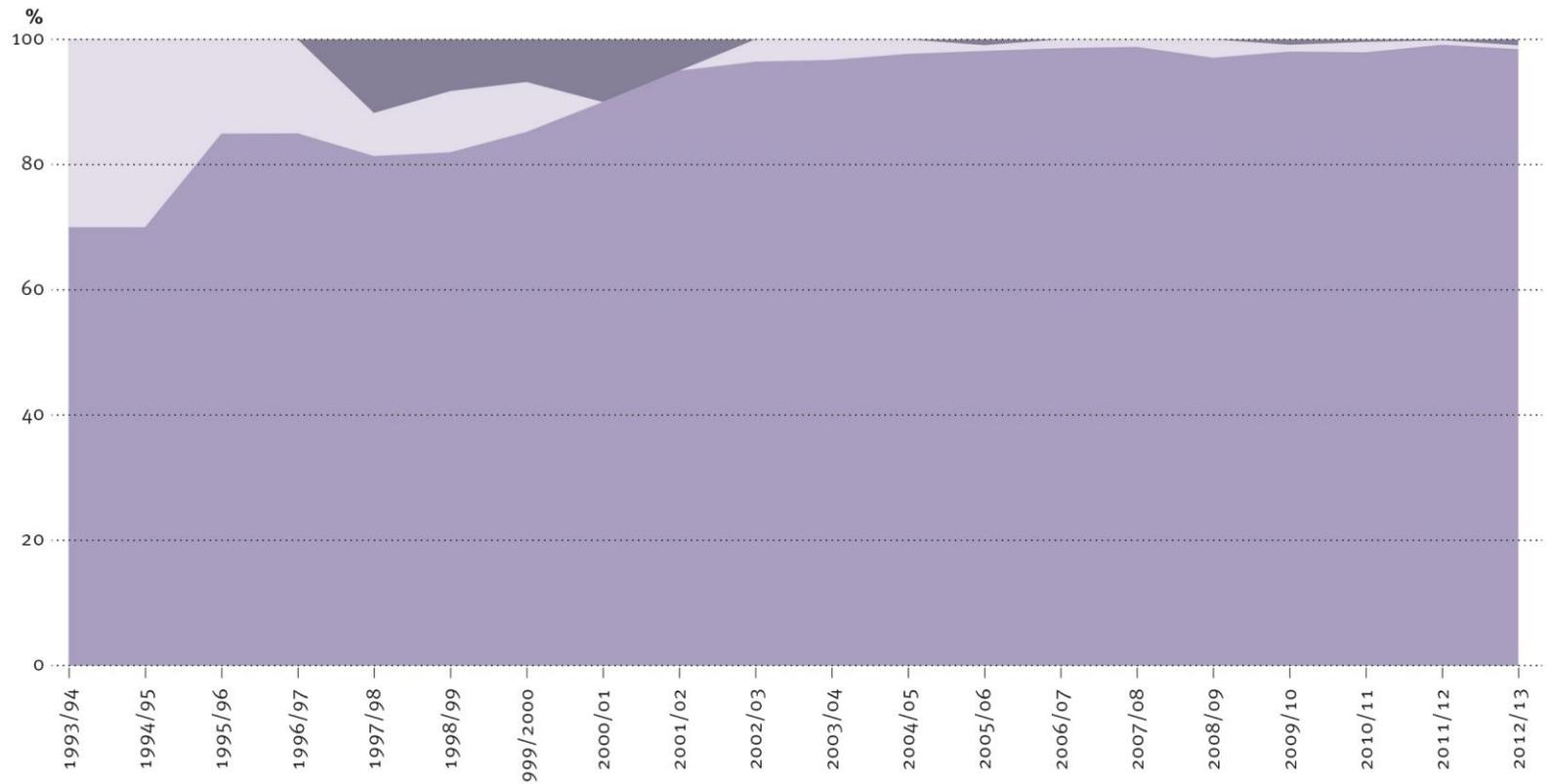
- The majority of funding for Saferworld's work came not through separate project-specific funding, but from either allocations of broader arms control and security grants received by Saferworld or from allocations of unrestricted core funds. This highlights two important points. First, it illustrates the consistent institutional support Saferworld provided to arms control work, making efforts to secure funding through broader programme funding, or prioritising it as significant enough for allocations of core funding, in particular for staffing costs. Second, it illustrates the relative paucity of available funding for work on an ambitious, long-term policy and advocacy process, particularly on sensitive topics such as the arms trade, and for the type of inside-track policy work for which Saferworld is noted.

While the figures provided relate to activities identified by Saferworld as being specifically focused upon the development of a global agreement, this work sits centrally within the organisation's vision and has formed part of a broader range of interconnected and mutually reinforcing areas of programming, for example:

- work on regional small arms control processes in East, Central and Southern Africa which promoted effective international arms transfer controls
- work on the United Nations Programme of Action on SALW (Biting the Bullet Project and the associated Consultative Group Process), with one of the objectives being to encourage progress towards a formal UN process on international arms transfers
- work at the EU level promoting strong arms transfer controls, in terms of both national practice in EU Member States and outreach by those States to others with less capacity and/or less-developed national systems
- work on improving arms transfer control practice in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe

As the focus now shifts to the implementation of the ATT, the specific project funding available from government has tended to come from the diplomatic budget lines of ministries, rather than from broader development funding. Donors, in general, do not

### 1993–2013 EXPENDITURE FOR ARMS TRADE TREATY-RELATED ACTIVITIES



	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
■ ATT expenses paid for by project funding (GBP)	0	0	0	0	27,715	21,768	34,449	58,800	45,300	0	0	0	25,000	0	0	0	17,000	10,000	10,000	75,380
■ ATT expenses paid for by strategic funding (GBP)	88,480	67,870	19,000	18,144	16,234	25,847	40,418	0	0	55,000	55,000	70,000	25,000	44,000	40,000	40,000	21,600	41,500	54,000	50,000
■ Other organisational expenses (GBP)	206,453	158,364	107,216	102,818	192,024	216,305	431,289	528,715	860,799	1,496,218	1,619,697	2,957,635	2,666,350	3,105,731	3,293,467	1,325,351	1,953,817	2,440,536	7,387,000	7,881,958

seem to be prioritising funding for the implementation of the ATT nor do they appear to recognise the scale of support that will be necessary if its implementation is to be effective.

*“To influence global opinion and practice on such a life-threatening issue, as the organisation did, is no small accomplishment. While it is laudable to have sustained this effort on what was mostly a scant budget, it also masks the major effort and uncertainty around securing sufficient funds. I could never quite understand why partner investments were so limited when the demand for our expertise was so high.”*

**Paul Murphy, Executive Director, Saferworld**

## Conclusion: Did Saferworld's work to create a global arms transfer control agreement represent value for money?

This report has sought to test the effectiveness and value for money of Saferworld's work over 20 years on creating a global arms transfer control agreement. The analysis used evidence in reports, evaluations, monitoring information, financial records, and in the historical memory of staff, and key allies. The following observations and conclusions can be drawn:

- By evaluating the effectiveness of Saferworld's programming a meaningful assessment of value for money can be made. The key contributions that they made to work on a global arms transfer control agreement provides the foundation for asserting that Saferworld has been effective and good value for money.
- Saferworld's theory of change has been effectively implemented. The interventions that Saferworld has made have been appropriate to the context and have been of a high quality. In implementing their theory of change, Saferworld made the following key contributions to the ATT process, which further support the claim that it has made an effective and substantive contribution:
  - It has informed and influenced the positions of governments on the ATT process and on specific elements of the treaty.
  - It has informed and helped shape the work of other CSOs and the lobbying that these organisations have undertaken.
  - It has contributed to the strategy and effective functioning of NGO coalitions.

- It has contributed to the birth of the ATT as a policy and advocacy goal and consistently supported work towards this goal, through its different incarnations. With a few other organisations this consistent engagement has enabled the process to keep going and not fall by the wayside.
- It has actively and constructively taken an inside-track approach to engagement with governments on arms transfer control issues, at times being one of the very few NGOs taking this approach. As such, they have been able to serve as a bridge between different groups (NGOs and states) and to act as a catalyst for action.
- Saferworld's work has been consistently funded but has received a low level of funding in relation to the contribution that it has made. When combined with an evaluation of the effectiveness of their interventions, Saferworld's expenditure on work in this area appears more than efficient; it has consistently turned relatively meagre financial inputs into notable outputs and outcomes.

## Key components delivering the success of Saferworld's ATT programme

The intention has been to retrace the elements of Saferworld's contribution to a successful policy outcome that is global in nature and long-term, and to discover what can be said about the nature of the relationship between financial inputs and this outcome. The following points are the key components leading to the successful outcome of the ATT:

### 1. Long-term organisational commitment and engagement

A long-term, successful policy outcome requires organisational vision that extends into the long term, and that is undeterred by lack of donor support.

- It shows their credibility, and consequently supports their influence, and demonstrates their commitment to the issue.
- It gives the organisation historical knowledge and understanding of the process that enables them to make informed, perceptive decisions about their own strategy and to contribute to the decision-making and strategy of others.
- It enables individuals, and the organisation, to develop expertise on the issues which, in turn, enables it/them to make high-quality, pointed and timely interventions.

## 2. Organisational commitment supported by financial commitment.

Longer-term commitment by an organisation has to be supported by long-term, uninterrupted funding that facilitates coherent programming. Saferworld's work on the ATT has not been high-cost. In fact, adopting a simplistic approach, one could assert that Saferworld's work has provided significant value for money at a meagre £53,858 per annum.

Overcoming whatever internal and external obstacles there may have been, Saferworld has succeeded in consistently supporting its international arms transfer control work and, perhaps most crucially, the salaries of its core ATT staff throughout the ATT process. This has primarily been possible because of the efforts made institutionally to make core funds available, as accessing donor support specifically for activities on this issue was persistently challenging. Many of the factors in Saferworld's successful contribution to the ATT – development of expertise, retention and longevity of staff, consistent long-term engagement – would not have been possible without this consistent funding.<sup>16</sup>

## 3. Financial commitment helps retain and build expertise of staff

In addition to coherent programming, committed financial inputs allow for retention of staff. Consistency of staff facilitates building of expertise, which is key to navigating the complexity of international policy-making and therefore supports more effective strategic decision-making and more effective programming. Saferworld's influence on the ATT process has been founded on its high level of technical expertise on issues of arms transfer controls, expertise that is widely recognised and is the foundation for its credibility. Its expertise, embodied in its staff, has been fundamental to its ability to effectively influence change at specific moments and over time. This expertise is evident in the work of the key individuals leading Saferworld's work on the ATT, but also more broadly in the capacity of the organisation.

Fundamental to Saferworld's contribution to the ATT are, therefore, its staff. That core members of staff have worked on the issue for many years, and the organisation has been able to retain them, is notable.

## 4. Robust theory of change that includes complementary programming supports overall impact

A robust theory of change is important to delivering a successful policy outcome, whether explicit or implicit. Saferworld has been clear about the change it is seeking to achieve and the contribution that it can make to this change. This theory of change has been appropriate to the changing context in which it has worked and its interventions have consequently been clearly and consistently conceived and executed.

A core component of the theory of change is collaboration with others. While Saferworld has undertaken a significant amount of work on the ATT and associated arms transfer control processes independently, they have consistently worked with others. Notably, they have participated actively in formal and informal coalitions and have committed significant energy and time to ensuring that these coalitions function effectively.

Another key component of the theory of change is that arms transfer control has been central to Saferworld as an organisation. As the organisation has grown and diversified, arms transfer control has retained its place as a core part of Saferworld's work. In part, this is because of the 'historical' place of the programme within the organisation, its continuing relevance to the organisation's vision and mission, but also because of the consistent track record and high quality of the work on arms transfer controls. As such, the importance and value of the work on the ATT to the organisation has been consistently recognised, and therefore supported, by Saferworld's management and board.

For Saferworld, seeking to understand how to assess value for money in policy work, this evaluation shows those elements that have allowed it to contribute significantly to delivering a successful policy outcome that is global in its reach.

<sup>16</sup> It is worth noting that the expertise of staff was key to attracting funding, and staff themselves were often directly responsible for fundraising.

## Acknowledgements

***Special thanks go to Angus Urquhart, and to all those who made themselves available – former and current staff and Trustees, donors, allies and challengers – for what has been a long, interesting and painstaking process of historical reconstruction and financial research going back 20 years.***

## Table of Abbreviations

ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
BASIC	British American Security Information Council
CSO	Civil society organisation
DfID	Department for International Development
GGE	Group of Governmental Experts
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OEWG	Open Ended Working Group
UN PoA	UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons

## About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe that everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from insecurity and violent conflict.

We are a not-for-profit organisation with programmes in nearly 20 countries and territories across Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

**For further information, discussion, input and feedback, please contact Madeline Church at Saferworld, [mchurch@saferworld.org.uk](mailto:mchurch@saferworld.org.uk)**

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