

**Wassenaar Arrangement Twentieth Anniversary Reception
6 December 2016**

**Remarks by the WA Head of Secretariat,
Ambassador Philip Griffiths**

Mr. Secretary-General, Plenary Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for hosting this formal commemoration and Plenary Chair Ambassador Hannu Kyröläinen for your opening remarks.

Please allow me also to convey appreciation to the Government of Austria for its generous hospitality. The Wassenaar Arrangement Secretariat continues to benefit from exemplary cooperation received from the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) and other host country authorities over the last twenty years.

Let me also recognise the presence this evening of distinguished persons closely associated with the WA in its formation and its first twenty years. In particular I would like to acknowledge Ambassador Sten Lundbo of Norway who chaired a working group that in 1993-1996 elaborated the Arrangement's basic guidelines and procedures, known as the WA *Initial Elements*; and Ambassador Sune Danielsson, my predecessor as Head of Secretariat from 2002 to 2012. I wish to thank them for travelling some distance to be with us. Ambassador Staffan Sohlman of Sweden, who chaired the first WA Plenary and ran the Secretariat for the first two years, is unfortunately unable to join us this evening and has sent his apologies.

Thanks to the foresight of the founders, and the contributions of many gifted people in the years since, the WA has proved to be a viable and resilient basis for cooperation on export controls in support of international security and stability. The path has not always been smooth, and challenges remain, but the WA is a forum where differences of view can be aired and accommodations can be sought within the framework of shared overarching goals. I'm sure that the "Vienna spirit" has also helped.

The technical work of our experts lies at the Arrangement's core. I believe that the WA can be proud of its record in keeping the Control Lists as the international export control standard for arms and dual-use goods and technologies. This task is more relevant than ever, and its importance is increasingly recognized, in today's international security environment.

Effective outreach is also crucial to the Arrangement's success in pursuing its goals and in promoting transparency. The well-attended Practical Workshop held in Vienna in June for an expanded number of outreach partners was a particular highlight of the 20th Anniversary year.

The Secretariat's role is to facilitate and support interaction among Participating States. I and my team, some of whom were present at the beginning and have devoted a large part of their working lives to the WA, feel honoured to be part of this collective endeavour.

Let me pay tribute to the WA's successive Chairs who have led and will lead our work, to my Secretariat colleagues, past and present, to all of you who contribute to the Arrangement or are interested in its work and objectives, as well as to absent friends.

Looking ahead, we can be sure that there will continue to be challenges related to the international security environment and the fast pace of technological change. I am confident that the WA will sustain and further enhance its contributions to international cooperation in this field when the Participating States are pulling together with a sense of common purpose.

Thank you.



Head of Secretariat Philip Griffiths

(Photo courtesy of Dodge and Burn for Cercle Diplomatie)