

Statement by
Ambassador
Secretary-General and Deputy-Foreign Minister
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs

Dear Ambassadors Griffiths (Head of Secretariat), Kyröläinen (Plenary Chair) and Beijer (General Working Group Chair), Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mr. Sebastian Kurz, I would like to welcome you here today in the premises of MFA at the reception to mark the 20th anniversary of the Wassenaar Arrangement.

As you all know the Austrian capital since the days of the Vienna Congress has been an important hub for diplomacy and international cooperation. Today Vienna as the capital of a middle sized and prosperous republic boasts to be the third headquarters of the United Nations. We are very proud to also host many specialised agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency as well as other International Organisations and Institutions of the European Union such as the European Agency for Fundamental Rights here in Vienna.

One of the themes of the international presence in Vienna certainly is security. Foreign Minister Kurz hosted the Iran talks, UNODC that oversees the implementation of the Firearms Protocol is located across the Danube in the Vienna International Centre and last but not least the Wassenaar Arrangement is dealing with export controls for conventional weapons and related dual use goods and technologies.

The Wassenaar Arrangement is a follow on organisation to COCOM – the then Western regime to regulate transfers of strategic technologies – but wider in its geographical scope. It now encompasses 41 countries from all 5 continents. Mexico was the last state to join the Wassenaar family and we hope that more states – when they are ready and fulfil all requirements, such as the Balkan States - will follow.

In its 20 years of existence the Wassenaar Arrangement has become the gold standard for transfer control in conventional weapons. The EU and therefore its Member States derives its lists of military and dual-use goods from the corresponding Wassenaar lists.

2016 is not just a jubilee for the Wassenaar Arrangement but also an assessment year. All of you have participated eagerly and constructively in all the meetings in order to see where we stand at the moment and which areas may require further discussion. The Wassenaar Arrangement has also made a particular effort this year to reach out to states that are not participating in the Arrangement. The 2 day practical workshop in June that was kindly hosted by the Permanent Mission of Japan and that brought experts from Wassenaar and non- Wassenaar states together was not just a welcome opportunity to discuss issues in a wider forum, but also a success in terms of making the work of the Arrangement more transparent and tangible.

The calendar as well as the Wassenaar year are drawing to a close. With two days of the Plenary still to come there is still some work ahead of you all. In concluding allow me to wish you successful deliberations, a good meeting and a great stay in Vienna.

Thank you very much.



**Ambassador Secretary-General and Deputy-Foreign Minister
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
Michael Linhart**

(Photo courtesy of Dodge and Burn for Cercle Diplomatique)