

**Wassenaar Arrangement 20th Anniversary Commemorative Reception
6 December 2016**

Remarks by 2016 Plenary Chair Ambassador Hannu Kyröläinen

Dear Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

Thank you for those warm welcoming remarks, Mr. Secretary-General. Please convey our gratitude and best wishes to the Minister, H.E. Mr. Sebastian Kurz, for Austria's hospitality this evening on the occasion of the Wassenaar Arrangement's twentieth anniversary.

It is an honour to speak to you today in my capacity as 2016 Plenary Chair, thanks to the happy coincidence of the Arrangement's alphabetical rotation.

This rotation gives national governments the opportunity to gain greater insight and perspective on the important contribution which the Wassenaar Arrangement is making to the international arms control framework.

Finland was a founding member of the Wassenaar Arrangement and holds its work in high regard. My predecessor in this role, Ambassador Anu Laamanen, and I have both enjoyed contributing to the Arrangement's operation this year and have appreciated colleagues' cooperation.

Let me offer a few observations.

Over these past twenty years, the Arrangement has provided a forum for Participating States to share information and assess the scope for coordinating their national export control systems. It has also facilitated experts-level exchanges on technical issues which lie at the heart of the Arrangement's effectiveness, as well as on practical implementation experiences.

The globalization of trade and rapid technological advances since the Arrangement's establishment have brought significant challenges to export controls. Participating States have had to work hard to ensure that the Control Lists continue to be relevant and their licensing and enforcement efforts effective.

Twenty years of consensus-based cooperation is indeed an accomplishment in this context where continued adjustment is needed.

A contributing factor has been the conduct of periodic Assessments – as we have undertaken in 2016 - whereby Participating States take a step back to reflect and consider how the Arrangement is positioned to meet current and future challenges, and make recommendations to adjust its work accordingly. We have had a busy day today addressing these issues and will continue our intensive work tomorrow.

In this 20th Anniversary year, we have also organized a number of special activities ranging from the production of new outreach publications like the Compendium of Best Practices Guidelines and the Stand-alone Munitions List, and the improvement of the WA website, to the technically focused Practical Workshop held in June which offered a unique opportunity to interact and network with practitioners from a wide range of WA Participating States and non-Participating States, and finally culminating in this special commemorative event graciously offered by Austria, our host country.

Before I pass the floor to the Head of Secretariat, let me suggest that we raise a glass to our Austrian hosts to thank them not only for their hospitality in organizing this event, but for serving as the "home" for the Arrangement's Secretariat and the regular meetings of the Arrangement's 41 Participating States.

Thank you.



2016 WA Plenary Chair Ambassador Hannu Kyröläinen
(Photo courtesy of Dodge and Burn for Cercle Diplomatie)