

SMALL ARMS MONITOR

Civil society perspectives on the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons

Aiming for a meaningful outcome document

Katherine Prizeman | *Global Action to Prevent War*

As the Second Review Conference (RevCon) for the UN Programme of Action on small arms (UNPoA) opened on Monday morning, the President of the Conference, Ambassador Ogwu of Nigeria, rightly called upon member states to clearly focus their general debate statements on the “desired outcome” for the conference.

The benefit of general debate is often unclear, as broad reiterations of national policies do not always contribute much to the practical discussion on how to strengthen implementation of the UNPoA. Therefore, it is essential to focus on priorities and themes linked to the outcome document so that this next review cycle contributes more tangible measures to more effectively address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW). It is not enough to continue to underscore the importance of eradicating diversion of weapons into the hands of terrorists and other criminal elements; rather, member states must produce meaningful outcomes that offer and highlight specific programmes of work and, in turn, themes and priorities that enhance and strengthen UNPoA implementation at all levels. As noted by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) as well as the delegation of Lithuania, it was a great disappointment that there was no final document adopted at the conclusion of the 2006 RevCon and a conclusion without an outcome document must not be repeated now in 2012. Furthermore, as stated by the New Zealand delegation, the outcome must be credible and genuinely add value to future efforts.

President Ogwu has already submitted “zero drafts” of the proposed outcome documents, which have served as a good basis for discussion in the inter-sessional period between the Preparatory Committee in March and this RevCon. Moreover, the programme of work for this RevCon limits general debate to the first two days and allows sub-

stantial time for consultations on all four drafts—Programme of Action- Strengthened Implementation at the National, Regional and Global levels 2012-2018; International Tracing Instrument Implementation Plan 2012-2018; Schedule of meetings 2012-2018; and the 2012 Declaration. This is a positive step towards formulating and adopting a substantial outcome document that will both reaffirm commitment to the UNPoA and outline strategies for improving its implementation during this next review cycle.

As general debate continued through Monday’s meetings, some of the focus of delegations did rest on the concrete items that should be addressed in the outcome documents. The delegations of Turkey and Portugal welcomed the drafts and noted the usefulness of these documents for discussions. The delegations of Australia and Germany supported the structure of the drafts, with the Australian delegation noting that it would enable the RevCon to identify priorities for moving forward as well as underscore methods of achieving those priorities.

Recommendations for a specific schedule of meetings were offered by the delegation of New Zealand, which called for an appropriate number of meetings with at least one being an Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE). The 2011 inaugural MGE proved itself extremely useful to both delegations and NGO observers. The Japanese delegation also expressed support for future technical discussions in the form of an MGE.

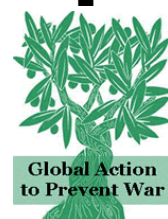
Several other delegations identified specific themes they wish to see underscored. The Mercosur states reiterated the importance of incorporating a gender and age perspective in the implementation of the UNPoA and the EU delegation noted the significance of eliminating diversion as well as proper stockpile security and destruction. The Holy See delegation also identified the

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Delegations call for gender mainstreaming in UNPoA implementation

Jasmin Nario-Galace | IANSA Women's Network

The first day of the Review Conference on the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) saw many states articulating the impact on women of the illicit trade in SALW. Thirty-five percent (35%) of 34 delegations who took the floor on the first day of the conference called either for gender mainstreaming for the effective implementation of the UN PoA or voiced concerns in regard to violence committed against women with SALW as weapons of choice.

These delegations were Kenya, Lithuania, CARICOM, European Union, Brazil, Portugal, United States, Trinidad and Tobago, Germany, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, and Lithuania.

Brazil underscored the importance of incorporating a gender perspective in the implementation of the UNPoA. Lithuania, on the other hand, expressed that it is crucial to understand the different ways that men, women and children are affected by armed violence in order to develop effective solutions. Kenya went a step ahead to note that it has already ensured that gender is mainstreamed in all its SALW activities and programs.

Portugal and Kazakhstan particularly called for the increased representation of women in decision-making agencies handling SALW concerns. The United States posited that UNPoA implementation would help prevent gender-based violence if states would make it more dif-

ficult for those who would engage in violations of international humanitarian law and international humanitarian rights law to obtain SALW from the illicit market. US also opined that to help reduce gender-based violence, women's participation in the design and implementation of policies and programs to address illicit SALW trafficking could be enhanced.

The US and Germany made reference to UN Security Council Resolution 1325, with the latter calling for the enhancement of the role of women in the security sector including in the field of small arms control. Both delegations underscored that UNSCR 1325 affirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. Germany urged states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional, and international institutions and argued that they must also participate in mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts. Germany added that women deserve an increased role in the field of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and made the important call that this be reflected adequately in the final documents of the UNPoA conference.

We look forward, indeed, to seeing this in the conference's final document. This could happen if more voices are raised in support of the cause. •

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All views expressed in this publication are solely those of the contributing authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the supporting organizations.

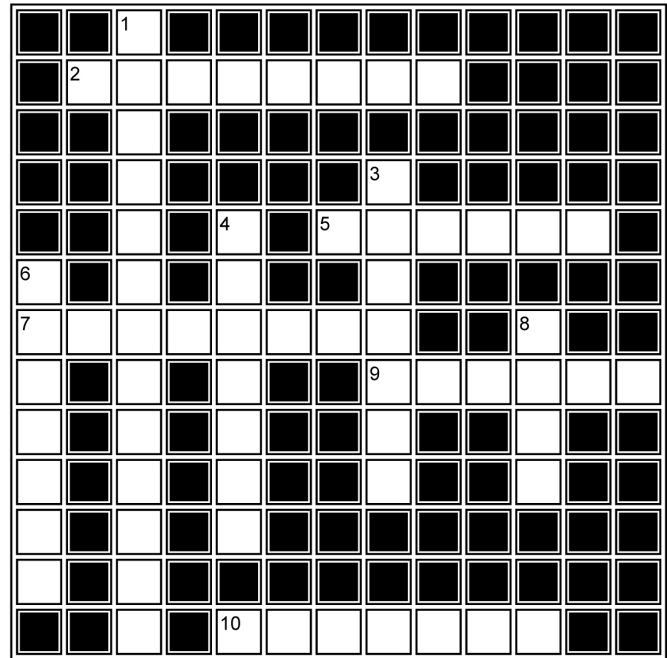
Meaningful outcome document, cont'd

need to focus on the special needs of children with regards to illicit trade in SALW. The Japanese delegation identified stockpile management and destruction as a key priority for the next 6-year review cycle and the Republic of Korea highlighted illicit brokering activities as an important issue to be addressed. The statements from Spain, CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago, and Mercosur also referenced the importance of addressing ammunition. The Ambassador of Kazakhstan stated that the outcome document should outline engagement of regional organizations.

As discussions continue throughout the next two weeks and, hopefully, conclude with the adoption of a consensus outcome document, the importance and relevance of the UNPoA and International Tracing Instrument must be continually confirmed and enhanced. The UNPoA, as rightly explained by the delegation of New Zealand, is entering a new phase during which more productive discussions on practical implementation must increasingly emerge from the divisive political issues that have previously blocked progress by member states. A wealth of tools, guidelines, model legislation, and other control mechanisms already exist at both the regional and global levels. It is time to ensure that these tools are implemented in the most comprehensive, consistent, and robust manner possible. •



Small arms crossword



Across

2. Chair of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UNPoA.
5. Parentage of ammunition trade that remains outside of reliable export data.
7. The Programme of Action emphasizes this kind of cooperation for tracing purposes.
9. The UNPoA recognizes the need to put in place comprehensive mechanisms to control SALW ...
10. What is it called when governments license arms sales via private companies?

Down

1. R in DDR.
3. Experts estimate that there are more than 600 ... small arms and light weapons in circulation worldwide.
4. In 2011 the UN Programme of Action was?
6. The action that can help illicit SALW to be found.
8. Number of biennial meetings held.

News in Brief*Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF and Maj Rørdam Nielsen | Global Action to Prevent War**Changes to UNPoA*

- MERCOSUR, Spain, and Trinidad and Tobago suggested the UNPoA should include ammunition.
- MERCOSUR suggested the UNPoA be legally-binding.
- Trinidad and Tobago said border control should become an integral part of the PoA.
- New Zealand said it favoured both measures regarding ammunition and border controls but rather than further development of the UNPoA it wanted full and effective implementation of the existing provisions.

Marking, tracing, record-keeping, and reporting

- UNDIR/Small Arms Survey gave an overview of trends in national reporting on UNPoA implementation. They concluded that implementation has been varied across regions and that reporting gives an incomplete picture.
- MERCOSUR and Kazakhstan called for strengthened mechanisms for national reporting and information exchange.
- Pacific Islands Forum and New Zealand said the RevCon should ensure reporting templates are simple and user-friendly and have realistic and flexible reporting requirements
- CARICOM and MERCOSUR said the ITI should include ammunition and be legally-binding.
- Italy suggested synchronizing UNPoA and ITI reporting with the calendar of UNPoA meetings.
- Thailand said exporters should contribute more to marking processes and provide samples of bullet characteristics or include information for national record-keeping to enhance marking and tracing.

International cooperation and assistance

- The Deputy Secretary-General noted there is still limited cooperation between states to track SALW.
- Kazakhstan and Germany called for better matching of needs and resources.
- Australia called for better monitoring and evaluation of assistance programmes.
- The US said the donor community should coordinate better in order not to duplicate efforts in a resource constrained field.
- Thailand commended UNODAs work with the PoA-ISS website that could facilitate better matching of needs and resources.
- New Zealand said that good tools have been developed including guidelines, model legislation, and INTERPOL's firearms programme and it was appropriate to enhance awareness of these tools.
- NAM and New Zealand supported the idea of a multi-

donor trust fund for PoA implementation.

- Benin, New Zealand, and France highlighted the importance of cooperation between multilateral organizations such as Interpol, WCO, and UNODC.

Gender

- CARICOM, EU, MERCOSUR, Brazil, Lithuania, Portugal, the US, Trinidad and Tobago, Kazakhstan, Germany, and Kenya indicated the need for work on incorporating a gender perspective in UNPoA implementation.
- The US and Kazakhstan called for mainstreaming of UNSC resolution 1325 on women's participation in SALW programming.
- Lithuania said it is crucial to understand the different ways that men, women, and children are affected by armed violence.

Age

- MERCOSUR and Lithuania stressed that age should also be taken into account in UNPoA implementation.
- Holy See, Kazakhstan, and Germany said that special attention should be given to children and SALW links.

Victims' assistance

- Holy See said the UNPoA should address victims' assistance.

Civil society

- The President of the General Assembly, Indonesia, MERCOSUR, Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Trinidad and Tobago, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Forum welcomed civil society contributions to increased awareness and implementation of activities related to combating the illicit trade in SALW.

Outcome

- CARICOM said the outcome should explore ways to measure the impact of UNPoA implementation on the ground.
- MERCOSUR called for the RevCon to "diagnose" the implementation of the UNPoA's objectives and establish mechanisms to strengthen implementation that are complementary to other existing instruments and processes.
- Lithuania said the focus should be on National Action Plans for implementation.
- India said language in the outcome document should be accordance with that in the UNPoA itself.

Follow-up mechanisms

- Italy recommended biennial meetings of states parties and review conferences every six years as the best meeting schedule but said if MGEs are to be held they should have clear mandates and concrete outcomes.

Side event: Moving targets

Lily Gardener | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

- Lithuania said the BMS of 2008 and 2010 had received substantial outcome because they focused on specific areas rather than general implementation and this approach could be successful again.
- Japan and New Zealand said regular MGE technical discussions could strengthen UNPoA implementation.
- The US and New Zealand said there should be clear and defined schedules for all meetings in advance.
- India said proliferation of reports, meetings, timelines, and targets should be avoided as this would be burdensome for the UNPoA; instead existing mechanisms should be reinforced.

Other

- MERCOSUR and Holy See highlighted the importance of promoting a culture of dialogue and peace to compliment and improve UNPoA implementation.
- NAM called for a significant reduction in the production, possession, and trade of conventional weapons by industrialized states.
- NAM called for control over private ownership of small arms and encouraged all states to ensure that the supply of SALW is limited only to governments or authorized entities.
- Japan said civilian insecurity could be mitigated by taking measure of arms possessed by civilians and security agents and destruction of surplus. Approaches such as giving goods for arms, enhancing education, and law enforcement play could play complementary roles in arms collection.
- NAM suggested that UNIDIR continue carrying out studies on the needs of developing countries for UNPoA implementation and the assistance provided to this end since 2001.
- NAM supported establishing a mechanism to ensure online access to technical studies and academic research on SALW issues.
- Holy See and Pakistan suggested looking at demand side of SALW production and trade, with the Holy See calling for more research on the dynamics of conflict and crime.
- Spain stressed the need for the UNPoA to work in tandem with existing instruments such as the Firearms Protocol and the Standing Committee on MANPADS.
- Japan and Kazakhstan noted that more attention should be given to illicit brokering in relation to the illicit trade in SALW.
- Germany said new political and technical developments should be addressed and taken advantage of and suggested MANPADS could be addressed. •

The Small Arms Survey 2012 was launch at Monday's lunchtime side event. The Chair of the UNPoA Review Conference 2012, Ambassador Joy Ogwu; Pius Wennubst, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations; and Ms. Hannelore Hoppe, Director and Deputy High Representative for Disarmament Affairs all voiced their appreciation of the Small Arms Survey's reliable analysis for the past 12 years. Eric Berman, Anna Alvazzi del Frate, Nicolas Florquin, Glenn McDonald, and Pierre Gobinet from Small Arms Survey provided information on the 2012 publication "Moving Targets," which focuses on the question of change.

Berman spoke on trade and transfers, which is determined with published customs data. The top exporters saw France and Japan join the list for the first time. He noted that the poor transparency in state reporting (both large and small exporters) means that a large proportion of the authorized trade remains obscure.

Alvazzi discussed the link between homicide rates and firearms. She argued that armed violence is a defining problem for Latin America and the Caribbean. Not only do countries in the region show significantly higher homicide rates than countries elsewhere in the world, but many of them also have significantly higher proportions of firearm homicides than the global average (42%). Firearms were used in an average of 70% of homicides in Central America, in 61% in the Caribbean, and in 60% in South America. Alvazzi presented case studies that illuminate the challenges, effects, and potential unintended consequences of state efforts to contain and reduce drug cartel violence in Latin America. Mexico's crackdown appears to have triggered a rapid explosion of violence. By contrast, Rio de Janeiro's pacification approach appeared to allow the state to retake control of some of Rio's largest favelas with less force.

Florquin examined the illicit small arms and light weapons in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia. One conclusion from all three case studies was that non-state armed groups are using older-generation weapons. He also analyzed the issue of Somali pirates. In response to attacks by Somali pirates, international naval forces began monitoring "high-risk" waters and shipping companies employed private security companies. While the number of "successful attacks" in 2011 dropped, an unintended, yet disturbing consequence is that pirate groups are increasingly resorting to lethal violence and abusing their hostages during attacks and captivity. Having armed guards on ships raises complex legal and small arms control challenges related to the movement in ports and territo-

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Voluntary associations

Dr. Robert Zuber | Global Action to Prevent War

Ambassador Ogwu of Nigeria, President of the Review Conference, set the tone for the initial meeting noting that illicit small arms represent an ‘enduring problem’ with profoundly negative ramifications, most especially for fragile states. The audience of diplomats and NGOs seemed attentive to her urgency. The ‘hangover’ that some of us feared from the month-long arms trade treaty negotiating conference was not in evidence this morning. This ability to recover and respond anew is worthy of high praise. At the same time, there is a recognition by many delegations that the need is still urgent to dry up and properly dispose of illicit stockpiles, secure borders and harbors, share the highest quality information within a predictable and reliable framework, and create more abundant and transparent streams of capacity support.

In a section of the draft outcome document entitled “Strengthened Implementation at the National, Regional and Global Levels 2012-2018,” there is a reference to the need for “supporting comprehensive needs assessments.” There is broad recognition on the wisdom of assessing needs thoroughly and honestly prior to any effort to address those needs. However, this ‘wisdom’ does not always translate into national policy. The kinds of rigorous assessments that anchor sustainable policy change are less common than we might wish them to be, both inside UN conference rooms and within the security establishments of member states.

Assessments in any form are very much part of the ‘voluntary’ activities that define implementation priorities in the UNPoA. Indeed, there are many points in the UNPoA draft outcome documents where ‘voluntary’ participation is underscored. Reporting is voluntary. Focal points for both the UNPoA and International Tracing Instrument are voluntary. Sharing of national experiences in eliminating illicit weapons is voluntary. Capacity assistance is voluntary, as are careful reviews of the benefits and challenges associated with such assistance.

To a large extent, this pattern is to be expected. As a norm setting institution, the UN generally has challenges in binding member states to any particular implementation strategy, and weapons-related implementation reinforces high levels of anxiety for some governments. With few exceptions, states are responsible for motivating themselves and each other to abide by political agreements. It would be inappropriate at this time to suggest structures of institutional coercion to enforce what is likely to remain a state-defined and motivated process.

However, while giving states a wide birth, we must be careful of allowing voluntarism to skew assessments (and

the reporting on which they are ostensibly based) for political purposes. Sarah Parker of the Small Arms Survey (SAS) updated delegations on levels of reporting under the UNPoA. Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW) is highly supportive of the work that SAS does in reviewing national reports and highlighting trends. SAS has also been deeply involved in work to create templates that can rationalize reporting and allow us to benefit from the most accurate national comparisons possible.

But, alas, the use of such templates, like the reporting obligation itself, is also voluntary.

In this context, GAPW feels compelled to remind delegations to review not only their levels of reporting under the UNPoA, but also the quality and reliability of information offered. ‘Accuracy’ as a voluntary obligation can have severe ramifications for small arms policy as well as impact levels of trust needed to keep donors and recipient states in transparent engagement.

As noted during the SAS presentation, response by states to the call for national UNPoA focal points is quite gratifying. It is indeed possible for states of diverse interests to respond ‘voluntarily’ to suggestions that build capacity for UNPoA implementation. We would suggest that vigorous reporting based on thorough and accurate information is one of the ‘voluntary’ contributions that must command a higher priority by states.

There is a maxim in philosophy that there are actually two ‘tests’ of truth. The first is getting our ‘facts’ right. The second is placing those facts in their proper context. Information provided under the UNPoA must be factual, but also comprehensive and embedded in the most relevant contexts. We simply cannot make good implementation policy, including sustainable capacity support among and between states, in the absence of comprehensive and accurate information on needs, successes, disappointments and concrete activities within and between the borders of member states. •

Side event: The role of legislators in the implementation of the UNPoA

Eloise Watson | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

Together with Parliamentarians for Global Action, the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations organized a side event to discuss the vital role that parliamentarians can play in the effective implementation of the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons (SALW). Chaired by H.E. Mrs. Yenerit Morgan, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the UN, the session included remarks from three speakers: Ms. Shazia Z. Rafi, PGA; Mr. Daniel Prins, Secretary General of the UNPoA Review Conference; and Mr. Jordan Ryan, Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP). Two legislators, Dr. Donya Aziz (MP, Pakistan) and Mr. Robert Halef (MP, Sweden) then shared their perspectives on the issue.

Mr. Prins gave a clear and compelling presentation in which he flagged the particular actions and activities of parliamentarians, highlighting the important contributions they can make in helping implement the UNPoA. Mr. Prins emphasized the inherent function of parliamentarians as catalysts or ‘guardians’ of governmental action. He explained how parliamentarians, obvious points of contact for civil society and the general public, have the ability to translate and convey the needs of their constituency to the government. He also touched on the power of parliamentarians in their ability to exert formidable pressure on government. Mr. Prins also briefly elucidated on their role in promoting regional cooperation in the field.

Mr. Jordan Ryan’s remarks echoed the sentiments of Mr. Prins; he declared that parliamentarians have the power to spur and sustain national action and bring attention to the issue of the illicit trade of SALW through engaging the community. After noting that the misuse of arms is both a security and development issue, Mr. Ryan highlighted the ways in which the UN Development Programme is assisting governments and parliamentarians to ensure small arms control is a national political priority and a part of national legislation. According to Mr. Ryan, prime examples of UNDP’s work in this area include its helping parliamentary committees in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, and in the Great Lakes region. A final theme weaved throughout Mr. Ryan’s remarks related to the idea that an equal focus on reducing both supply and demand of small arms is one of the most effective ways to work on UNPoA implementation.

Dr. Donya Aziz, first elected to Parliament in Pakistan in 2002, shared her view on incorporating an important gender perspective into UNPoA implementation. Like

Mr. Ryan, she explained how the illicit trade of SALW negatively impacts society’s development, emphasizing that arms availability increases violence against women. Dr. Aziz stated that efforts must be revitalized to include women in the decision-making of disarmament and security processes. Finally, Dr. Aziz alluded to the dual role played by legislators; not only are they responsible for enacting legislation on light weapons, they also shape attitudes and domestic dialogue on the issue, both of which are necessary in any state’s endeavor to achieve a society free of violence.

During the Q&A session, Clare Elias (Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations) asked in what way is it useful to share between states particular ‘model’ legislations on small arms? Mr. Ryan responded, suggesting that legislation sharing in parliamentary working meetings is an important mechanism for exploring useful legislation templates; it drives debate, spurs ideas, and promotes a better understanding and an appreciation that context matters. •

Moving targets, cont’d

rial waters. Guards’ use of force and firearms also raises complex legal issues.

McDonald reflected on the open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE), where delegations focused on the technical details of weapons marking, record-keeping, and tracing within the framework of the broader UNPoA. He argued that armed violence continues to undermine security and small arms proliferation remains a problem, however, although there are challenges there are also opportunities.

Gobinet discussed stockpile management and security. He explained that unplanned explosions at munitions sites (UEMS) are a global problem. There is almost one UEMS per week, which affects entire communities who live next to the sites. He also discussed regional approach to stockpile reduction, which looks at surpluses, cost, and demilitarization.

The statistics and case studies presented illustrate the desperate need to prevent illicit flows of SALW in order to ensure international peace and security. The publication can be found at <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/yearbook/small-arms-survey-2012.html>. •

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Calendar of events for Tuesday, 28 August 2012

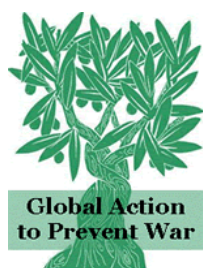
When	What	Where	Who
10:00–13:00	Plenary	Conference Room 1 North Lawn Building	
9:00–17:30	Monitoring Illicit Arms Flows: Sanctions, Networks and Capacity Building	Conference Room B North Lawn Building	Swedish Permanent Mission to the UN and SIPRI Contact: Hugh Griffiths griffiths@sipri.org
13:15–14:45	Launch of UNIDIR-Small Arms Survey analysis of PoA national reports	Conference Room E North Lawn Building	Contact: Tae Takahashi ttakahashi@unog.ch
13:15–14:45	UNMAS 2012: Preventing “Big Bangs” and Saving Lives”	Conference Room 1 North Lawn Building	UN Mine Service (UNMAS), DPKO Contact: Aaron Buckley buckleya@un.org
13:15–14:45	Weapons Tracing by Peace Support Operations	Conference Room D North Lawn Building	Permanent Mission of Belgium to the UN and Small Arms Survey Cont: Vincent Willekens vincent.willekens@diplo-bel.fed.be
13:15–14:45	Key themes and outcomes of the expert roundtable on Combatting Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons Through Strengthened Border Controls	New Zealand Permanent Mission	New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago and UNLIREC Cont: Anthony Simpson Anthony.Simpson@mfat.govt.nz
15:00–18:00	Plenary	Conference Room 1 North Lawn Building	
18:15–19:30	Preventing diversion of arms and ammunition: Approaches in Sudan and South Sudan	German House	BICC in the framework of the GIS Contact: Marius Kahl kahl@bicc.de

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