



SMALL ARMS MONITOR

Civil society perspectives on the fifth biennial meeting of states
of the UN Programme of Action on small arms, 16–20 June 2014



Reaching Critical Will

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IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 | **Stockpile management**
- 2 | **Calendar of events**
- 3 | **Licit arms, illicit uses**
- 4 | **The 2014 Programme of Action Expo**
- 5 | **Event report: SALW and the post-2015 development agenda**
- 6 | **Event report: Gun violence, disability and recovery**

The *Small Arms Monitor* is produced by the Reaching Critical Will programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom during meetings related to the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons.

See reachingcriticalwill.org for information, statements, papers, reports, archived *Small Arms Monitors*, and more.

STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT: A TOP PRIORITY?

Baffour Dokyi Amoa | *International Action Network on Small Arms*

Never before has the need to curb the illicit trade and proliferation of small arms and light weapons been felt by so many people around the world. The escalating loss of human lives and wanton destruction of valuable property as a result of the increased misuse of small arms and light weapons is a major cause of concern.

This Week, the fifth Biennial Meeting of States is considering the implementation of the UN Programme of Action at the national, regional, and global levels, including stockpile management and physical security measures; the International Tracing Instrument; and international cooperation and assistance for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, including capacity-building and training, and transfer of technology and equipment.

The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), the global civil society movement against gun violence, has for years highlighted the need for action by states to protect civilians against poor stockpile management practices. For instance, in many parts of the world where civilian populations have grown in rapid proportions, people are now living too close to ammunition dumps and depots. This is a phenomenon that has led to the death of many innocent citizens in situations where accidental explosions have occurred. It is therefore gratifying to note that states are still committed to finding better ways to deal with the challenges posed by inefficient stockpile management systems.

In many countries of the South, weapons of the police are placed behind the counters, visible and unchained. When mob actions occur, these weapons are easily collected and they disappear into the illicit market. Similar stories can be told in similar circumstances of poor stockpile systems. Not only is the storage system poor but it

also allows easy diversion of weapons under the pretext that it has been stolen. Some security forces do well to handle their stockpile of weapons but the use of appropriate technology will further strengthen current systems and make them more robust.

Stockpile management is certainly a priority, but in the face of proliferation of complex small arms and light weapons, a well-coordinated, well-resourced international cooperation and assistance programme will go a long way to reducing their illicit circulation. The more the stockpile management systems are allowed to remain fragile, the higher the risk of increased proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Another key issue of concern is ammunition. It was argued during the Arms Trade Treaty negotiations that small arms and light weapons become redundant if the related ammunitions are not available. It is therefore crucial that states find the most appropriate and convenient way to manage ammunition stockpile.

Information on global ammunition flows is difficult to obtain. More than 80 per cent of ammunition trade seems to remain outside of reliable export data, according to UNODA resources. However, ammunition forms a key component of tackling small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In the context of sustained use, ammunition stockpiles are rapidly depleted. Preventing their resupply in unlawful situations should be a matter of urgent concern. Furthermore, these stockpiles present a two-fold problem of security and safety—research shows that much of the non-state actors' ammunition are illicitly diverted from state security forces, and ammunition warehouses located in densely populated areas have exploded in a number of countries, causing thousands of casualties. Therefore, security as well as safety measures with regard to ammunition stockpiles need to be urgently addressed.

continued on next page

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

When	What	Where	Who
10:30-11:30	Press event: OSCE Effort to Fight Illicit SALW: Providing practical assistance to States for over a decade	Permanent Mission of Spain, 245 East 47th St. 36th Floor	Permanent Mission of Spain
10:00-13:00	Plenary	Conference Room 3 Conference Building	
13:15-14:30	OSCE achievements in fighting the proliferation of illicit SALW	Conference Room C Conference Building	OSCE
13:15-14:30	Tracing illicit arms in conflict zones	Conference Room 3 North Lawn Building	Permanent Missions of Belgium
13:15-14:30	How local-level stockpile management is improving community security in Kenya	Conference Room B Conference Building	Permanent Mission of Finland, Saferworld
15:00-18:00	Plenary	Conference Room 3 Conference Building	

Stockpile management, continued

Further, stockpile management and control is one of the most acute small arms problems. "Leaking" government stockpiles are prominent sources of illegal small arms in circulation. Generally, surplus and obsolete weapons are better destroyed than stored. In post-conflict settings, the immediate destruction of surplus weapons and ammunition removes possible fuel for new instability.

The results of collection and destruction programmes are mixed. Often, projects have had only marginal impact on security, presumably because it is typically the obsolete weapons that are destroyed, and because affected communities do not always participate in the design and implementation of collection programmes. Also, disarmament programmes tend to focus on weapons rather than ammunition. Most importantly, for weapons collection programmes to have a lasting effect, they must be embedded in robust efforts linked to violence reduction, reconciliation, security sector reform and peace-building.

IANSA will continue to follow the debate on these issues closely during BMS5 and hopes for a strong outcome to advance measures for preventing human suffering from small arms and light weapons.

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LICIT ARMS, ILLICIT USES

Dr. Robert Zuber | Global Action to Prevent War

As the BMS process moves to deliberations on the specifics of outcome language, there is still a bit more to say regarding the larger policy and security frameworks in which such outcomes will have their life.

I won't repeat the linkages from yesterday, but do want to point out an additional wrinkle, one that challenges and complicates our use of language about the weapons we seek to bring under effective international control.

Much of GAPW's policy time is spent in the Security Council as well as with the causes, effects, and response tools relevant to the prevention of mass atrocities, the keeping of the peace, and the promotion of the 'rule of law' within all member states. Of particular interest to us are reports on the implementation of International Criminal Court (ICC) referrals to some of the most challenging political environments.

While 'illicit arms' rarely comes up in reports submitted by Chief ICC Prosecutor Bensouda and shared with the Council, there is perhaps nowhere in the UN system where the impact of such arms is more fully felt. Last month for instance, Mrs. Bensouda asked the Council to help her understand how her office could possibly be expected to conduct full investigations of allegations related to Libyan authorities in settings characterized by unacceptably high levels of armed violence. This week, she presented her brief on Darfur and noted the diverse iterations of weapons-related violence by several parties—the government in Khartoum to be sure, but also from various opposition groups who benefited greatly from the vast arms bazaar created in the aftermath of UN-mandated operations in Libya.

From the standpoint of atrocity crime violence and international justice, the distinctions between illicit and

licit weapons are less dramatic than state representatives in the BMS might wish to maintain. For many states participating in the BMS, what makes arms 'illicit' is the degree to which they are beyond the reach of state control. Fair enough. But what about arms by legitimate owners that are used for illegitimate purposes? This category includes states inflicting weapons-related violence on citizens whom they are obligated to protect, weapons used in state response to criminality that is disproportionate to the crime committed, weapons used to repel attacks from insurgents or criminal but which instead result in preventable casualties to innocent civilians, and so forth. If the security challenges of the UN in settings from Syria to Central African Republic reveal anything, it is that under international law not all use of weapons by non-state actors is illegitimate; and not all use of weapons by states is legitimate.

We welcome any and all discussions in the BMS/ITI that link small arms and peacekeeping operations or other pertinent security issues. Such discussions demonstrate yet again the intellectual acumen of disarmament-focused delegations supplemented and enhanced by strong leadership from the chair. It is not always essential to achieve consensus on references to international justice, peacekeeping operations, and atrocity crime response in forums such as the BMS. But it is important to the larger UN community and well beyond that these linkages are forthrightly discussed. Victims of armed violence often find themselves in complex contexts of insecurity, sometimes experiencing understandable difficulty distinguishing between their tormentors and their rescuers. As both a practical matter and in solidarity with those who bear the brunt of arms-related violence in our world, it is important that deliberations by delegations, NGOs, and others reflect this complexity as well.

For further analysis and reporting on the BMS5 this week, please see www.reachingcriticalwill.org.

Statements will also be posted on the RCW website.

Follow discussions on Twitter with

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****ONE WEEK ONLY** THE 2014 PROGRAMME OF ACTION EXPO***Marcus Wilson | International Action Network on Small Arms*

In *What Next?*, a recent critique of the international small arms process, and of civil societies role within it, Daniel Mack of Instituto Sou da Paz wrote: "it is helpful for all civil society advocates to look inward in a judicious and searching manner, request external feedback, and listen attentively to constructive, well-intended criticism from wherever it may come."

This was the summation of a long and frank reflection of where we have come, what we have achieved, and what improvements could be made to PoA engagement.

The report does fantastically well in laying out the concern and disillusion that many of us have felt and some of us have expressed over the years.

In consultations with many of our civil society colleagues who have watched the process unfold since 2001, the question was raised as to why, when resources are so scarce and organisation capacity so low, many of us continue to turn up to these meetings every two years.

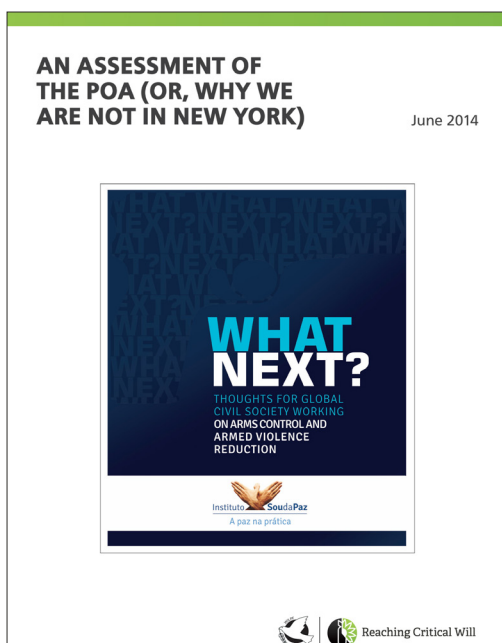
I'm as guilty of that as anyone else. I tend to visit New York once a year, and have done for the past six years. And for what? In that time I've observed the ups and downs of the diplomatic process; I've made some very good colleagues and friends from across the globe; I've co-presented several projects and reports to an audience that would be otherwise unreachable without

spending far more than the cost of a week-long trip to NY; and, I've witnessed the slow whittling-down of PoA language as each substantive meeting turns into one of defending rather than strengthening existing language.

Although the concerns raised in the *What Next?* report hold plenty of water, it's tempting to accept the PoA and its Biennial Meetings of States for what they really are: PoA Expos, where stakeholders can enjoy the infrequent opportunity of all being under one roof, to promote their work, fundraise, network, share information, and feel part of global action. Which is great.

Perhaps if we modify our expectations and appreciate New York meetings for what they really are, we can then amplify our efforts away from New York. 'What Next?' questioned practitioners where real impact can be made, and it's clear that regional, national, and local efforts have achieved far more impact than those at the global level. The sooner we accept the BMS for what it is, the sooner we recognise that impact is driven not necessarily from the global level, but from the ground.

Few would argue that the PoA has strengthened since 2001. In spite of this, we see examples at these meetings of the relentless and positive work being done by practitioners the world over. Perhaps, for one week only, the PoA Expo isn't such bad thing?



New publication from
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EVENT REPORT: SALW AND THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Arianna Framvik Malik | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

A year ago, the world was surprised to hear about riots in the outskirts of Stockholm, Sweden, and about the inability of the police to stop it amid its week long duration. Sweden is known for a relatively good distribution of wealth and is this year celebrating two hundred years of uninterrupted peace. So what caused the riots?

Apart from inequality factors being the cause, a shift in police instructions had gradually taken the police out of the neighborhoods, moving in law enforcement only to punish and thus ending the previous preventative approach where police were constantly present in the area and in contact with locals. When a man was questionably and fatally shot in May of last year, riots ensued.

Speaking on the importance of conflict preventative measures, the main argument of all panelists of the side event were that development goals are inextricably linked with the issue of security, and that it is vital that the post-2015 development agenda takes this into account. For example, as an indirect effect of armed violence, maternal healthcare suffers and infant and child mortality rises when women are not able to get safely to hospitals. Without safe neighborhoods, sanitation and clean water deteriorates, HIV spreads to a higher level, and enrollment in primary education decreases. These effects are directly linked to the Millennium Development Goals, proving the importance of including conflict reduction in them.

Agreeing that none of the development goals can be reached where there are high levels of armed violence, Uruguayan MP Daisy Toruné spoke from experience of the need of having police that engage with citizens before they become violent. Violence, argued Toruné, cannot be solved generally, but requires co-operation between politicians, law enforcement,

and locals in order to ascertain what is needed in that particular neighborhood, whether it is improved electricity, healthcare, education, or all of the above.

Nic Marsh of the Oslo Peace Research Institute explained that reducing violence is achievable through a strategy of improving the police force in violent areas along with reducing access to firearms licensing and allowing firearms in public. Most importantly, there needs to be investment in the young, giving them better opportunities for education and work, including providing parents of young children with daycare so that both parents can work.

In principle, there is widespread agreement in the UN and elsewhere for the need for conflict and violence prevention. The problem of implementation is political. As stated by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, "The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded." Politicians, citizens, and civil society alike need to be aware of the interests at stake, such as the revenues from arms production, when we advocate for the best possible post-2015 development goals.



...what next?

EVENT REPORT: GUN VIOLENCE, DISABILITY AND RECOVERY

Simon Rose | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

As negotiations on the outcome document continue, it's refreshing to be reminded of the individuals that have experienced gun violence as the reason for being here,

Alex Galvez was just going out for a soda when he was shot point blank range through shoulder, hitting his spine and paralyzing him from the waist down. Now he is the Executive Director of the Transitions Foundation in Guatemala, an NGO working with disabled persons and giving them a chance to work their way back to employment, support, and other forms of social integration. Even if you are lucky enough to survive gun violence, Mr Galvez points out that there's a lack

of knowledge on how to treat disabled persons. As there is little understanding on the treatment of victims, the preventive work regarding gun violence is also lacking resources and recommendations.

For this reason, the Surviving Gun Violence Project has been trying to gather as much solid data as possible, in order to be able to make a concrete contribution to policy making on the issue of gun violence. It has published this research in the book *Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery*, along with personal stories from all over the world, commentaries from a range of experts, and policy recommendations in regards to the issue of survivors and gun violence policy.

On the international level, Rebecca Peters of IANSA points out that the victims of landmines have been given great assistance, but there's little mention of gun violence victims in international conventions or documents, despite that the number of victims is estimated at roughly 500 times greater (although exact numbers are hard to get). Some countries are making progress, especially in South America, enacting national legislation to deal with this issue, or as the example of El Salvador, channeling some of the income taxes from guns and tobacco directly to the health sector.

Still, Cate Buchanan of the Surviving Gun Violence Project pointed out that among other things many countries need assistance in developing national arms control strategies connected to trauma care, as well as funding for services of gun violence victims. Therefore, it would be possible to move forward in this area if the international community would engage in a greater extent, or at least acknowledge the problems with which victims of gun violence are faced.

Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery

Cate Buchanan, Editor

