



SMALL ARMS MONITOR

Civil society perspectives on the meeting of governmental
experts of the UN Programme of Action on small arms

1–5 June 2015



Reaching Critical Will

5 June 2015
Vol. 7, No. 5

IN THIS ISSUE

1 | Editorial

3 | Side event report: ATT/UNPoA synergies, stockpile management, and diversion prevention

EDITORIAL: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE ARMS TRADE, ARMED VIOLENCE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Ray Acheson | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

Thursday's discussion included some review of the need for cooperation and assistance to combat trafficking of small arms, including in regions of armed conflict. The flow of arms, whether sold legally or through the black market, destabilises countries and regions, leads to armed conflict and armed violence, and undermines development. Incorporating small arms control and armed violence reduction into development agendas is therefore crucial, as is the integration of development and armed violence considerations into arms transfer decisions.

Traffickers don't care what they traffic, noted the Chair of MGE2—weapons, drugs, people, they will sell and trade whatever is profitable. Arms trafficking is definitely profitable. But so is the “legal” international arms trade. According to the latest report from Small Arms Survey (SAS), the value of the global small arms trade has nearly doubled between 2001 and 2011 and has continued to increase since then. The United States continues to corner the market. Many of these weapons are then diverted to the black market for illicit trade and use by non-state actors.

For the most part, the SAS report found, major arms exporting states have continued to supply weapons to countries embroiled in armed conflict despite the risk of misuse or diversion. The embargo by the EU against the export of arms to Egypt that could be used for internal repression “apparently left sufficient leeway for the manufacturer to sign contracts for the delivery of more than 50,000 duty pistols and 10 million 9mm rounds to the Egyptian Ministry of Interior,” writes *Foreign Policy*. US transfers of weapons to Kurdish forces besieged in the Syrian city of Kobani have in part been diverted to the Islamic State, while in other cases, finds the *The Atlantic*, “Syrian rebel groups have

obtained US-supplied weapons after the materiel was put on the black market by the Iraqi troops for whom they were intended.

The arms trade—legal and illegal alike—leads to armed violence, armed conflict, destabilisation, human rights violations, and economic hardship. It has serious implications for development, which is why UN Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) spoke on Tuesday about the importance of the post-2015 agenda for work on small arms control. “Recognizing the significant negative impact of armed violence on sustainable human development,” said the CASA representative, “UN entities strongly support the inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals of a target to significantly reduce illicit arms flows.”

WILPF and other civil society groups have been advocating for inclusion of small arms in the post-2015 SDGs currently being developed. But strong resistance has been mounted in particular by some major arms exporting states. Overall, small arms and armed violence issues have not yet been effectively mainstreamed into development studies, institutions, or programmes. As last year's publication from Instituto Sou da Paz and Reaching Critical Will on small arms found, “while some development agencies and organizations have dedicated some specific advocacy efforts towards armed violence reduction, one could argue that development offices, international NGOs, or agencies such as UNDP still have space to become more active in issues directly related to firearms and ensuing violence.” Author Daniel Mack contended, “Beyond the international frameworks, it is also relevant that, on a national basis, many countries do not integrate a proper armed violence reduction perspective into their national development plans.”

continued on next page

The *Small Arms Monitor* is produced by the Reaching Critical Will programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) 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.

Editorial, continued

He suggested that the clearest avenue for mainstreaming small arms into development agendas is through the SDG process. Potential targets noted by Mack and others include eliminating lethal violence from communities by a certain date or reducing the number of people and groups affected by violence. Indicators could include decreases in the number of homicides or reported violent crime per 100,000 people.

Political resistance to the inclusion of such indicators, argues Mack, “stems from a disconnect, at least in the perception of some states as to what is being discussed, between the concepts of ‘human development’ and ‘national development’.” Some countries have settled on narrow definitions of development in which politics, safety, justice, and governance “are glaringly absent”. But properly including armed violence reduction into the SDGs, particularly with precise indicators or targets, is essential. Among other things, “clear targets for reduction of homicides or violent deaths will compel all govern-

ments to renew emphasis on controlling firearms, a main piece of the violence puzzle virtually everywhere.”

Simultaneously, it is crucial to ensure that armed violence and development concerns are reflected in arms transfer controls and other small arms control measures. The Arms Trade Treaty fell short of this, failing to include development as a specific indicator against which export decisions would need to be assessed. But exporting states, and actors trying to prevent the misuse of weapons or the diversion of weapons to the illicit trade, must take these factors into consideration in their work.

Mainstreaming small arms issues across development, human rights, crime prevention, and peace and security agendas will be critical for holistically confronting many of the challenges being discussed here at MGE2. Efforts must go beyond technical provisions and adopt a “big picture” approach to armed conflict and armed violence to be truly effective beyond the walls of the UN. •

Available at www.reachingcriticalwill.org

SMALL ARMS, BIG PICTURE ARMED VIOLENCE BEYOND FIRST COMMITTEE

September 2014



SMALL ARMS MONITOR 5 JUNE 2015 | Vol. 7, No. 5

Reaching Critical Will
a programme of the Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom

777 UN Plaza, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017
ph. +1 212.682.1265
email: info@reachingcriticalwill.org
web: www.reachingcriticalwill.org

Editor: Ray Acheson

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom or the Reaching Critical Will programme.



SIDE EVENT REPORT: ATT/UNPoA SYNERGIES, STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT, AND DIVERSION PREVENTION

Ghazal Rahmanpanah | PeaceWomen of WILPF

On 4 June, the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth office, with support from Finland, organised a panel discussion on the synergies between the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) with regards to stockpile management and diversion prevention. The event featured Chris Loughran, Director of Policy & Evaluation for Mine Action Group (MAG); Eric Berman, Small Arms Survey (SAS) Managing Director; and Gillian Goh, UNODA.

Eric Berman addressed synergies between the ATT and PoA, specifically how they overlap as well as how the instruments work together. While the ATT is important and legally-binding, insight on its implementation is still unknown. The UNPoA is politically-binding rather than legally-binding and does not include language on ammunition. Poor stockpile management is directly related to the illegal diversion of small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, poor stockpile management has resulted in unplanned explosions that led to deaths and injuries. The issue of reporting was also discussed. Member states have been inconsistent with reporting in the past and have signalled disinterest in the additional reporting obligations detailed in the ATT.

Chris Loughran presented an outcome summary on the UNSCAR Practical Disarmament Initiative project and the two-day workshop held in Dakar, Senegal that was hosted by MAG, which focused on stockpile management and diversion in the Sahel and West Africa. The workshop aimed to present, review, and consider practical implications of a desktop study conducted by SAS on the scope and provisions of stockpile management and diversion within the UNPoA, the ATT, and four sub-regional instruments; to identify opportunities for enhancing practical effort to improve stockpile management and prevent diversion; and to enhance regional dialogue and cooperation.

The workshop included a presentation of the SAS desktop study. The group of approximately 20 stakeholders focused on stockpile management practices in general, as well as in the context and analysis of various international and sub-regional instruments. The initiative aimed to identify synergies between the various instruments as well as opportunities to enhance their practical implementation. Some discussion points included a strong understanding within the group of the existing instruments and the importance of stockpile management to mitigate the risk of weapons diversion. In review of the various sub-regional and international instruments, discrepancies existed on methods of disposal when addressing the issues of diversion and

stockpile management. Some challenges that arose included inadequate funding and human capacity, ongoing fragility and conflict, low levels of infrastructure and material, and lack of control over some borders.

The workshop resulted in a series of conclusions and recommendations for enhancing stockpile management and diversion prevention in the context of the UNPoA, the ATT, and the four sub-regional instruments, such as the need for international cooperation and assistance in stockpile management. Cooperation and assistance is particularly necessary for the provision of technical expertise; the urgency to increase coordination and planning between organisations providing assistance; the need for consideration of what constitutes a “surplus” of weapons and munitions and the technical differences between the management of small arms and munitions. The International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) were also mentioned in the discussion as an additional element, along with the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), which provides a strong international guiding framework to inform the voluntary development of standards at the national level.

Gillian Goh gave an overview of the IATG and the UN SaferGuard Programme and spoke on their role in management of ammunition. Ammunition can be used directly to feed into a conflict. Alternatively, ammunition often includes materials that can be used for creating improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Management of ammunition stockpiles is essential in order to avoid diversion for use of creating explosives as well as mitigating the risk of injury and death. Research shows that unintended ammunition explosions globally affect 103 states. UN SaferGuard utilises three risk-reduction process levels: Basic Risk Reduction; Intermediate; and NATO Standards, which means you begin at the foundation and move forward to the highest of standards.

Quick response mechanisms were also discussed as the operational arm of the IATG, which allows ammunition experts to be deployed rapidly to assist states, upon request, in the urgent management of ammunition stockpiles. It is currently being deployed to support the interdiction of dangerous goods, in partnership with the World Customs Organization, and to support the Security Council arms embargo Panel of Experts in assessing dangerous goods before inspection visits in the DPRK and Iran. Furthermore, it provides support and advice after ammunition explosions and natural disasters that impact national stockpiles as well as capacity-building and training. •

