

# SMALL ARMS MONITOR

Civil society perspectives on the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States to the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects  
26 – 30 July 2021

## VOL.11 NO.2

4 August 2021



*Photo: Michael Schofield | Unsplash*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial: Act today for a better tomorrow

Overview and analysis of the BMS7 outcome document

Reporting on statements



Reaching Critical Will

[www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org)



[www.wilpf.org](http://www.wilpf.org)

# ACT TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Allison Pytlak | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

The Seventh Biennial Meeting of States (BMS7) of the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons **opened with ambitious words** from its chairperson, Ambassador Martin Kimani of Kenya:

We are here this week to save the lives of innocent citizens, to protect the common peace, and to show the most vulnerable that we stand with them. We have a moral and ethical duty to hasten action ... while much has been achieved, we can do more to realise the potential of the PoA and the ITI. Let us use this week to leave a legacy using the substantive issues agreed upon in our agenda.

Indeed, there can be little doubt that small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition continue to be a significant cause of human suffering just as they were 20 years ago when the UNPoA was adopted. A Small Arms Survey **report** from 2020 notes, "The financial value of reported small arms exports in 2017 was USD 6.5 billion. While this represents a slight decrease compared to 2016, the reported trade remains at a high level when compared with the previous 15 years." Diverse delegations at BMS7, from **Ukraine to Sierra Leone**, and civil society from **Nepal**, described the impact of these weapons and their ammunition on human security, safety, or socio-economic development in their countries or regions.

But, SALW are changing too—how they are made, what they are made of, how they are traded and trafficked, marked and traced. The environment in which SALW and ammunition control is being discussed is also changing. There are new instruments and frameworks that offer complementarity to the provisions of the UNPoA and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI). Recognition of SALW's differentiated impact, whether by age, gender, ability, or other characteristics, and the need to respond accordingly, has come a long way since 2001. There

are also now decades worth of practical learnings about how to prevent diversion and illicit trading, coupled with greater public scrutiny and pressure on legal arms transfer decision-making.

Given these changing circumstances, ambitious words must be accompanied by bold action for the UNPoA and ITI to maintain relevance and have impact. A good many member states recognise this and seem ready to move in that direction, but BMS7 was encumbered by the same politicisation and rigidity that has come to characterise so many past UNPoA meetings.

## "Collaboration, compromise, and consensus"

The Chair urged for collaboration, compromise, and consensus when BMS7 began. The latter two inevitably take the wind out of any sails of bold action because consensus (in UN settings) has been interpreted over time as meaning unanimity, which effectively gives any member state a veto and the ability to hold up a positive outcome—or in some cases, any outcome at all.

This is what nearly happened (again) in the final hour of BMS7.

Going into BMS7, states had already had several rounds of closed informal consultations about the contents of the outcome document that this meeting would hopefully adopt. Most of the final day of BMS7 was spent in closed consultations about the **version** that was released in the morning of 30 July.

We are unable to report on what occurred throughout the day, or to report well on states' positions in relation to specific parts of the draft outcome document as it evolved over the week, because most of BMS7 was held in a closed format.

On Friday, the **UN WebTV link** flickered to life in the late afternoon and after about 45 minutes of live streaming delegates waiting in a nearly empty conference room, the final session of

BMS7 was called to order. A **final version** of the outcome report had just been made available online and was presented as the one tabled for adoption. In presenting it, the Chair stressed how far he had seen delegations come on the many issues contained in the document, and said that compromises had been made by all.

Iran quickly requested the floor. It reiterated that it had shared many concerns and observations throughout the meeting, but in the spirit of consensus tried to have a “constructive approach” and not object to all issues. It then provided an oral amendment to paragraph 92, which is the paragraph relating to ways forward for addressing “recent developments in SALW manufacturing, technology, and design”. The Iranian oral amendment would have removed any reference to progress on this issue at the BMS8 in 2022 (which was already a step back from an earlier proposal to establish a technical working group now) and move decision-making and proposals to the 2024 review conference. Iran explained in a subsequent intervention that this is because of the mandates that are given to BMSs versus those given to review conferences around decision-making.

Germany responded to say that it too is not happy with the draft but it has been striving for “compromise and consensus”. The German representative added that it has a hard time understanding how the one delegation that talks about the importance of consensus at each meeting is “trying to open a Pandora’s Box” at the last moment by introducing an oral amendment that could trigger other amendments. Germany also requested a legal opinion around how the BMS7 can take a decision on establishing a fellowship programme (a proposal that originated with Non-Aligned Movement states) but not a technical expert group.

As if a Pandora’s Box had in fact been opened, Indonesia requested an oral amendment to paragraph 31, which is about ensuring that international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) are taken into consideration in national small arms and light weapons transfer decisions. Its amendment would reframe the paragraph to be about enhancing capacity to assess for overriding risk that “may

emerge” from transfers, “with a view to preserving the implementation of IHL and IHRL.”

Ireland took the floor and echoed the points made by Germany, including its call for a legal opinion.

At this juncture the Chair stated that as there was clearly no consensus on the two proposed oral amendments, the text must be taken as is and reservations can be issued. He moved for adoption, at which point Iran stated it could not join consensus and requested a vote on paragraph 92. Indonesia withdrew its amendment, explaining that while it would like to hear more reactions to its proposal it would not call for a vote on it, and instead put its positions on record.

Brazil and Mexico appealed to Iran to not break consensus and when the Chair asked Iran a final time if it was determined to break consensus, Iran responded to say that it wished its issue was not so contentious and that if others would accept its amendment, it could go along with consensus. Iran stressed that it was working under the instructions of its capital and had no other option except to decide by voting.

Then, an unusual moment in diplomacy occurred. Ambassador Kimani spoke with uncharacteristic frankness to the representative of Iran, explaining that “our attempts at consensus were successful, until you disrupted it with negativity.” He went on to say that he found Iran’s position to be “disruptive, negative, and not speaking to the facts,” noting that he worked hard to bring forward a balanced draft document in which “all delegations with passionately held views” found a way to work with each other. The Chair then moved swiftly to commence voting, having explained that in the new UN (i.e. per Covid-related restrictions) there cannot be anymore “midnight runs”.

Ahead of voting, Yemen on behalf of the Arab Group stated that it accepts the current text and would vote in favour of paragraph 92.

Paragraph 92 was adopted by a vote of 100-1-10, and the document as a whole was adopted by a vote of 114-0-0. Iran, on behalf of Belarus, Cuba, Nicaragua, Iran, Syria, and Venezuela began to give an explanation of vote, but was stopped for reasons

of time and in order to proceed with adoption of the full outcome document (substantive plus procedural contents).

After the vote, Russia took the floor to deliver a vehemently anti-gender statement in which it refuted the document's provisions relating to gender, which are discussed later in this editorial. **Costa Rica** strongly defended the gender provisions and noted the **statement from around 60 countries** delivered mid-meeting in support of retaining them.

Cuba disassociated from paragraph 92 and registered that paragraph 31 should not be interpreted to hinder the right of states to possess weapons for their legitimate defense, in line with Article 51 of UN Charter. Romania clarified its understanding of the word "license" as contained in paragraph 27 as being the same as an authorisation, and not a manufacturing license which is not a matter for multilateral fora.

The Chair invited states with other explanations of vote or closing statements to submit them in writing, as by this point there were few minutes left in the meeting and because of COVID-19 protocols, the meeting could not go after-hours.

While it's very rare (and was somewhat refreshing) to hear a conference chairperson and senior diplomat speak with such candour, it is not rare for UNPoA meetings to end in a stand-off. The final day of the 2018 Review Conference concluded work around 5:00am, with much of the hours between midnight and dawn spent in **procedural delaying tactics** after some of the hardest fought substantive issues had been reconciled and prolonging the meeting unnecessarily. Going further back in time, our **reporting on the 2008 BMS** describes another challenging final meeting in which Iran's insistence on a paragraph by paragraph read of the final document and blocking of its adoption by consensus was met with direct and charged appeals from multiple states, alongside practical suggestions to bridge the impasse.

Playing politics with human security is unacceptable. When this happened in 2008, Nigeria reminded delegates that they represent millions of people who are dying daily from SALW and that

complaints about process and procedure should not "clog the wheels" and prevent success. At that meeting, Liberia also reminded delegates that the issues they face are not theoretical but are rather a matter of life and death. This is no less true today.

Painful negotiation and consensus-imposed limitations did yield some concrete and specific contents within the outcome document, even if in many places there was qualifying and limiting language added (i.e. "as appropriate") and an emphasis on national priorities and prerogatives. Elsewhere in this edition we provide an overview of some key aspects in the outcome document as well as analysis of how analysis of how the draft text evolved during BMS7.

### Gender panic redux

Russia's blistering repudiation of the gender-related provisions of the BMS7 outcome document was shocking in its bluntness. It's known of course that not all member states are on board with accounting for gender perspectives within disarmament and arms control, but so far, no state has been so hostile toward it in an open setting. Among the fora that WILPF monitors, none have ever said on record that "if someone is shot, it doesn't make a difference if you're a man or a woman."

During its closing statement (for which it switched in a woman speaker), Russia tried to distance itself from paragraph 77, which relates to the four pillars of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda as established by UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. It argued that the Council's resolutions pertain only to countries in situations of armed conflict, which Russia does not fall under. It was not clear if Russia meant all Council resolutions or those comprising the WPS Agenda, but either way, this is inaccurate. UNSCR 1325 and the subsequent WPS resolutions are not applicable only during armed conflict, but are applicable to *all member states, at all times*, therefore including (but not limited to) armed conflict.

In its closing statement, Costa Rica stated that a "gendered approach is here to stay". But it also underscored that it was a fight to get to this point, a fight that included defending previously agreed

upon language including from BMS6, the Third Review Conference, and the UN General Assembly. This was made clear by the joint statement from around 60 countries delivered in the middle of BMS7, calling for the retention and strengthening of all the paragraphs with a gender-related acknowledgement or recommendation—the majority of which were based on prior agreements and commitments.

Beyond the concern about undoing of language is the one that comes from the reality check provided by the Russian statement about the world beyond the conference room. “Small arms continue to be used in criminal and armed violence, and if we are to use a gender lens, we cannot ignore how they are used to facilitate sexual and gender-based violence and to reinforce violent, gendered social norms,” **Namibia highlighted**, a message later reinforced by Costa Rica: “In a world in where gender or sex is still a reason to be killed, to be shunned, to be maimed, trafficked, and exploited, Costa Rica decries that a few refuse to acknowledge that their safety and security is only as strong as that enjoyed by our most vulnerable.”

The patriarchy is real and dismantling it will not come solely through words on a page. It will come through challenging prevailing norms and attitudes around gender, power, and security and transformative action. Demilitarisation, including through disarmament, is vital, and getting there will require addressing some uncomfortable realities and familiar positions, even among some the most ardent “gender champions”. “The continued association of weapons with power is one of the foremost obstacles to disarmament,” **writes** Ray Acheson, WILPF’s disarmament programme director. “Disarmament requires that we change the way we think about and confront war and violence as social and economic institutions, and we can’t do that just by giving some privileges to those who do not challenge the thinking or the behaviour of those who have the most privilege.”

### A tale of two meetings

BMS7 was also, in many ways, a tale of two meetings. As noted in our preview edition, the outcome document was pre-cooked via a series

of informal consultations that had been taking place among member states over the last several months. It continued to be negotiated in closed settings throughout the week while the “actual” meeting unfolded somewhat simultaneously through a discussion of several agenda items that relate to themes and components of the outcome document—but were never used to discuss or negotiate the document. As well, with the time and meeting constraints imposed by COVID-19 safety procedures, nearly half of the scheduled BMS7 meeting time was taken offline and used to negotiate the report even if, as Russia remarked, states hadn’t actually yet delivered their thematic statements corresponding to topics contained in the report.

This is poor for transparency. It’s not at all unusual that states will have closed consultations on a resolution or conference report, but it is unusual for it to come at the expense of so much of the scheduled open meetings. Throughout the pandemic, diverse processes across the UN system have had to adapt to new working methods that involve remote participation by states and other stakeholders or using alternative ways to input. Closing out civil society—particularly given its historic role in advocating for and assisting to implement the UNPoA—is damaging to the effectiveness of meeting outcomes and undermines the praise for civil society contained in such documents.

It can also make one question the purpose of having the meeting when there is such a clear bifurcation between the negotiation of its “outcome” and its actual assembly. Viewed in this light, the open sessions started to feel performative as the week wore on. Delegates delivered statements in which they outlined their positions on key BMS7 themes and proposals, but not in a way that corresponded to changes emerging in the text. This approach serves to increase the existing gap between the BMS’ mandate to consider implementation of the UNPoA and ITI, and the premium that has been given to adopting a negotiated outcome, which contributes to the politicisation described earlier in this editorial. It is this gap which led to the suggestion of reforming UNPoA meeting formats and measurements for progress.

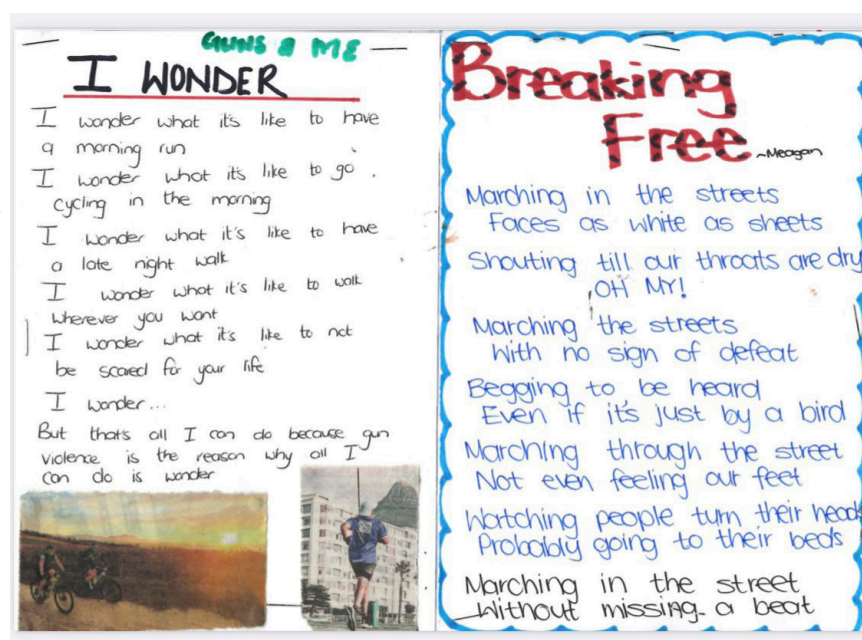
## The time for bold action is now

Because BMS7 was delayed due to COVID-19 there will be a shorter than usual gap until BMS8. Undoubtedly familiar tensions will surface there as well. Positively, the BMS7 outcome document gives BMS8 a mandate to again consider progress on UNPoA and ITI implementation, while it will also have to give time to prepare for the Fourth Review Conference.

This editorial began with a quote emphasising the moral and ethical duty to hasten action and reiterating the deadly impact that SALW and their ammunition still pose. No outcome document may ever be able to capture all the strongest and life-saving provisions but that shouldn't stop states from acting on what has been agreed, and recommended, and taking steps that they know are necessary to prevent human suffering. We have words on the page aplenty—the time for bold action is now.



These Images are from a "design jam" that took place as a parallel event to BMS7 called "Creativity and Collaboration—New ways to address youth and gun violence". It was organised jointly by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Gun Free South Africa, and Algonquin Human-Centred Design Institute and sponsored by Canada. (Image sources: IANSA)



# OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE BMS7 OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Jillian Rafferty and Allison Pytlak | WILPF

**B**elow is a non-exhaustive overview of some of key aspects contained in the BMS7 outcome document. It is followed by an analysis of changes made to the outcome document in its draft forms (drafts 3, 4, 5 and the final adopted version).

## OVERVIEW

- Paragraph 4 reiterates the need to implement the **principles and provisions** of the UNPoA and the ITI. For the first time, it makes an operative paragraph reference to implementing provisions agreed at past BMSs, review conferences, and relevant UN General Assembly resolutions.
- Paragraph 13 has new language about coordinating on **donor initiatives**.
- Paragraph 18 refers to **survivors** of armed conflict, alongside victims, for the first time.
- Paragraph 31 calls on states to “ensure that international humanitarian law and international human rights law are taken into consideration in national small arms and light weapons transfer decisions.” While **IHL and IHRL** have become a common basis for national, regional, and international arms control risk assessment practices at arms transfer framework, there is not an action-oriented reference to IHL in the UNPoA, or any reference to human rights or IHRL. This constitutes a normative and aligning step forward.
- There are not as many references to **ammunition** control as there were statements in support of how the UNPoA applies to it. Significant in this regard however is paragraph 36, which acknowledges that states that apply UNPoA provisions to SALW ammunition can integrate “applicable policies and practices into their small arms and light weapons control efforts with a view to strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action.” Paragraph 24 takes note of the current Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on surplus ammunition stockpiles.
- Paragraphs 41–48 outline steps for states to take with respect to “**emerging challenges**,” including preventing conversion, 3D printing, additive manufacturing, and illicit online trading. This falls short of establishing a process by which to update either the UNPoA or ITI, but can be practically effective by setting out actions to take.
- Paragraph 91 calls to continue exchanging views on “**recent developments in SALW manufacturing, technology and design, in particular polymer and modular weapons**” and to “consider the mandate, funding, timeframe and modalities of an open-ended technical expert group” at BMS8. The group would set out next steps for consideration at the fourth review conference.
- There are complementary provisions on “emerging challenges” found in paragraphs 108–116 in relation to international cooperation and assistance.
- Paragraph 53 describes bringing national control measures in line with other relevant instruments “to which a state is party ... noting the complementary character of such instruments and frameworks.” While vague, this effectively acknowledges that there is **complementarity and synergies**.
- Paragraph 115 asks states to “consider establishing voluntary national and regional targets in support of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.” This corresponds to concerns about the time given over in UNPoA meetings to document negotiation versus an assessment of impact.
- Paragraph 116 welcomes the proposal to establish a dedicated **fellowship training programme** on small arms and light weapons in order to strengthen technical knowledge and expertise particularly in developing countries.
- There are multiple **gender-related provisions**:

1. In paragraph 10, states recognise the need for the “equal, full and effective participation of women in all decision-making and implementation processes relating to the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument and encourage mainstreaming gender perspectives into their implementation efforts to address the differential impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on women, men, girls and boys.”
2. Paragraph 51 asks state to consider collecting sex-disaggregated data on the impacts of SALW.
3. Sex-disaggregated data collection is reinforced in paragraph 73 along with by age and ability, so as to inform “evidence-based gender-sensitive policy making”. Earlier iterations used the term “gender responsive”.
4. Paragraph 74 calls for exchange of national experience, lessons, and good practice on mainstreaming gender into illicit SALW control.
5. Paragraph 75 encourages states in a position to do so to increase funding for relevant policies that take account of gender-differentiated impact.
6. Paragraph 76 recognises that eradicating the illicit trade in SALW is a key part of combatting gender-based violence and sexual violence in conflict.
7. Paragraph 77 refers to the gender sections of the UNPoA national report templates.
8. Paragraph 78 call on states to “take account of the disproportionate impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on women, children and youth and to develop, where they do not exist, or strengthen response mechanisms.”
9. The role of civil society is noted in paragraph 10, and encouragement for collaboration with civil society is found in paragraphs 54 and 63.

## TRACKING KEY ISSUES ACROSS DRAFTS

### Issue 1: Ammunition

*Summary:* References to ammunition remained static across drafts of the outcome document, with the exception of a note in the final version recognising that some states encouraged the application of the UNPoA and the ITI to ammunition.

#### Draft 3:

- Para. 23: Recognising the governmental expert process established by UN General Assembly resolution 72/55 on problems arising from the accumulation of ammunition stockpiles in surplus.
- Para. 35: Acknowledging that states that apply the UNPoA to SALW ammunition can “integrate applicable policies and practices into their [SALW] control efforts with a view to strengthening the implementation of the [UNPoA] across all sectors.”

#### Draft 4:

- Para. 24: Identical to para. 23 of Draft 3.
- Para. 36: Identical to para. 35 of Draft 3, but adds “across all sectors” to the end of the paragraph.

#### Draft 5:

- Para. 24: Identical to para. 24 of Draft 4 and para. 23 of Draft 3.
- Para. 35: Identical to para. 35 of Draft 3. (Removes “across all sectors,” as had been added to para. 36 of Draft 4.)

#### Final Draft:

- Para. 24: Identical to para. 24 of Drafts 4 and 5 and para. 23 of Draft 3.
- Para. 36: Identical to para. 35 of Drafts 3 and 5. (Removes “across all sectors,” as had been added to para. 36 of Draft 4.)
- Para. 122(a): Noting that some states encouraged the application of the UNPoA and the ITI to SALW ammunition and calling for further dialogue on this topic.

### Issue 2: Gender

*Summary:* References to “gender,” “sex,” and “women” were clearly points of contention, with wording changing between each draft of the outcome document and report. Some language was ultimately weakened when considering the final draft relative to Draft 3, including by excluding references to women’s civil society organisations and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Other language, however, was strengthened, with broadened reference to the disparate effects of the

illicit trade of SALW based on sex and/or gender and with reincorporated the references to sex-disaggregated data.

Draft 3:

- Para. 10: Recognising the need for “strengthened participation of women in all decision-making and implementation processes” of the UNPoA and ITI.
- Para. 10: Reaffirming the importance of “mainstreaming gender considerations” into states’ implementation efforts to “address the differential impact of the illicit trade in [SALW] on women, men, girls and boys.”
- Para. 51: Ensuring the inclusion of “sex-disaggregated data” on SALW and their differentiated impact on victims.
- Para. 54: Strengthening cooperation with civil society, “including women’s civil society organizations.”
- Para. 69: Ensuring the “equal, full and effective participation of women, including in leadership roles and as agents of change,” in the implementation of the UNPoA, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as well as UN General Assembly resolution 65/69 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
- Para. 70: Encouraging states to take into account the importance of the implementation of the UNPoA to the achievement of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda’s four pillars.
- Para. 71: Accounting for the “differing impacts” of the illicit trade in SALW on “women, men, girls and boys by conducting disaggregated data collection by sex, age and disability.”
- Para. 71: Using that data to inform “evidence-based gender-responsive policy-making and programming.”
- Para. 72: Exchanging “national experiences, lessons learned and good practices on the mainstreaming of gender dimensions” into UNPoA and ITI implementation.
- Para. 73: Encouraging states who can to “increase funding for relevant policies and programs” of various kinds to account for the “different impacts” of the illicit trade of SALW on “women, men, girls and boys.”

- Para. 74: Recognising the link between implementing the UNPoA and the “prevention of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence.”
- Para. 75: Reporting on “gender-relevant information and initiatives” as part of national reports on the implementation of the UNPoA and ITI.
- Para. 76: Accounting for the disproportionate impact of the illicit trade of SALW on “women, children and youth” and developing and strengthening response mechanisms.

Draft 4:

- Para. 10: Identical to para. 10 of Draft 3, except “mainstreaming gender considerations” is replaced in Draft 4 with “mainstreaming gender perspectives.”
- Para. 53: Asks states to simply “consider including disaggregated data collection” on the impacts of SALW, without direct reference to sex (as existed in para. 51 of Draft 3).
- Para. 56: Identical to para. 54 of Draft 3, but with addition of “and survivors” of violence.
- Para. 73: Identical to para. 69 of Draft 3.
- Para. 74: Encouraging harmonising national policies on SALW and the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and its four pillars. (Edited from Para. 70 of Draft 3.)
- Para. 75: Identical to para. 71 of Draft 3.
- Para. 76: Exchanging “national experiences, lessons learned and good practices on the mainstreaming of gender dimensions” into policies and programmes designed to combat the illicit trade in SALW. (Broadened from Para. 72 of Draft 3 to apply not only to the UNPoA and ITI, but rather to all policies and programmes to combat the illicit trade in SALW.)
- Para. 77: Identical to para. 73 of Draft 3.
- Para. 78: Recognising the link between implementing the UNPoA and the “prevention of gender-based violence and sexual violence in conflict.” (Edited slightly from para. 74 of Draft 3.)
- Para. 79: Identical to para. 75 of Draft 3.
- Para. 80: Identical to para. 76 of Draft 3.

## Draft 5:

- Para. 10: Identical to para. 10 of Draft 4.
- Para. 51: Similar to para. 53 of Draft 4, but with clarification that data should be disaggregated “by gender.”
- Para. 54: Removal of reference to women’s organisations, as had existed in para. 56 of Draft 4 and para. 54 of Draft 3.
- Para. 71: Similar to para. 73 of Draft 4 and para. 69 of Draft 3, but: deletion of “and as agents of change”; replacement of “the Women, Peace and Security agenda as well as General Assembly Resolution 65/69 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control” with “other relevant United Nations resolutions on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.”
- Para. 72: Identical to para. 74 of Draft 4.
- Para. 73: Similar to para. 75 of Draft 4 and para. 71 of Draft 3, but: adding that disaggregated data should be collected where feasible (as in previous drafts) “and appropriate” (absent from previous drafts); replacement of “gender-responsive policy-making” with “gender-sensitive policy-making.”
- Para. 74: Identical to para. 76 of Draft 4.
- Para. 75: Identical to para. 77 of Draft 4.
- Para. 76: Recognising that eradicating the illicit trade in SALW is a “key part of combating gender-based violence and sexual violence in conflict.” (Broadened from Drafts 3 and 4 to discuss eradicating the illicit trade in SALW generally, not just the implementation of the UNPoA and the ITI.)
- Para. 77: Identical to para. 79 of Draft 4.
- Para. 78: Identical to para. 80 of Draft 4.

## Final draft

- Para. 10: Identical to para. 10 of Drafts 4 and 5.
- Para. 52: Similar to para. 51 of Draft 5, but with the clarification that data should be disaggregated “by sex” rather than “by gender.”
- Para. 55: Identical to para. 54 of Draft 5.
- Para. 72: Similar to para. 71 of Draft 5, para. 73 of Draft 4, and para. 69 of Draft 3, but here is the reinsertion of “and as agents of change”; and the replacement of “other relevant United

Nations resolutions on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control” with “General Assembly Resolution 65/69 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and other relevant United Nations resolutions.”

- Para. 73: Similar to para. 72 of Draft 5, but with the insertion of “as appropriate.”
- Para. 74: Similar to para. 73 of Draft 5, but with the removal of “as appropriate.”
- Para. 75: Identical to para. 74 of Draft 5 and para. 76 of Draft 4
- Para. 76: Identical to para. 75 of Draft 5 and para. 77 of Draft 4.
- Para. 77: Identical to para. 76 of Draft 5.
- Para. 78: Identical to para. 77 of Draft 5 and para. 79 of Draft 4.
- Para. 79: Identical to para. 78 of Draft 5 and para. 80 of Draft 4.

**Issue 3: Open-ended technical expert group**

*Summary:* The proposal for an open-ended group of technical experts first appears in Draft 3. Language around the group is softened between Draft 3 and 4 (which purported to establish that group) and the subsequent two drafts (which instead suggest the establishment of that group as an agenda item for BMS8).

## Draft 3:

- Para. 89: Continue exchanging views on new technologies through the “establishment of an open-ended technical expert group that is tasked to develop action-oriented and consensually-agreed next steps.”
- Para. 90: Asking the open-ended technical expert group to consider marking options in light of recent developments; assess marking, record-keeping, and tracing requirements for modular weapons; and consider the implications of polymer and 3D printed weapons on customs and border control.

## Draft 4:

- Para. 93: Identical to para. 89 of Draft 3.
- Para. 94: Identical to para. 90 of Draft 3.

#### Draft 5:

- Para. 91: Similar to para. 93 of Draft 4, but instead this draft suggests considering at BMS8 the mandate, funding, timeframe, and modalities of an open-ended technical expert group with the same tasks as noted in Draft 4.
- Deletion of para. 94 of Draft 4.

#### Final Draft:

- Para. 92: Nearly identical to para. 91 of Draft 5, but the items (mandate, funding, etc.) are in a different order.

#### Issue 4: Synergies

*Summary:* References to synergies with other arms control instruments, whether explicit or implicit, fluctuated across drafts. All drafts make at least some reference to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, and to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Some drafts, though not including the final draft, included references to the role of assessing the risk of weapons exports on the enjoyment of human rights and compliance with IHL, in line with provision in the ATT. All drafts made some reference to the effect of illicitly traded weapons on other issues in international law—such as terrorism, organised crime, human rights, and international humanitarian law—also in line with provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty.

#### Draft 3:

- Para. 13: Recognises the role of reducing the illicit trafficking of SALW in preventing and combating domestic and transnational organized crime, terrorism, and other challenges—themes that are also part of the Arms Trade Treaty's Article 7 export risk assessment.
- Para. 15: Recognising that the UNPoA is vital for other priorities, in line with the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament.
- Para. 17: Concerning the role of the illicit trade in SALW in undermining respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL)—themes that are also part of the ATT's article 6 prohibitions and article 7 risk assessment.

- Para. 65: Ensuring that the implementation of the UNPoA is integrated into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Para. 66: Highlighting progress made under the 2030 Agenda in national reporting on the UNPoA and ITI.
- Para. 69: Ensuring the “equal, full and effective participation of women, including in leadership roles and as agents of change,” in the implementation of the UNPoA, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the WPS agenda, as well as UN General Assembly resolution 65/69 on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
- Para. 80: Ensuring that implementation of the ITI is integrated into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### Draft 4:

- Para. 14: identical to para. 13 of Draft 3.
- Para. 16: Similar to para. 14 of Draft 3, but noting only the “relevant provisions on small arms and light weapons” in the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament.
- Para. 18: Similar to para. 17 of Draft 3, but notes the “wide range of negative humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences.”
- Para. 31: Making every effort to deny the supply of SALW “where this an overriding risk that they could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law,” language which is evocative of the ATT article 7 risk assessment.
- Para. 69: Identical to para. 65 of Draft 3.

#### Draft 5:

- Para. 14: identical to para. 14 of Draft 4 and para. 13 of Draft 3.
- Para. 16: Identical to para. 16 of Draft 4.
- Para. 18: Identical to para. 18 of Draft 4.
- Deletion of para. 31 of Draft 4.
- Para. 67: Identical to para. 69 of Draft 4 and para. 65 of Draft 3.

## Final Draft:

- Para. 14: Identical to para. 14 of Drafts 4 and 5 and para. 13 of Draft 3.
- Para. 16: Identical to para. 16 of Drafts 4 and 5.
- Para. 18: Identical to para. 18 of Drafts 4 and 5.
- Para. 68: Identical to para. 67 of Draft 5, para. 69 of Draft 4, and para. 65 of Draft 3.

**Issue 5: Youth**

*Summary:* References to youth and children were remarkably static across the various drafts of the document. They mainly acknowledge the role of youth contributions in implementing the UNPoA and the disproportionate impact of weapons on youth.

## Draft 3:

- Para. 11: Noting the “positive contributions youth can bring” in implementing the UNPoA.
- Para. 54: Strengthening cooperation with civil society, including youth, in the implementation of the UNPoA.
- Para. 76: Accounting for the disproportionate impact of the illicit trade of SALW on “women, children and youth” and developing and strengthening response mechanisms.

## Draft 4:

- Para. 11: Identical to para. 11 of Draft 3.
- Para. 56: Identical to para. 54 of Draft 3.
- Para. 80: Identical to para. 76 of Draft 3.

## Draft 5:

- Para. 11: Identical to para. 11 of Drafts 3 and 4.
- Para. 54: Identical to para. 56 of Draft 4 and para. 54 of Draft 3 (as far as youth are concerned).
- Para. 78: Identical to para. 80 of Draft 4 and para. 76 of Draft 3.

## Final Draft:

- Para. 11: Identical to para. 11 of Drafts 3 and 4.
- Para. 55: Identical to para. 54 of Draft 5, para. 56 of Draft 4, and para. 54 of Draft 3 (as far as youth are concerned).
- Para. 79: Identical to para. 79 of Draft 4, para. 80 of Draft 4, and para. 76 of Draft 3.



Photo: Joe | Unsplash

# REPORTING ON STATEMENTS

Katrin Geyer, Jillian Rafferty, Allison Pytlak | WILPF

*This is not a comprehensive record of all statements and positions but attempts to capture key points from discussions, and can be limited by the quality of the webcast and interpretation. It does not include statements delivered on the final day of BMS7 in relation to drafts four, five or the final version of the outcome document.*

## Practical updates on UNPoA implementation

- The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) offered an overview of states' implementation of the UNPoA through an [analysis of states' national reports](#). It explained that so far 79 national coordination agencies and 126 national points of contact as well as 21 national action plans (NAPs) have been established. It noted that challenges for NAP implementation lie in lack of institutional capacity for programming and implementation, as well as lack of resources.
- Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Thailand, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and Peru, among others, underscored that they have set up a national small arms commission, or similar bodies, to advance implementation of the UNPoA.
- Various states reported about specific policies and laws in relation to the UNPoA. Pakistan has put in place regulatory and administrative mechanisms to implement the UNPoA. Lebanon explained that its security and law enforcement agencies spare no effort to meet obligations under the UNPoA. India has put in place legislative and administrative mechanisms to prevent, combat, and eradicate illicit SALW, and it noted that the amendment to its Arms Act in 2019 has further strengthened the legislative provisions relating to arms and ammunition. Thailand stressed that it continues to review and develop laws, regulations, and measures on SALW control as well as incorporate international standards and practices into its operations. China said that it enacted laws and regulations on guns and export control of SALW, among other actions.
- Indonesia informed that it has enhanced its capacity of border management control to identify illegal trafficking of SALW, and established robust national regulations. The Republic of Korea (RoK) reported that it established and strengthened strict export control system to prevent the export of SALW to troubled regions. India said that it maintains strict export controls over all munitions and related items, including SALW. Peru established cross-border mechanisms to combat illicit transfer.
- Russia identified and described various of its measures for effective implementation of the UNPoA, including a 1) universal ban on SALW that are going to unauthorised recipients; 2) regulating brokering and limiting the number of brokers; 3) prohibiting re-export without permission of the state that originally exported the SALW, 4) prevent the production of SALW by not allowing an expired or illegitimate certification; 5) stopping modernisation of SALW without consent.
- International, regional, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) explained how they are supporting states in UNPoA implementation. UNODA uses the Modular Small-arms Control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC) to help establishing national action plans and commissions, while the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) offers assistance to states, to implement national control systems and legal frameworks relevant to the UNPoA. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) provides capacity building for key physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) personnel and has assisted in improving regulatory frameworks in its member states. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said it regularly assesses the UNPoA's implementation through biennial meetings and assistance projects, and launched a process to review and update its best practice guide on SALW. The European Union (EU) invests in SALW control in third countries by supporting a range of activities such as civilian disarmament; collection and destruction of surplus; physical security and

stockpile management; capacity building for marking; and record-keeping and tracing. The UN Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) explained it is supporting governments in addressing SALW, by identifying specific needs and gaps at the national level, and in collaboration with civil society, with its guiding principle of ownership.

- Germany noted that regional coordination to address SALW is key, and used the “Roadmap for the Control of SALW in the Western Balkans” as a good example of this approach, which has inspired similar approaches in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and West Africa. CASA also noted the Western Balkans’ roadmap as excellent example of an integrated response to addressing the illicit flow of SALW. Kenya said that it plays a key role in the hosting the Regional Center on Small Arms (RECSA), which coordinates action against SALW in the Great Lakes and Horn region.
- Jamaica mentioned the support received from Germany and the United States for a roadmap on implementing priority actions on illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition in the Caribbean. It explained that the roadmap’s vision is for a safer Caribbean by reducing illicit flow of firearms into, within, and beyond the region; bolstering law enforcement capacity; stopping trafficking and illicit possession and misuse; and reducing diversion.
- In terms of stockpile management, UNODA reported that between 2018 and 2019, 26 states reported the destruction of over 400,000 SALW. It noted that challenges lie in the consistently high demand for assistance, and high costs and technical requirements, and said that low capacity for destruction exists especially in Africa and the Asia-Pacific. Mauritania informed that it has instituted efforts to ensure SALW’s physical security through the financial support from the EU. Ukraine said that, in its report to the OSCE Secretariat, it also provides information on confiscated SALW removed from illegal trade and on their destruction in Ukrainian territory. Sierra Leone explained that weapons for state security are secured and properly managed, and that those that no longer met operational needs were disposed of. RoK has also put in place acts of safety management of guns and

explosives for each stage of their life cycle, including manufacturing, export, post-delivery storage, end-use, and disposal. Côte d’Ivoire further noted that it manages stockpiles of SALW and ammunition in line with international standards, including through marking of weapons of security and defence forces, and by implementing a database of arms transfers.

- The OSCE explained that it updated national procedures guide for the destruction of SALW as well as its best practice guide on the deactivation of SALW, and that updates are based on the outcome document of the UNPoA’s Third Review Conference (RevCon3), recognising important elements of irreversible SALW destruction.
- Many participants referenced various international and regional instruments as good avenues to implement the UNPoA effectively. These are outlined in the sub-section on “synergies”.

#### Practical updates on ITI implementation

- UNODA provided an overview of ITI implementation based on its analysis of submitted national reports. It reported that in 2020, 77 states marked state-owned weapons, and that a growing number of states are capable of marking which is a major achievement of international assistance. It noted that challenges include the lack of universal standard practice in marking, and a lack of capacity and equipment. From 2018 to 2019, 62 out of 90 reporting states have put tracing procedures in place; 57 states are cooperating with INTERPOL; and 32 states use new technologies for tracing. UNODA explained that tracing requires the highest need for assistance due to lack of capacity to respond to tracing requests.
- Many states offered examples of national policies, laws, and other measures in relation to ITI. India, Pakistan, and Côte d’Ivoire, among others, stressed that they have sound provisions and mechanisms for marking and tracing.
- The RoK said that it has made systemic efforts to implement the ITI by establishing and managing marking, record-keeping, and tracing systems. It has also completed amending its national laws on the import of

small arms, allowing only properly marked small arms to be brought into the RoK. Algeria said that it put in place a thorough legal framework covering the four aspects of the ITI, and that any weapon must be identified and authorised for exports and imports. Mauritania explained that it set up a project with two phases of marking and tracing, dealing with arms held by government officials and legally by citizens, respectively.

- Brazil has implemented ammunition marking procedures and legislation for over ten years which demonstrates that this is feasible and viable, and an effective tool to enhance data generation. Brazil reported that responses to its tracing requests to INTERPOL have been slow and of poor quality. It noted that responses to tracing requests should be improved, through better information sharing, including if weapons were imported or exported by the requesting state.
- Spain emphasised the importance of having a national small arms focal point to enhance cooperation for tracing, and explained that a recent royal decree created a national small arms focal point for Spain.
- Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal made various recommendations to states to enhance the ITI's implementation, such as 1) including ammunition in the ITI discussions; 2) marking SALW owned by all military, police and other law enforcement; 3) creating national regulations for marking and tracing; 4) developing procedures to maintain up-to-date records of the markings of confiscated weapons for 20 years; and 4) having detailed national procedures and training relevant law officials on tracing.
- Participants reported on various regional and cross-regional initiatives with respect to the ITI. Indonesia informed that it's currently deliberating creating a regional platform for cross-border collaboration on tracing and marking. Senegal said that regional and sub-regional initiatives should be pursued, like awareness raising campaigns for marking licit weapons and destroying illicit weapons, as part of the UNODC Sahel Programme.
- ECOWAS member states have adopted and are applying unique secondary marking codes on SALW in its region, and ECOWAS as well as Ghana called on states to consider the adoption of similar unique marking codes

to link every SALW to the initial importing state. ECOWAS and Ghana recommended that the marking codes unique to each state should be embossed on the weapons by the manufacturer before transfer to the importing state, and that countries should emboss their unique marking codes on weapons already in their custody. Ghana called on BMS7 to consider and possibly agree on a timeframe within which the ECOWAS proposal could be implemented, with due consideration given to allow for adequate sensitisation and preparation for this proposal.

- The EU said that since 2011, it has supported INTERPOL's arms record and tracing management system as well as iTrace, as managed by Conflict Armament Research.
- Jamaica, Peru, Ecuador, Malaysia, India, Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Syria, Venezuela, and Nicaragua), and others, explained that they face challenges in implementing the ITI, and called for cooperation and assistance, capacity building, and transfer of technology and knowledge. France said it was essential to share experiences of ITI implementation. Costa Rica said that everyone involved in the tracing process must strengthen dialogue and information exchange, and that countries, especially those emerging from conflict, should be encouraged to develop national small arms action plans with detailed implementation targets and indicators of progress, based on the UNPoA and the ITI. References to cooperation and assistance are further elaborated in another section.

## Ammunition

- The EU, Costa Rica, Spain, Mexico, India, Philippines, Thailand, Côte d'Ivoire, the ICRC, and ECOWAS, among others, referenced "ammunition" frequently alongside "small arms" in their statements, and sometimes, as with the EU, ECOWAS, and Costa Rica, in relation to regional or other agreements and control standards. Mexico and Côte d'Ivoire integrated references to "parts and components".
- Costa Rica highlighted that "people do not die from gun wounds, they die from bullet wounds" in advocating for the full integration of ammunition into the scope and ammunition

process of the UNPoA. CARICOM, Belgium, Ireland, Bulgaria, Mexico, Ghana, and the Philippines also expressed support for widening UNPoA discussions to include ammunition alongside SALW. MERCOSUR recalled the RevCon3 outcome in this regard and that many instruments recognise ammunition.

- The EU said it looks forward to a BMS7 outcome “geared toward the implementation of a safe and secure management of ammunition with a focus on preventing diversion and unintended explosions”. Belgium expressed similar views about preventing diversion and improving PSSM by applying UNPoA provisions to ammunition. Guatemala was pleased to see references to ammunition in draft three of the outcome document. The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) urged prioritising ammunition in the outcome document.
- Costa Rica urged several actions: to use BMS7 to opportunity to clarify that the UNPoA and ITI apply both to weapons and ammunition; encourage the development of laws defining criminal possession of ammunition; and propose concrete ways forward towards international controls of SALW ammunition at all stages of its lifecycle.
- Ireland said ammunition should be subject to the same controls as SALW, which “would significantly reduce the illegal use of weapons and thus reduce the level of casualties arising from their use.” The ICRC called for strengthened ammunition control to reduce human suffering.
- Peru said it would support a legally binding instrument including ammunition to better address SALW.
- Ghana urged maintaining the language on ammunition found in draft three of the outcome document (paragraph 36) and suggested inserting it elsewhere, especially in the section on national-level action. Colombia urged states to apply UNPoA and ITI provisions to ammunition and keep the reference in this outcome document.
- The Arab League, Egypt, Israel, the US, Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela), and Algeria said that they do not want the UNPoA to address ammunition. Egypt highlighted that

it is addressed by other frameworks. The US and Israel expanded on this by referring to the UNGA Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on surplus ammunition destruction. The US urged that states wait for the results of the GGE as it is close to completing its work, noting that ammunition should be addressed but just not by the UNPoA. The group statement from Iran reiterated that ammunition is a non-consensual issue and so should not be addressed.

- EU, ECOWAS, MERCOSUR, and Mexico recognised the work of the GGE.
- Mauritania described that ammunition depots still exist in areas of cities where people live, which it is a concern and requires risk reduction against accidental explosions.
- HALO Trust described its Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) programming, noting the progress that has been made in addressing surplus ammunition but that “poorly managed or secured stocks of weapons and ammunition can destabilise states and entire regions.” CASA noted its partners assist member states in ammunition management.
- IANSA called on states to acknowledge that management of ammunition is essential to prevent armed violence; include ammunition in the thematic discussions on diversion and on the ITI; and commit to formulating national targets in relation ammunition controls.

### Technological developments

- Multiple states described both the opportunities and challenges posed by diverse new and emerging technologies in small arms control. China observed that technology and use of new materials means that the illicit manufacture and trade of SALW has taken on new features and become more convenient, posing new challenges. Thailand noted that 3D printing technology and conversion is a way to enhance efforts at small arms control but more sophisticated arms smuggling poses new challenges. Peru highlighted that new technology and evolution of arms trading requires renewed efforts. Ireland noted that weapons can now be more easily transferred in their component parts, making it significantly harder to detect.

- CARICOM observed that modular designs and 3D printing, among other emerging technologies, strain already limited resources in meeting UNPoA obligations. It stressed the importance of technology transfer and development of in-country expertise to avoid further widening of the technological divide between states. India made similar observations about the benefits and burdens that could arise from expanding the ITI to account for new technology. Indonesia stressed focusing on the unique needs of each country in this regard.
- Switzerland strongly welcomed that draft three of the outcome document recognises the importance of embedding technology transfers in broader cooperation frameworks aimed at building sustainable capacities. Jamaica stressed the importance of technology transfer, stating that ignoring its importance and development of sustained in-country expertise could lead to a further widening of the technological divide between the developed and developing countries.
- The Arab Group and Egypt described that fast technological advances in SALW manufacturing shows the importance of this issue for the ITI, especially in reference to modular and polymer weapons and 3D printing. They noted though that not all member states have access to necessary marking technologies while countries which own relevant technology have no obligation to share it, adding that it would be important to ensure there are no restriction over the ability of member states to benefit from the peaceful uses of 3D printing, a point reinforced by Indonesia.
- Belgium considers that there is an urgent need to adapt the UNPoA and ITI to technological developments in the area of SALW design, particularly in the development and the proliferation of modular weapons and polymer weapons. It referenced the summary of the informal consultation that it facilitated on this subject in June 2021, noting along with France that this subject has been under consideration for a decade.
- Ghana and Costa Rica underlined the need for developing a supplementary annex to the ITI to address recent developments in SALW manufacturing, technology, design, materials and related considerations. Jamaica would support an annex. Malaysia and Mexico urged better consideration of recent developments including polymer and modular weapons. Colombia and Ireland highlighted the importance of doing so for the applicability, effectiveness and relevance of the instruments. Costa Rica said this would need to involve an in-depth look at ensuring cross-border cooperation, technology transfer, and capacity-building efforts. Australia feels an annex reflects real-world developments.
- Ireland said it recognises the very real concerns of states that such updates to the ITI would pose for capacity, and implementation prioritisation and that all should work together to ensure support for implementing any new provisions.
- The Deputy to the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs said proposals to move forward with discussions on new technologies are as crucial as strengthening international cooperation and assistance mechanisms. ECOWAS noted the recent technological developments in polymer and modular weapons and said it expects the outcome document will take steps to address these developments
- The Arab Group, Egypt, China, and Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela) spoke against including any elements relating to a supplementary ITI annex in the BMS7 outcome document, including establishing a technical group of experts. The Arab Group believes the issue must be addressed through a more holistic perspective taking into account the various dimensions of the issue. Egypt is not against discussing developments in new technology but asks that discussion address all concerns relating to this issue, whether technical or financial.
- Switzerland supports continued exchange on technological developments, especially at a technical level and on a step-by-step approach. It feels the proposed technical working group could be a “feasible and intermediate” step and, with Belgium, that more time be given to clarify the group’s composition and mandate. Jamaica could support the recommendation for a group and its proposed mandate as in the third draft.

Ireland, Belgium, and Switzerland stressed that this must be a technical working group; South Africa's support is based on the understanding that the group will be inclusive and transparent and that the consideration of new technologies should be based on an understanding that technology transfer, information sharing and capacity-building in these fields are key implementation tools. Canada, Australia, and Costa Rica, among others, also expressed support for the group. Brazil suggested the group might consider parts and components in its consideration of "technology". Belgium is not convinced of the need for the UN Secretariat to prepare a "good practices" document.

- Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela) urged against any new measures in this regard, in more than one statement on the topic. In two statements the group said it deems it necessary to remove all of the paragraphs raising elements related to this idea from the draft outcome document and reminded that inclusion of this subject in the BMS7 agenda was intended for discussion purposes only. The group statement expressed concern that adopting measures in this regard could impose greater financial and technological burdens for developing countries, especially if it could lead to possible noncompliance with existing obligations, including those that remain unfulfilled.
- The EU urged the outcome document to address the growing importance of internet and online transactions with regard to the illicit trade in SALW, and their parts and components. Malaysia urged combatting illicit online trafficking. Peru described challenges related to cryptocurrency and cyber crime in relation to arms trafficking. Spain noted that new distribution patterns are also emerging, including the trafficking of firearms parts through express parcel services or "the use of the so-called 'dark web'."
- Indonesia called on all countries to intensify international cooperation in discussing rules and regulations, calling for no procurement or sale of SALW through digital platforms. Republic of Korea prohibited online posting or spreading of gun manufacturing methods, including 3D printing designs.

## Synergies

- Many participants encouraged recognition of the synergies between the UNPoA and the ITI, and existing arms control agreements and arrangements. For example, the Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs commended states for the progress made to link the UNPoA and the ITI to a broader policy agenda. He noted this was vital "to ensure that small arms control measures are part of initiatives related to sustainable development, armed violence and conflict prevention and gender equality." South Africa reinforced that synergies can assist states with reporting, facilitate implementation, and strengthen confidence-building measures on arms control. The ICRC stressed that the UNPoA, together with the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the ITI, and other instruments, establishes principles for a rule-based order for conventional weapons.
- Senegal, IANSA, CARICOM, Belgium, Canada, Argentina, Sierra Leone, Australia, Bulgaria, the EU, Bulgaria, Romania, Peru, and Costa Rica, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) particularly mentioned the ATT as an important instrument to complement the UNPoA.
- The EU noted that work to address diversion "establishes...an undeniable link between" the UNPoA and the ATT, the latter of which created the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (DIEF) in 2020. Belgium also noted that it favours increased information sharing between the UNPoA and the ATT on diversion.
- Sierra Leone, as the president of the ATT's Seventh Conference of States Parties (CSP7) of the ATT, explained that its choice of the thematic focus of strengthening efforts to eradicate the illicit trade in SALW and ensuring efficient stockpile management seeks "to engage all states parties to link ATT implementation efforts firmly to the global framework for arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament." Sierra Leone presented its working paper to CSP7, and stressed that this was "an opportunity to encourage UN member states to actively engage in the CSP7 deliberations and to share best practices and lessons learned from the national implementation of the UNPoA that may contribute to strengthening the

implementation of the ATT.” The EU said it supports states, at their request, to strengthen arms control by implementing the ATT, in the areas such as legislation drafting or sharing of best practices.

- IANSA explained that through its campaigns and policy work, it has worked to increase the capacity of its members to advocate for the implementation of commitments by states in the UNPoA, the ATT, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms (Firearms Protocol), and regional frameworks on SALW. Costa Rica noted that references to the preexisting commitments under the Firearms Protocol would make the UNPoA more dynamic and complete. Argentina, Romania, IANSA, the EU, and Guatemala made similar remarks in support of synergies between the UNPoA and the Firearms Protocol.
- Many participants underscored the link between the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Chair noted that the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and especially SDG target 16.4 to reduce illicit arms flows relies on the success of BMS7. CARICOM, Lebanon, Peru, Guatemala, CASA, Canada, Thailand, Colombia, Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control (GENSAC), South Africa, RoK, Côte d’Ivoire, Bulgaria, and Mexico made similar remarks, with Switzerland and Costa Rica noting that the UNPoA contributes to achieve various SDG targets across the 2030 Agenda.
- The EU urged that BMS7 should confirm that SDG targets 16.1 and 16.4 are shared objectives with the UNPoA. GENSAC called on states to accelerate action for implementation of SDG target 5.2. Malaysia suggested to promote greater collaboration between those working on sustainable development, and those working on SALW proliferation, including through joint data collection. CASA explained that it leads data collection and analysis of UNPoA and ITI implementation, as well as of the Firearms Protocol. GENSAC said that as part of the newly launched Pathfinders’ Task Force on Halving Global Violence it seeks to drive stronger collective action and deliver measurable results in line with the aspirations of SDG 16, and specifically SDG target 16.1

to significantly reduce all forms of violence everywhere.

- Some participants, including IANSA, referenced regional mechanisms and framework for broader synergies. The Chair noted that successful conclusion of BMS7 supports the roadmap of the initiative “Silencing the Guns in Africa” by 2030.
- The EU encouraged transparency through reporting, by including SALW in states’ reports to the UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), which Senegal also referenced.
- References were made to the UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security, as well as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda more broadly as important to enhance UNPoA implementation, including by RoK, Peru, Mexico, Canada, Ireland, EU, Namibia, and Guatemala. Specifically, the EU suggested a special reference to UNSCR 2242 of 2015 in the outcome document that specifically encourages empowering women with the efforts related to the fight against illicit SALW. Similarly, Sierra Leone underscored that BMS7 should embrace UNSCRs 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015) to ensure women’s full and meaningful participation in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of SALW, and that states should operationalise the gender-related outcomes of RevCon3 at sub-national, national, and regional levels.
- Switzerland advocated for strong coordination between national authorities and action plans on SALW and on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 as a concrete way forward to strengthen these linkages. Namibia made similar recommendations regarding the mainstreaming of the WPS agenda into national action plans on SALW.
- A few states opposed recognising synergies between the UNPoA and other instruments. Lebanon urged to avoid “expansion” of the UNPoA, or to reconsider its mandate and contents, and to focus instead on implementation. Similarly, the Arab Group does not favour addressing synergies between instruments that aren’t consensus-based, such as the ATT or the Firearms Protocol. Iran, on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela) argued that the outcome document should refrain from

adding “non-globally” accepted instruments. Indonesia explained that the ATT contradicts its national law, and therefore can’t support linking the UNPoA to non-consensual instruments. Algeria urged to avoid overlaps and interference of other mechanisms and processes with the BMS7 mandate and to avoid establishing synergies. Egypt, Pakistan, and Cuba made similar remarks. Pakistan added that creating synergies might risk the UNPoA’s universal support. Israel, the Arab Group, and South Africa also cautioned against including synergies for similar reasons. Iran, on behalf of the same group of states, said that “overemphasising” issues like SDG specific indicators are not necessary.

## Diversion

- A large number of participants, including the EU, Costa Rica, Ireland, Peru, Belgium, Colombia, Switzerland, Spain, Algeria, Malaysia, France, RoK, Canada, Ecuador, US, South Africa, China, Romania, Ghana, India, Sierra Leone, Jamaica, Japan, MERCOSUR, the OSCE, the ICRC, ECOWAS, and the Security Research & Information Centre, identified preventing and combatting diversion as an issue of paramount importance.
- Many participants, including the EU, Costa Rica, Ireland, Peru, the OSCE, and the ICRC, noted that the diversion of small arms and light weapons can be a serious impediment to other priorities, such as peace, security, growth, and the 2030 Agenda, and can damage those priorities across generations.
- The EU, Belgium, Colombia, and Canada, among numerous other participants encouraged states to cooperate and exchange information—such as information on identified diversion methods—in an effort to better expose and eliminate channels of arms trafficking and prevent diversion.
- The EU, Colombia, France, and Canada, among several others noted the importance of monitoring relevant aspects across the lifecycle of SALW in order to prevent diversion.
- The EU, Romania, and the United Kingdom (UK), among others emphasised that effective arms export control, including, for example, authenticated end user agreements, can reduce the risk of diversion. Some participants, like Belgium and the RoK

explicitly noted the importance of dialogue between the UNPoA and export control instruments, like the ATT in tackling diversion.

- Spain called for a final-use verification mechanism in an effort to better prevent diversion.
- Others, including Brazil, Belgium, Mauritania, Peru, the OSCE, and the Security Risk & Information Centre, noted that the diversion of ammunition is also a feasible and viable tool to reduce the harms caused by SALW.

## Non-state actors

- Mexico, the Arab Group, RoK, the Philippines, Belgium, Algeria, Egypt, Malaysia, Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela), Iraq, France, Colombia, the Russian Federation, China, Pakistan, Mauritania, Peru, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guatemala, and the OSCE, among others, noted that the illicit trade in SALW has serious humanitarian and security consequences, including when those weapons end up in the hands of criminals, terrorist groups, and/or other non-state actors.
- Mexico, RoK, the Philippines, Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela), France, Colombia, the Russian Federation, Pakistan, Peru, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Guatemala, and the OSCE, noted the dangers of SALW in the hands of criminals. The Arab Group, the RoK, the Philippines, Belgium, Malaysia, Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela), Iraq, France, the Russian Federation, Mauritania, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and the OSCE, noted the dangers of SALW in the hands of terrorists.

## Gender

- A large number of participants, including CARICOM, GENSAC, the OSCE, IANSA, as well as Costa Rica on behalf of 59 states, called for a gender-responsive approach to the implementation of the UNPoA and the ITI.
- In its presentation on national UNPoA reporting, UNODA explained that there has been a 40 per cent increase in states reporting on gender considerations from 2018 to 2020.
- IANSA, Costa Rica on behalf of 59 states, and Bolivian Women's Efforts called for

sustained action on gender and small arms by building on relevant outcomes of the 2018 Review Conference. The EU, the Philippines, and Ireland called for the outcome document to underscore the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to SALW control. Switzerland appreciated the recognition in the third draft outcome document of gender-related considerations.

- Many participants, including Mexico, Colombia, Iraq, GENSAC, Canada, Costa Rica, and CARICOM, among others, spoke to the importance of women's equal participation in the implementation of the UNPoA and the ITI. Costa Rica encouraged a frank discussion on how women and girls can be included in disarmament and arms control processes that transcend superficial quotas, being used as commodities or symbols of victimisation. It argued that at every stage of BMS7 negotiations it was essential that women feature in all dimensions of national delegations. This requires that women are fully included and heard, both in in-person and virtual negotiations
- South Africa, Australia, Germany, Canada, and the UK welcomed the reference to women's participation in the third draft outcome document.
- CARICOM observed that women are key actors in combatting illicit trade of SALW but are still underrepresented in decision-making processes related to the UNPoA and the ITI. Thailand also stressed that women are agents of change and play a key role in peace and reconciliation efforts. The HALO Trust called for women's participation, including in leadership roles, in physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) and all other aspects of UNPoA implementation.
- The EU, RoK, CARICOM, UK, Ireland, Guatemala, Canada, Mexico, Germany, Ecuador, Peru, the Philippines, CASA, Bolivian Women's Efforts, the Chair, and Costa Rica underscored the differentiated impacts of armed violence and illicit trafficking of SALW on women and girls, and men and boys. CARICOM expressed support for the provision in the outcome document on funded programmes targeting the gendered nature of SALW and welcomed the reference to UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 65/69 Women, disarmament, non-

proliferation and arms control. Namibia, the ICRC and the OSCE emphasised that SALW facilitates sexual and other forms of GBV. A few states observed that the impacts of firearms-related violence against women has deteriorated during the pandemic, including due to lockdowns as noted by Guatemala, Bolivian Women's Efforts, and Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal. Costa Rica on behalf of 59 states also underscored the regressive impacts of COVID-19 on gender equality.

- Namibia underscored that SALW proliferation reinforces violent social gendered norms.
- Costa Rica said that all policies addressing prevention of diversion should consider the gendered dimensions of SALW, including through disaggregated data collection and gender analysis. Various other states also spoke to the importance of gender disaggregated data collection. Australia welcomed the language in the third draft of the outcome document regarding compilation of data collection disaggregated by age, sex, and disability, which it said is crucial for evidence-based solutions. Mexico and Bolivian Women's Efforts made similar remarks about the importance of data collection while CASA explained that it is collecting sex disaggregated data. Guatemala stressed that there needs to be sufficient information about impacts of arms trafficking, especially on children, on women, and on survivors of violence. It said that there's a need to track the use of weapons, so that it's possible to track down perpetrators of trafficking, and to take appropriate judicial measures. UNODA shared that there has been a 24 per cent increase of states collecting sex-disaggregated data between 2018 and 2020, per national UNPoA reports.
- A few participants reported on their own efforts to include gender considerations more prominently. The EU said that gender equality and women's empowerment is at the core of EU policies at home and abroad, and that it mainstreams gender considerations in programs against gun violence and SALW control in general. CASA explained it includes gender perspectives in all its policies. UNODA and the OSCE reported on their joint initiative of the annual fellowship on arms

control for young professionals, seeking to increase women's participation in decision-making arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Germany informed that it has increased funding for training and advocacy to advance gender responsive small arms control, and is one of the initiators of GENSAC, which enhances cross-regional exchange on good practice on the topic.

- GENSAC recommended that national regulations on firearms control should address the specific risks and violence against women facilitated by small arms in the hands of civilians and called on states to endorse the Call to Action by civil society organisations on gender and small arms control that was launched by IANSA for RevCon3 (updated for BMS7) and which highlights the priorities of civil society in advancing gender-responsive small arms control.

## Youth

- Belgium, Colombia, RoK, the Philippines, and Guatemala, among others, noted that the trafficking of SALW fuels armed violence against children.
- Sierra Leone noted the importance of encouraging youth to engage in good governance and divert youth away from violence, including armed violence.
- A group of participants, in a statement advanced by Costa Rica, advocated for the outcome document to take into account the disproportionate effects of the illicit trade in SALW on women, children, and youth (see paragraph 76 from Draft 3) and the sub-section on gender.

## Humanitarian consequences and impact

- The vast majority of participants expressed their serious concern about the devastating impacts of the illicit trade of SALW. Many mentioned grave impacts on peace, security, stability, and sustainable development. Various states and organisations also raised concerns about the link between SALW proliferation and terrorism, transnational crime, exploitation, organised crime, and armed conflict and violence. In particular, Costa Rica argued that the scourge of SALW and their ammunition impacts so many aspects of human

experience, including health, public safety, education and economies. MERCOSUR and others were concerned about the economic and social impacts of SALW and ammunition proliferation. Spain, Sierra Leone, the ICRC, ECOWAS, the Chair, and Thailand said that illicit proliferation of SALW contributes to human rights violations while Sierra Leone, ECOWAS, and the ICRC also stressed the links between SALW proliferation and violations of international humanitarian law (IHL).

- Lebanon reminded that the 2008 BMS highlighted the need to mitigate environmental impacts of destruction. It said this should be a priority given the devastating effects of weapons on the environment.
- Various states expressed particular concern about the high death rate caused by the use of SALW, including Ireland, RoK, Sierra Leone, the Chair, the ICRC, Ghana, and Ukraine. The Chair noted the importance of the meeting in light of the loss of tenths of thousands of lives per year due to violence caused by SALW. GENSAC said that firearms are involved in about 40 per cent of the estimated 66,000 annual homicides of women committed each year, and that the proliferation of small arms and its ammunition—both legal and illegal—is a danger to peace and jeopardises global efforts to reduce violence. Sierra Leone recounted its national experience, explaining that 80 per cent of the death, wounded, and displaced during its civil war “was a direct causative effect of the use of small arms and light weapons”.
- Colombia argued that it is important to remember that every measure agreed, every effort made, every open door to dialogue, and every consideration of every aspect related to the phenomenon of the illicit trade in SALW has an impact on the lives, integrity, and dignity of individuals, families, communities and entire nations. It also reminded of the UNPoA's collective goal, which is to reduce human suffering and enhance human dignity through promoting a culture of peace, and noted that this sentiment continues to guide the UNPoA's work.

## Civil society and other stakeholders

- Ireland, Colombia, CARICOM, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala, Namibia, Japan, Iraq, Senegal, Jamaica, Mexico, and CASA called on states to recognise the vital work done by researchers and civil society as well as the important role of the SALW industry, noting that all of these are critical to implementing the mission of the UNPoA. Similarly, Colombia and CARICOM both noted the importance of including civil society, in partnership with governments, in the process of implementing the UNPoA.
- The ICRC noted the importance that vital stakeholders, including survivors of SALW-related harms and the ICRC itself, make contributions to this process.
- HALO Trust argued that states must engage the full range of civil society actors when working on weapons and ammunition management programming to ensure adequate buy-in.
- Mexico noted the importance of expanding participation in the biennial meetings to a wider array of relevant stakeholders with relevant expertise, particularly expertise on new technological advancements in the manufacturing of SALW.
- Australia, Canada, and Senegal included civil society and industry in their support for a proposed working group of technology experts. Australia also spoke in support of developing an annex to the ITI on new technologies in SALW, based on consultations and engagement with experts, industry, and civil society organisations.
- Some participants, including France, noted the role of private actors—both from industry and from civil society—in tracing SALW.
- Bolivian Women's Efforts among others noted the importance of ensuring that civil society organizations engaged in this work have sufficient funding.

## Fellowship programme

- Iran on behalf of a group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Venezuela), Malaysia, Guatemala, Algeria, Egypt, the Arab Group, Pakistan, Kenya, Costa Rica, and Jamaica, among many others, welcomed the establishment of the proposed fellowship

programme on SALW for exchanging technical expertise.

- Jamaica suggested fellowship selection criteria that takes into consideration the needs of states without adequate resources to implement the UNPoA and the ITI.
- Numerous participants, including the Deputy High Representative for Disarmament Affairs noted the potential for the proposed fellowship programme to provide needed capacity-building support in order to fully implement the UNPoA and ITI.

## Views on BM8

- Iran, on behalf of a group of states (Belarus, Nicaragua, Russia, Venezuela, Cuba) said that hybrid and virtual meeting formats were acceptable due to Covid and used only on an exceptional basis without setting precedent. They noted that hybridity cannot serve as an operational mode because it fails to provide equal and uninterrupted access to all member states.
- Iran, on behalf of a different group of states (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria and Venezuela) said that the need for increased international cooperation and assistance should be properly expressed in the BMS8 agenda, taking into account the various situations, capacities, and objectives of states and regions.
- The Arab Group stressed the importance of continuing discussion on a number of issues that it believes are of priority for reaching consensus during BMS8. This included issues such as 1) individuals and terrorist groups and armed groups and unauthorised users; 2) discussing frameworks for transfer of technology and scientific knowledge, financial assistance and training, and equipment to follow up on latest M&T developments, and border control; 3) continuing efforts to set up a fellowship programme for training as one means of transferring knowledge; 4) setting out a clear vision for cooperation and assistance among states towards setting out clear steps that are agreed upon.
- South Africa expressed that states should not be in a position to develop guidelines or roadmaps, suggesting that this term should be approached with caution and not agreed to unless clearly defined.

# SMALL ARMS MONITOR

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organisation in the world. Reaching Critical Will works for disarmament and the prohibition of many different weapon systems; confronting militarism and military spending; and exposing gendered aspects of the impact of weapons and disarmament processes with a feminist lens. Reaching Critical Will also monitors and analyses international disarmament processes, providing primary resources, reporting, and civil society coordination at various UN-related forums.



Reaching Critical Will

[www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org)



[www.wilpf.org](http://www.wilpf.org)

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

## **SMALL ARMS MONITOR**

Vol. 11, No. 2

4 August 2021

Editor: Allison Pytlak  
[disarm@wilpf.org](mailto:disarm@wilpf.org)

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of WILPF or Reaching Critical Will.