



# SMALL ARMS MONITOR

*Civil society perspectives on the Biennial Meeting of States on  
the UN Programme of Action on small arms  
6–10 June 2016*



Reaching Critical Will

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## EDITORIAL: SMALL ARMS, BIG PICTURE

*Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

During the first day of the sixth biennial meeting of states (BMS6) on the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons, the relationship between small arms and sustainable development took centre stage. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by states in September 2015, for the first time recognised in target 16.4 a link between development and the reduction of illicit arms flows. Many delegations highlighted this goal to frame their approach to this BMS and to small arms control more broadly, articulating a vision of a world in which the production, sale, and use of weapons is no longer permitted to drive humankind towards violence and mayhem.

### Financing development or war

The 2030 Agenda offers “an opportunity to move beyond our tendency to view the PoA through a narrow security lens and to address its broader dimension,” argued the Chair of BMS6, Ambassador Courteney Rattray of Jamaica. Through this Agenda, member states have “given the disarmament community a mandate to contribute to our shared objective of establishing an environment conducive to sustainable development for people, planet and prosperity.”

A key challenge to implementing this Agenda, as highlighted by Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya, is the military-industrial complex, which derives profits from weapons and thus has a vested interest in the perpetuation of massive arms flows. Delivering a keynote address, he noted that official development assistance represents a fraction of what is spent on weapons and war. “The principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments calls on all Member States to devote more resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as an imperative to the fight against poverty,” he argued. “It is therefore critical to commit

more resources to development, alongside non-military measures to achieve peace such as disarmament and arms control.”

### Deaths and profits

The pursuit of nonviolent means of achieving peace will be critical in advancing both the development and small arms agendas. As High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo noted, the number of deaths, injuries, and displacement of civilians from armed conflict is on the rise. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas and the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition are key drivers of these violent deaths and mass displacement. “Weapons are the toxic lubricant allowing the engine of conflict to run,” he said.

Viewing conflict as a machine is appropriate. The elements of this machine—the military-industrial complex and the associated political apparatus—churn out profits and violence. More violence requires more weapons, which generates more profits. It's a model of death and destruction that has been growing and sustaining itself for decades. It is civilians all over the world who suffer its consequences.

### Cultures of violence

Among the violence experienced the world over is gender-based violence. This form of violence is targeted against women, men, and others on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. At its core is a culture of violence that expresses power through domination over those who are perceived as weaker than or not conforming to the hegemonic representation of masculinity.

When the culture of violent masculinities is coupled with development challenges limiting employment opportunities in particular for young men, gender-based violence often

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*Editorial, continued*

increases. This is why Ms. Shorna-Kay Richards of Jamaica urged states to consider issues related to fostering the creation of alternative livelihoods for young men, as previous versions of the draft BMS6 outcome document have done.

### Cultures of diversity and the pursuit of alternative paths

A number of other delegations, including the Caribbean Community, the European Union, Australia, Austria, Japan, Spain, and Trinidad and Tobago, welcomed the references to gender and to the meaningful participation of women in small arms-related programmes and other arms control projects. Gender diversity in arms control and disarmament is critical to ensuring diverse perspectives. This is important for generating new ideas and

approaches that can help create space for alternatives to militarism, violence, and conflict.

As Ambassador Kamau said, “discarding the mentality of military solutions to conflicts” is critical to achieving lasting peace and development. This BMS may not solve all related challenges, but it is an opportunity to confront some of them. “The PoA and the ITI should not be static mechanisms,” argued the Chair of the meeting, “but rather dynamic and living instruments that are adaptable to new and emerging international realities.” States here should build on other instruments and agreements and ensure diversity in these discussions in order to pursue an effective path to peace and development through arms control and disarmament. •



Image © Lin Evola

When	What	Where
10:00-11:00	Consideration of the implementation of the UNPoA	CR 4
11:00-13:00	Consideration of the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument	CR 4
13:15-14:30	Side event: Regional approach to SALW control: success stories from Southeast Europe (UNDP SEESAC)	CR C
13:15-14:30	Side event: Relationship between SALW - treaties/programmes of action and SDG16.4 (Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures in cooperation with UNODA, IANSA, Small Arms Survey, and Control Arms)	German House, 871 UN Plaza
13:15-14:30	Side event: End-use control and post-delivery verification: are arms exporting countries doing all they can to stop diversion? (GRIP)	CR D
15:00-18:00	Consideration of the implementation of the ITI, <i>continued</i>	CR 4

## THINKING HARD ON THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF BMS6

*Dr. Nelson Alusala | Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria*

The sixth biennial meeting of states (BMS6) is historic in the global fight against the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). There are a number of reasons for this.

First, it is the last meeting of states before the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA), which will take place in 2018. As such, states have an opportunity to deliberate on and set the agenda for the review conference.

Second, the review conference is a defining one with regard to the future direction, objectives, and implementation plan of the UNPoA, which in itself is no more than a political instrument. The conference offers UN member states an opportunity to redefine the contents of the UNPoA and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

Third, this week's proceedings will also be the first BMS to take place following the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in December 2014. The ATT is a legally binding instrument that sets out, for the first time, robust global rules to prevent the flow of weapons, munitions, and related items to countries where arms are likely to facilitate genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and serious human rights violations.

This is therefore also a moment for member states of the UN to draw clear linkages between development, the UNPoA, ITI, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Of particular relevance is Goal 16, Target 4.

Fourth, all the participants to the BMS should note that the success and effectiveness of any arms control instrument depends on the ability of the states to implement its provisions. Experience by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) shows that political will by countries, coupled with support such as that offered by the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms (UNSCAR), makes it possible to achieve set targets.

Whereas it is true that the political commitment to develop and implement practical measures might pose a challenge, recent meetings held in Rwanda, Botswana, Namibia, and Uganda, among others, have shown that the biggest obstacle is implementation. This, in turn, can be attributed to a lack of sufficient resources, which are needed to enable countries to put in place the national and regional structures necessary for effective implementation.

The gains made as a result of financial support from UNSCAR is a clear indication of the link between sufficient resources and the success of arms control instru-

ments. States, and African states in particular, should prioritise negotiating a clear roadmap to sustainable resource mobilisation, along with technical support, towards the implementation of these instruments.

With the eye on the 2018 review conference, a likely question at this week's meeting will be whether states wish to retain the UNPoA in its current format, despite the entry into force of the ATT, or whether the UNPoA should metamorphose into a new instrument. The latter scenario could take place much the same way that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were reconstructed into SDGs.

The question for the UN member states meeting now should be how to strengthen the UNPoA, especially by ensuring that the issue of ammunition is comprehensively covered in this instrument. This reality can only be achieved, firstly if both manufacturing states and importing states take cognisance of the continued negative impact that uncontrolled ammunition causes; and secondly if the need for matters of development and poverty alleviation are placed at the centre of arms control initiatives. The cyclical links between poverty and vulnerability and conflict, arms abuse and the illicit trade is a real one, especially in Africa. The question is therefore how these issues can be integrated into discussions at the biennial meeting and the review conference to ensure the most comprehensive UNPoA.

Finally, UN member states must work together to promote transparency in reporting arms transfers (while taking note of the relevant reservations provided for in the ATT). Successfully implementing these instruments depends on the commitment of states to adhere to the requirements of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. •



# SMALL ARMS MONITOR

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Mia Gandenberger | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

The News in Brief is not a comprehensive summary of all statements. It highlights positions on few critical issues covered during plenary discussions.

### Implementation gaps

- The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs identified stockpile management, marking and tracing of weapons, and the potential negative impact of new materials and technologies as key challenges.
- Venezuela added to the list the risk of non-state actor's role in the diversion of SALW.
- Mexico suggested a survey on the effectiveness of the UNPoA at the national and international level.

### Emerging challenges

- EU suggested states should address internet and online transactions regarding illicit trade in SALW and their parts and components.
- Israel highlighted the challenges resulting from technologies for preventing and combatting diversion.

### Ammunition

- CARICOM called for ammunition to be adequately reflected in the outcome document.
- The EU remained convinced that an effective implementation of the UNPoA requires the inclusion of ammunition in its scope.
- Mexico stressed the controlling ammunition remains the greatest outstanding issue.
- Australia expressed openness to the inclusion of Ammunition in the outcome document.
- Guatemala stressed the importance of including ammunition in the scope of the UNPoA.

### Gender

- CARICOM welcomed the references to gender dimensions in draft 4 of the outcome document and expressed support for the reference to gender disaggregated data collection and to UNGA resolution 65/69 and UNSC resolutions 1325 and 2242.
- EU would like to see a reference to UNSC resolutions 1325 and 2242.
- Austria highlighted gender as important issue for the implementation of the UNPoA.
- Keynote speaker Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya stressed that gender dynamics and youth are relevant to drivers of violence.

- Australia expressed support for a reference to UNSC resolution 1325 in the outcome document.
- Japan supports the meaningful participation and representation of women in UNPoA related policy-making and planning.
- Spain stressed the importance of strengthening the role of women in UNPoA policy-making and highlighted UNSC resolutions 1325 and 2242 in this connection.
- Jamaica called for women's full and equal participation in preventing and reducing armed violence and noted the relationship between gender and disarmament in this connection. It also highlighted the Global Study on UNSC resolution 1325 is relevant to states deliberations.
- Trinidad and Tobago welcomed the provision in the draft outcome document on women's role in UNPoA related policy-making.

### Sustainable development goals (SDGs)

- Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya delivered a keynote address on the 2030 Agenda, highlighting the connection between disarmament and development. He highlighted SDG goal 16 in particular and expressed concern with the high levels of military expenditure.
- The Chair, Ambassador Courtenay Rattray of Jamaica, highlighted states' responsibility to help bring peace and prosperity, in particular by implementing goal 16.4.
- CARICOM highlighted the interaction of disarmament and arms control with development as contained in SDG 16.4.
- EU highlighted the shared objective of SDG 16.1 and 16.4 with the UNPoA.
- Japan was pleased to see reference to UNPoA in implementation for SDG 16.
- Jamaica welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and in particular SDG 16.4.
- African Group expressed concern with humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences of SALW trafficking. It suggested the SDG 16 could be achieved through SALW regulation and UNPoA implementation.

### Process

- The afternoon session was closed for informal consultations on the draft outcome document, which the Chair intends to continue throughout the week. •