



## Newsletter Dec 2017

### New short film about destroying impact of SALW

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#### **Honoured Members and Friends of the Forum,**

As we are approaching the holiday season, time has come for the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Forum, to close the circle for this year and start looking ahead towards a new and exciting year.

Looking back on 2017, a year filled with activity and significant progress on prevention and reduction of armed violence appears. **Six key activities** have been held on three different continents, reaching **74 parliamentarians** directly and nearly **300 other stakeholders**. A new methodology was also introduced this year as two so called **Parliamentary Action Plans** were concluded at seminars arranged by the Forum, so as to guide parliamentary action for strategic progress on relevant SALW issues. **36 000 people** were also reached as part of the Forum's campaign "Words Over Bullets", in which many Members participated.

This has led to inter alia, substantial progress for the universalisation and implementation of the ATT in countries such as **Brazil, Cameroon, Colombia and Zimbabwe**; progressive law amendments or oversight actions taken in **Guatemala, Germany, the European Parliament and the Democratic Republic of Congo** among other countries, to name but a few of the initiatives that Members have contributed to.

**Dear Members**, thank you for all the hard work and efforts you have made during the year! Your dedication has made a difference and will have an impact in the everyday lives of people around the globe, as we continue our strife together for a peaceful world, free from armed violence.

As we look forward, we see a continued need for parliamentary action. **2018 is an important year**, in June it is time for the **Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action** to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UNPoA), Revcon 3. This is an important moment to highlight global SALW-issues and bring the work forward. Revcon 3 is preceded by a preparatory conference, equally important in paving the way for a productive conference in June. The Forum will be present with side events on both occasions, as well as on **CSP4**, the Fourth Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Moreover, the Forum is planning for further activities part of the Connecting the Dots-initiative, expanding our outreach to Asia and Africa. You can read more about the upcoming activities below.

With the hopes of seeing and hearing from all of you next year, on behalf of the Secretariat, I wish you happy holidays and a peaceful, productive and healthy New Year!

Best wishes,

Karin Olofsson, Secretary-General

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### **Short film about SALW – watch, share and use for awareness-raising**

The Forum is proud to present a new **short film shedding light on the devastating impact caused by uncontrolled flows of illicit small arms and light weapons** on lives and societies. In the three minute video we meet three victims of armed violence as well as the Vice President and Secretary General of the Forum, telling us more about the Forum. We encourage all of you to watch it and share it widely, helping us to raise awareness about the problems of illicit SALW and what we do about it. **Please make use of the film** in your work when addressing different audiences on SALW-related issues, for example as introduction to parliamentary seminars on armed violence or when speaking to groups unfamiliar with the issue. [You can find the film here](#), with subtitles in English. Please keep a lookout for additional versions with French and Spanish subtitles that will be published in the beginning of next year.

### **Policy update: Illicit SALW and Terrorism**

[A new Policy Statement on illicit SALW and terrorism](#) was adopted by the Board of the Forum in November. The availability of illicit SALW is a key factor enabling terrorism, with high human, social and economic costs. In 2016, firearms were used in 18 % of all terrorist attacks globally. Based on the over-all objective of the Forum to contribute to the achievement of more peaceful and developed societies, we find it crucial to strengthen the role of parliamentarians in addressing conditions conducive to terrorism. The parliamentary responsibility relate to aligning efforts with existing international frameworks for preventing and reducing armed violence, specifically the

2030 Agenda, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA). The Policy is available on our website in English, French and Spanish.

## **Past Activities**

### *Campaign*

The social media campaign **Words Over Bullets** was successfully relaunched on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all of you who contributed to the campaign with videos or photos, and for following, sharing and interacting with us during the campaign week! The aim of the campaign was to increase global awareness on the importance of reducing and preventing SALW-related violence to reach sustainable development and human security. The campaign **reached over 36 000 people** on Facebook, and was viewed **nearly 19 000 times** on Twitter. Did you miss the campaign? Visit and follow our social media channels, [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), to see the important and interesting contributions from all around the world!

The campaign is over for this year, but you can still contribute to the work of the Forum by **engaging with us in our social media channels**. Please share your important armed violence preventive work with us, tell us when you have made any progress or when you would like our support to build momentum on some SALW-related issue, so we in turn can share your news and encourage action. By following us in social media channels, sharing our content, liking it as well as commenting or discussing issues with us, you also help us raise awareness of SALW and put it on the political agenda.

### *Anniversary Mingle*

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Forum marked its **15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** with a seminar in the Swedish Parliament on October 11 highlighting results from the progressive and unique work to strengthen parliamentary action on preventing and reducing armed violence across the globe. There are many actors all over the world with whom the Forum has had fruitful collaborations over the years. However, being based in Sweden, one of the founding countries of the Forum, the Secretariat wanted to take the opportunity to celebrate our 15 years of work by inviting partners, parliamentarians and other people to a mingle at the Secretariat on November 29. To highlight the need for an actor like the Forum and show the human faces behind the numbers that we frequently use, we invited two of the armed violence victims interviewed in the short film mentioned above. Hearing them tell their brave and honest personal stories was much appreciated by the people attending the mingle, making a clear reminder of the need for continued work for peaceful and inclusive societies.

## **Upcoming Activities**

### *Connecting the Dots - Africa and Asia – Preparatory steps ahead of Revcon 3*

In the last newsletter, we wrote about the upcoming seminars in Africa and Asia that are part of the “Connecting the Dots”-project. First out during 2018 is the seminar in Africa, “Supporting 2030 Agenda, ATT and UNPoA implementation through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes”. We can now confirm that it will take place on **2-3 March, 2018** in **Johannesburg**, South Africa, in cooperation with and at the venue of the **Pan-African Parliament**. It will focus on increasing parliamentary engagement and

action related to boost synergy effects in implementing the 2030 Agenda, the ATT and the UNPoA. Focus countries are Cameroon, DRC, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The second seminar in 2018 as part of the same project, will take place in **South East Asia in April**, exact date and location to be confirmed. Focus countries are Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, East Timor and Vietnam.

Please spread the word on this initiative and if you are interested in more information on this project, or if you are a Member of Parliament from one of the focus countries, please contact the Secretariat: [brindis@parlforum.org](mailto:brindis@parlforum.org) or check [our website](#) and social media channels for up-dates.

Based on the conclusions from the above mentioned efforts, the Forum will take part in the **Preparatory Committee of the UNPoA in March 2018** and the **Third Review Conference in June** of the same year at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where the participation, contribution and priorities of parliamentarians are also at the core.

### **Support us**

*Give a holiday gift to celebrate our fifteen years of work*

The Forum is constantly working on broadening our funding base and securing new ways to continue the vital work for prevention and reduction of armed violence. As a gift to the Forum celebrating our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we kindly encourage you to consider making a contribution to our work through the Swedish application **Swish**, open for all Swedish residents, no. **123 515 16 42**.

For Members and Friends of the Forum elsewhere, please support our work by making a **contribution to our account** at: Swedbank, IBAN: SE97 8000 0832 7998 3907 9226, BIC: SWEDSESS, recipient: Parlamentarikerforum, address: Hammarby Allé 93, 120 63 Stockholm, Sweden\*.

Any contribution is most appreciated, as it allows us to keep working for our common endeavour to achieve a more peaceful world!

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\*Transparency is a key guiding principle for the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms & Light Weapons. Financial income and expenditure is subject to external auditing yearly by an independent qualified auditor.