

Presentation Arms Transfer Control
Achievements in the Western Balkans
30th Oct 2015



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Overview of the Parliamentary Forum

- Unique global network – 240 parliamentarians from 90 countries
- Multi-party approach
- Space to debate, join forces & contribute to advancement of the Small Arms Violence Reduction and Prevention Agenda
- Founded 2002 in the Spanish Congress



Overview of the Parliamentary Forum

- Enabling parliamentarians to act at national, regional & international levels.
- Expertise, technical support, capacity building & platform for dialogue and exchange

Achievements

- Legislation: development and use of a state of the art *Model Law on Firearms, Ammunitions and Related Material*
- Production of a series of parliamentary handbooks
- Regional work w/ regional organisations:
3-4 meeting/year to formulate solid understanding on SALW
- Gender equality: 80% of members are men; involvement of women politicians – to be strengthened
- Addressing supply and demand

Achievements

- Dialogue with the USA; illegal transfer of SALW to Latin America
- International instruments, treaties and conventions:
 - Arms Trade Treaty
 - UN Programme of Action on illicit SALW
 - The Convention of Cluster Munition
 - The Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence and Development

Work in the Western Balkans

- Start in 2007 – good working relationship w/ Parliamentarians, UNDP SEESAC and others
- 15 Members in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia
- Gun culture, legacy of armed conflict, well developed channels contraband smuggling & security/defence strategies that rely on stockpiling of weapons and ammunition
- SALW proliferation persist to be particular concern

Work in the Western Balkans

-> Parliamentary action crucial

Challenges:

- Weak political will for change
- Lack of resources & efforts for building political capacity -> negative spiral
- Limited by party politics
- Inhibited to perform oversight function & “fear” to jeopardize position -> weak democratic control
- Lack of substantive parliamentarian control system

Work in the Western Balkans


- Alarming: large stockpiles of surplus weapons and ammunitions & circulation of SALW and ammunition – limited access to data
- Lack of interest from parliamentarians to scrutinize existing detailed reports on arms export

Opportunities:

- Good example scrutinizing reports: Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Young competent, enthusiastic parliamentarians w/modern approach

Work in the Western Balkans

- No lack of disarmament initiative; well-funded technical programmes
- Forum aims to bridge gap: practical disarmament efforts and the political sphere
- Build on earlier vital experiences:
 - Generous support SEESAC and the National Assembly of Serbia, 2014: Seminar “Parliament’s role in minimizing the threat of Small arms and light weapons in the Western Balkans – past experiences and new challenges”
 - Tailor-made publications made for parliamentarians; 2006 & 2010
- Potential for similar initiatives: needed for change & to address challenges mentioned

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- High political relevance: Sustainable Development Goal nr 16 “Peace”
 - The Forum is interested in further cooperation w/ parliamentarians & regional organisations such as UNDP SEESAC

Thank you for your attention!

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