



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS



THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE HASHEMITE
KINGDOM OF JORDAN

The Amman Declaration

Parliamentary resolution adopted at the joint session of the Regional meeting for the MENA Region and the General Assembly of the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, meeting in the House of Representatives of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Amman, on 13th of November, 2014

Parliamentarians from 10 states in the Middle East and North Africa Region (Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Puntland, Saudi Arabia, Somaliland and Turkey), with presence also from colleagues from Africa, Europe and Latin America (Albania, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nicaragua, Peru, Serbia, Seychelles, Sweden, Togo, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zimbabwe), and civil society representatives, coming together for a Regional Meeting for the MENA Region and General Assembly of Parliamentary Forum on SALW in Amman, Jordan, November 12-14 2014, express their common concern with the escalating violence in the region, the inability to fulfil the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms feeding these conflicts and violence in societies in general.

The parliamentarians are aware that the weapons used by the ISIS in northern Iraq and Syria originate from more than 20 arms producing countries. A clear majority, but not all, of the existing military capacity of the ISIS has been captured from the armed forces in Syria and Iraq. There is a need for all countries to facilitate investigations and fact finding efforts, so that the ongoing chains of supply can be identified, addressed and stopped.

The arms producing countries should take more responsibility to improve their obligation for end use certificates and show more restraint in providing licenses. The governments and parliaments in the region have to tighten their control of stockpiling and seriously address corruption as a main catalyst for illicit arms trade, as well as measures to stop smuggling of arms.

Small arms proliferation in the MENA Region has drastically grown as a result of the abolition and the collapse of the armed forces in Iraq in 2003 and in Libya 2011 respectively. There is a need for the international community as a whole to be more responsible in the appliance of international law and carefully look at the balance of consequences when outside military action is taken for

regime change, in order not to jeopardize the important UN principle of the Responsibility to Protect.

The participants acknowledge that the ISIS has made a psychological impact in the region which has led to large number of people reacting with survival reflexes, seeking to arm themselves. When people lose faith in the ability of state authorities – police and military – to provide security, people undertake to secure themselves. This undermines the principle of legitimate state monopoly for the use of force and opens up for anarchy. Parliamentarians have a key responsibility to ensure public trust in a state which is able to reinforce the law and that security forces can fulfil their role.

The meeting also addressed the culture of violence and the need to improve accountability for law enforcement. The widespread use of firearms when celebrating family or public events causes collateral damage and contributes to a culture of violence and should be stopped. Parliamentarians have a responsibility to improve legislation, raise public awareness and provide good examples for this change to happen.

In their appreciation of the important role of women in peace building the participants called for improved implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 in the MENA Region. Women need to be part of all aspects of peace building, in particular in countries of transition. Peace building starts at home, which is also by far the environment which provides the highest risk for women to become victims of violence. In connection with this the meeting expressed its solidarity with the Yazidi women and children who have been victims to the hideous acts of the ISIS and the Boko Haram.

Participants expressed their gratitude to the first 54 countries that have now ratified the Arms Trade Treaty, which will have the treaty enter into force on the 24 December this year. Parliamentarians still have a significant role to play to ensure that the Arms Trade Treaty effectively prevents and reduces armed violence, and in particular SALW-related violence.

Parliamentarians will be able to contribute to ensure that the necessary national implementation mechanisms are in place, to oversee and politically interpret the implementation of the ATT to ensure its strongest and broadest possible application. This would be facilitated by improved capacity and knowledge among parliamentarians.