



Connecting the Dots: Supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms (UNPOA) through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes

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GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY ACTION PLAN¹

Introduction

The “Connecting the Dots” project and seminars in Africa, Asia and Latin America aim to build on the on-going efforts towards implementation and universalisation of the Agenda 2030’s Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 16.4, the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms (UNPOA)² and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), putting special focus on providing parliamentarians with the adequate tools to support the process at the national and regional level. The objective of the project is to increase parliamentary engagement, understanding and participation related to the aforementioned frameworks, in order to underpin impact in the RevCon3 and related processes. Political will, as well as identifying synergies, are crucial aspects for the effective universalisation and implementation of all instruments.

It uses the momentum that the 2030 Agenda, the UNPoA and the ATT have created, in order to gather parliamentarians from focus countries in an effort to facilitate the exchange of experiences, challenges and best practices that surround the legislative work on these instruments. As a result of these efforts, three regional Parliamentary Action Plans were adopted in each one of the regions Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Plans, together with the policy shaping and capacity building provided to parliamentarians, have already rendered results, where members of the parliament have contributed decisively to SDG 16.4, UNPoA and ATT related process in for example Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala and Zimbabwe.

¹ This Global Parliamentary Action Plan is a condensed, summarized version of the three Regional Parliamentary Action Plans. For a detailed account of results, please consult the aforementioned Plans.

² Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPOA)

This Global Parliamentary Action Plan has been prepared by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons based on the analysis and recommendations set out in the three different regional Parliamentary Action Plans. The Global Parliamentary Action Plan outlines and condenses the main priorities and actions needed to reinforce parliamentary ownership, participation and understanding of the ATT, the UNPOA, within the framework of SDG 16. It should serve as a tool for parliamentary action in the field of armed violence reduction and prevention, and take into account other relevant instruments.

Key priorities - Recommendations on Universalisation and Implementation of 2030 Agenda SDG 16, the UNPoA and the ATT

The outcomes of the “Connecting the Dots” Project underscore the fact that parliamentary action is paramount to create the missing link between the local and national level related to the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, the SDG 16.4 and the UNPoA, and synergies among these instruments are fundamental to achieve a change. Parliamentarians have an important role in identifying and highlighting best practices at the local level in order to inform national policies and legislation and to promote good practice internationally. Therefore, it is fundamental to support parliamentary action to Connect the Dots and decisively contribute to the prevention and reduction of SALW related violence.

In all efforts, it is fundamental to include the gender equality perspective, the role of women and youth, as well as other relevant international instruments on conventional arms control. Three action areas have been identified by parliamentarians participating in the project in Africa, Asia and Latin America. They are based on their three key roles of awareness raising, legislation and oversight, the main conclusions of each area are as follows;

1. Awareness raising

* Awareness raising is key in the consecution of implementation and universalisation of the ATT, UNPoA and SDG 16 at different levels.

* It is fundamental to carry on sensitisation efforts on the universalisation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UNPoA, and ATT among fellow parliamentarians, both in relevant committees and in the plenary.

* Awareness raising efforts among the population is crucial, as a better understanding of the provisions to national firearm control laws, SDG 16, UNPoA and ATT is necessary both for compliance but also to gather the political support needed to implement the above-mentioned instruments.

* Stronger parliamentary action is needed to promote the work and substantial participation of women parliamentarians in peace and security issues, especially facilitating their inclusion and access to decision making positions.

* Parliamentary work with the media is important, and parliamentarians need to engage with the traditional and social media to broaden support for and understanding of the SDG 16, UNPoA and ATT among the population.

2. Legislation

* Parliamentary action is needed to ensure universalisation, domestication and implementation of the ATT, the SDG 16 and the UNPoA, including different aspects ranging from drafting of legislation to budget allocations.

* Relevant international and regional treaties and instruments related to the topic of SALW control need to be signed, ratified and implemented by governments.

* Support for harmonisation of relevant legislation at the regional level is widely needed, together with the use of available tools such as model legislations, e.g. the Parlatino³ or UNODC⁴ model laws on Firearms, to identify areas of improvement as well as aid the regional harmonisation or laws and common standards.

* The gender equality perspective is an important point to take into account when working with legislation regarding SALW control, both in terms of content in the legislation and promoting women 's participation and leadership roles in the legislative process.

* Inter-committee work at the parliamentary level, and wider consultations with diplomatic representatives, government officials, civil society organisations, youth organisations, are also a priority to enrich legislative work, especially during the discussions, evaluation and drafting of relevant SALW control legislation relating to ATT, UNPoA and SDG 16.4.

3. Oversight

* Parliamentary oversight is a required step to ensure universalisation and implementation of the SDG 16, UNPoA and the ATT, and it is closely linked to the increased need to hold the government accountable and securing cooperation between relevant agencies in the consecution of such instruments.

* The maximisation of oversight of the government by relevant parliamentary committees is a priority, including actions such as tabling questions, motions and interpellations to relevant government institutions and officials.

* The active participation of civil society organisations in the oversight tasks is highly encouraged, as civil society can provide expertise, experiences and voice issues close to the reality of the constituents.

* Ensure parliamentary inclusion in relevant UN processes, and insist on parliamentary participation as part of delegations to relevant meetings and conferences. Parliamentary participation can bridge the gap existing in universalisation, implementation and domestication of relevant international SALW control instruments.

³ The Model Law was commissioned by the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino) and developed by the Forum in cooperation with the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation (SweFOR) and the Latin American organisations Latin American Coalition for the Prevention of Armed Violence (CLAVE) and Viva Rio. It was formally adopted by Parlatino in December 2008.

http://parlatino.org/pdf/leyes_marcos/leyes/ley-armas-municion-ingles-pma-5-dic-2008.pdf

⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Model Law against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (2011) https://www.unodc.org/documents/legal-tools/Model_Law_Firearms_Final.pdf