



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2022

Hammarby Fabriksväg 23 | SE-120 30 Stockholm | Sweden | telephone +46 (0)8 653 25 43 | secretariat@parlforum.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PFSALW/> | Twitter: @ParlForumSalw

www.parliamentaryforum.org

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Context	4
3. Theory of change	6
a. Outcome objectives.....	6
b. Strategic priorities.....	8
4. Strengthening Global Partnership	9
5. Transparency, Quality Assurance and Accountability	10

Executive Summary¹

The state of the world, marked by violence and conflict, underlines the need to prioritise the prevention and reduction of armed violence. The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (hereinafter the Forum or PFSALW) is the only membership based organisation gathering parliamentarians globally across party-political lines, specifically related to the **reduction** and **prevention** of SALW-related violence. It is an organisation constituted by parliamentarians, for parliamentarians working for sustainable development, human security and peace-building.

Our **Theory of Change** is to contribute to the achievement of more peaceful and sustainably developed societies by enhancing parliamentary action in the implementation and universalisation of international frameworks relevant to the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence through capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising.

The added value of the organisation consists in its vital role in bridging the gap between international arms control instruments and the regional and national implementation level. Strengthening parliamentary capacity by the threefold mutually reinforcing methodology of policy-shaping, capacity-building and awareness-raising underscores the contribution to sustainable development, human security and peace-building.

During 2019-2022, the core of the Forum's mandate is maintained. However, certain strategic priorities will be emphasised as to maximise the political impact of the Forum. Three strategic priorities have been identified based on recent international policy development on SALW-related violence and in response to the needs of our members;

- The role of parliamentarians in relation to the fulfilment of the **United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA)**, the **Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)** and the **2030 Agenda**, in specific **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, target 4** “by 2030, significantly reduce illicit flow of arms (...)”, and its connection to **SDG 5 on gender equality** and **SDG 17 on strengthening global partnerships** for sustainable development.
- Further strengthening parliamentary **outreach** and **advocacy** as to raise **public awareness** for the **prevention and reduction** of SALW-related violence globally.
- Continued consolidation and harmonisation of the **gender equality perspective** of the Forum, both organisationally by **targeting more women parliamentarians** as well as in the **thematic work** related to **UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security** and related **international instruments**.

¹ The Strategic Plan 2019-2022 was approved by the Board of the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons on 30th of November 2018.

1. Introduction

The Strategic Plan 2019-2022 constitutes a summarised, overall presentation of the objectives and scope of the organisation for the four-year period that it covers. The multi-annual Strategic Plan is translated into, and complemented by, more detailed annual operational plans.²

The Forum is the only membership based organisation gathering parliamentarians globally across party-political lines, specifically related to the **reduction** and **prevention** of **Small Arms and Light Weapons**-related violence. It is an organisation constituted by parliamentarians, for parliamentarians working for sustainable development, human security and peace-building.

The Forum's work aligns parliamentary action with international actions to prevent and reduce the uncontrolled availability of SALW that constitutes a holistic obstacle to sustainable development, human rights, good governance, human security and compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Parliamentarians have a central role to play in the mentioned processes to achieve a more peaceful and sustainably developed world with focus on conflict prevention.

2. Context

Problem statement

The state of the world, marked by violence and conflict, underlines the need to prioritise the prevention and reduction of armed violence. According to the Small Arms Survey, more than 1 billion Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are circulating worldwide, 85% in the hands of civilians³, causing the death of approximately 210 000 people every year⁴. The number of forcibly displaced people due to conflict, violence and persecution has reached 68.5 million, the highest number since the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees records began.⁵ The situations behind forced displacement are highly linked to the misuse of SALW. Armed conflicts and violence, independent of their scale, are perpetuated by the uncontrolled availability of SALW, increasing the need for concise and effective steps to tackle its proliferation. The uncontrolled proliferation of SALW has widespread human, economic and social costs. It is a threat to human security and impedes sustainable development. Furthermore, it threatens democracy and good governance and facilitates violations of human rights and IHL. Civilian lives as well as short- and long-term health are at risk by injuries from SALW-violence. The costs of hospitalisation, complex surgeries, ambulances

² The annual operational plans are outlined according to available financial and human resources and subject to the Board's decision.

³ Small Arms Survey (2018), Estimating Global Civilian-held firearms numbers, last accessed on June 20 2018, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Civilian-Firearms-Numbers.pdf>

⁴ Small Arms Survey (2017), Global Violent Deaths 2017, Time to decide, last accessed on June 13 2018: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/U-Reports/SAS-Report-GVD2017.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5b27be547/unhcr-global-trends-2017.html>

fees, are a burden for public budgets as a consequence. Civilians are also the main victims of violations of IHL in armed conflicts.⁶ However, the presence of SALW leads to an increase in insecurity, real and perceived, in both conflict and non-conflict zones. Situations of insecurity, in turn, lead to increased public security costs. When the state cannot meet the additional demand it can result in a heightened privatisation of the security sector, which can constitute a challenge to democracy.

Parliamentarians are crucial to the fight against uncontrolled SALW proliferation at national, regional and international levels. However, there is a gap in the support from international development stakeholders to provide the necessary capacities to parliamentarians enabling them to realise their full potential as actors of change.

Prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence: a role for parliamentarians

The prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence require a complex set of interventions. Regulations can be put in place regarding the acquisition and possession of SALW, transfers (including import, export, transfer, brokering, transit and transshipment), its manufacture and selling, marking and record-keeping, as well as the use of SALW. Beyond these types of controls, the demand for SALW can be targeted through awareness-raising in order to change perceptions associated with SALW possession or by increasing the level of compliance with the law. Domestic actions can be taken to review legislation or implement armed violence reduction programmes. Initiatives at the regional and international level are also crucial for the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence.

Parliamentarians have a central role to play at each level. As legislators, they have the mandate to introduce new laws and review existing ones, ensuring that they adequately regulate emerging practices. Parliamentarians also play an important oversight function vis-à-vis the government. By exercising their right to interpellation, requesting and reviewing reports on government achievements and, equally important, approving the budget, parliamentarians can positively influence the extent to which laws are implemented. In addition, parliamentarians interact with the public and translate contemporary concerns into policies. In doing so, they play a vital role in the stimulation of public debate and can contribute to cultural and behavioural changes. With regards to international processes, parliamentarians promote ratification of international treaties and can initiate discussions with fellow colleagues in other countries, contributing decisively to the formation of international norms on SALW and harmonisation at the regional level.

⁶ <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/contemporary-challenges-ihl>

3. Theory of change

The Theory of Change of the Forum is to contribute to the **achievement of more peaceful and sustainably developed societies by enhancing parliamentary action** in the implementation and universalisation of international frameworks relevant to the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence through capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising.

The work to enhance parliamentary action rests on three, mutually reinforcing methodological pillars: **capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising**. The pillars are used in the work of the Forum to support parliamentarians in their national, regional and international efforts by: 1) Providing them tools and action plans to contribute to their individual capacity as well as the capacity of parliaments to attend to issues of SALW; 2) Identifying policy options and recommendations for SALW control by drawing on knowledge and expertise both internally and through our network of partner organisations and research institutes; 3) Providing a space for parliamentarians to meet and cooperate with other stakeholders and actors from the civil society, as well as to distribute and share content to raise awareness of SALW on a societal level.

The points of departure for these pillars are hence the three key roles of a parliamentarian; **the legislative, oversight and awareness-raising** functions.

By serving as a platform for **inter-parliamentary dialogue, consensus building, exchange of good practices and harmonisation of initiatives**, the Forum enables parliamentarians to realise their full potential in preventing and reducing SALW-related violence in their work on legislation, oversight, and awareness-raising.

a. Outcome objectives

Based on its Theory of Change and the underlying working methodology, the Forum has developed four outcomes. These are continuously refined based on accumulated experience and global context. The process of revising outcomes enables the Forum to carry out work that is up to date in relation to current global events and the needs of its members, as well as to keep building upon past experiences. During 2019-2022, the trajectory of the Forum's work will adhere to the following four outcomes. Within each outcome certain priorities for the upcoming period are emphasised.

Outcome 1: Improved compliance with SALW control instruments at the national and regional level through increased parliamentary action

The purpose of this outcome is to enhance parliamentary action related to the three key functions of a parliamentarian; legislation, oversight and awareness-raising, in order to improve compliance with SALW control instruments at the national and regional level. Activities to realise this outcome will

aim to ensure that parliamentarians are well equipped to address issues connected to SALW-related violence within their national legislatures and in their respective regional contexts. In order to build capacity and strengthen their actions, parliamentarians will be provided with policy relevant expertise, knowledge and material, as well as with a meeting point to connect with other parliamentarians and relevant stakeholders. Since political processes take time, and parliamentarians have busy schedules, maintaining contact and supportive activities on a regular basis are vital to keep momentum going for parliamentary initiatives related to issues of SALW.

Outcome 2: Increased universalisation and implementation of the ATT, UNPoA and SDG 16.4 through the support and promotion of parliamentary participation and action in international processes

Parliamentary participation and action in international processes are vital as parliamentarians contribute to universalisation and implementation of international instruments. It concerns relevant United Nations conferences related to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UNPoA), and the Sustainable Development Goal 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda, as well as on women, peace and security.

Parliamentarians promote ratification of international treaties, contribute to the formation of international norms on SALW and harmonisation at the regional and international level, and are important in translating international development policies to the regional and national level. Moreover, international treaties envisage and highlight various parliamentary tasks, such as legislation, oversight and awareness-raising. The Forum actively promotes parliamentary inclusion and action at international conferences, and has done so successfully in the past by inviting members to take part in international meetings, seminars and side events.

Outcome 3: Strengthened parliamentary outreach, advocacy and awareness-raising for the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence

Parliamentarians play a central role in outreach and advocacy work for raising awareness among colleagues, constituencies and the public on the negative effects of SALW-related violence for societies. Increased awareness on the importance of reducing and preventing armed violence for the promotion of human security and sustainable development is vital for a better understanding of the provisions to national firearm control laws and international arms control frameworks. It is necessary both for compliance but also to gather the political support needed to initiate policies and to implement policies adopted. This work is carried out by parliamentarians in their constituencies, in their everyday work and through national, regional and international media outlets and social media. Their efforts are supported by the Forum working actively to enhance the capacity and policy-building role of its members.

Outcome 4: Consolidated financial and operational sustainability of the Forum

This outcome aims to further consolidate the financial and operational management of the Forum. This has been an important aspect of the Forum's efforts to strengthen the organisation following the precarious financial situation in late 2015. Qualitative results have been achieved recent years regarding financial and operational routines and policies, including clarification of roles and systematisation of operations. However, this outcome will remain a priority in the upcoming period, especially concerning **diversifying the funding base**. The financial sustainability of the organisation is vital for quality assurance and precondition for the thematic impact in the short-, mid- and long-term.

b. Strategic priorities

During 2019-2022, the core of the Forum's mandate is maintained. However, certain strategic priorities will be emphasised as to maximise the political impact of the Forum. Three strategic priorities have been identified based on recent international policy development on SALW-related violence and in response to the needs of our members. The strategic priorities will permeate the overall trajectory of the Forum's work. **The UNPoA, ATT and 2030 Agenda** and a strengthened **gender equality approach** will continue to be important topical focuses. The efforts to further strengthen parliamentary **outreach** and **advocacy** in order to raise **public awareness** for the **prevention and reduction** of SALW-related violence globally will also be a priority. Existing and further strengthened partnerships with other organisations will be of decisive importance for this process.

UNPoA, ATT and the 2030 Agenda

The role of the Forum is to translate global policies and goals to the political language of parliamentarians and connect them to implementation at the national level, where parliamentarians have an impact through their legislative, oversight and awareness-raising roles. Supporting universalisation and implementation of the UNPoA, ATT and the 2030 Agenda, more specifically SDG 16 target 16.4, will be important continued directions. Synergies between the three frameworks of the ATT, UNPoA and SDG 16.4 are essential. Supporting parliamentary action is key for the implementation of policies and strengthened compliance relevant to the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence. The close link between SDG 16, SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 17 on strengthening global partnerships for sustainable development will also be an important part of the work of the Forum.

The Forum will contribute to further strengthening parliamentary **outreach** and **advocacy** as to raise **public awareness** for the **prevention and reduction** of SALW-related violence globally. This will include targeted activities such as campaigns, publication of debate articles, general media outreach and active use of social media. Advocacy efforts will take place actively with members and relevant national, regional and international stakeholders. The topics will focus on the 2030 Agenda,

international instruments such as the ATT and the UNPoA, as well as on women, peace and security in relation to the role of the parliamentarians in preventing and reducing SALW-related violence.

Gender equality approach

The Forum will work to further strengthen its gender equality approach. Our work to contribute to SDG 5 of the 2030 Agenda to achieve gender equality and empower all girls and women involves organisational as well as thematic aspects. A continued priority is therefore to make targeted outreach activities to attract more women parliamentarians to become members. The objective to have a gender equal balance among members also connects to a focus of the Forum to involve and empower women's participation in peace and security processes, which are traditionally male dominated areas.

Thematically, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) and subsequent resolutions are vital guiding frameworks. UNSCR 1325 urges for the increased participation of women, reaffirms the important role of women in peace processes and calls for protective measures against gender-based violence (GBV). In its Policy Statement on Women Peace and Security⁷, the Forum reaffirms its support for the resolution and draws attention to the clear link between GBV and the proliferation of SALW. The link between GBV and the uncontrolled availability and use of SALW is widely acknowledged,⁸ and reports further show that the presence of a weapon in the household leads to higher rates of lethal domestic violence.⁹

4. Strengthening Global Partnership

The Forum benefits from close cooperation with international organisations, governments, research institutions, and civil society. Through individual members' networks, presence in national, regional and international contexts, as well as through its Secretariat, the Forum maintains a large network of experts, enabling the Forum to draw on policy knowledge and competencies on the most complex SALW-related issues.

The Forum adheres to and promotes the idea that effective intervention aimed at preventing or reducing SALW-related violence needs to be all-encompassing in nature. SALW-related violence manifests itself in a broad range of behaviours and in various contexts. It is the result of the interaction of a multitude of risk factors, and has far-reaching consequences on various aspects of societies. The Forum therefore pursues a comprehensive multi-stakeholder approach towards the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence, together with parliamentarians, governments, international organisations and civil society organisations.

⁷ <http://parliamentaryforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Policy-Statement-on-Women-Peace-and-Security-.pdf>

⁸ https://controlarms.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GBV-practical-guide_ONLINE.pdf

⁹ http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Gender-and-Security/Brief01-2eng_web.pdf

In order to achieve the strategic priorities for the period, the Forum aims to increase the cooperation with key actors and to consolidate previous collaborations. Based on this approach, the capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising pillars will be strengthened as to assure the quality and long-term impact.

Cooperation with different actors takes place through well-established partnerships and also ad hoc coordination. Partnerships are expressed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is signed with organisations who are fundamental to the work of the Forum.

Further cooperation with parliamentary assemblies and organisations, as well as with relevant research and civil society organisations, will be prioritised.

5. Transparency, Quality Assurance and Accountability

The Forum is committed to principles of transparency and accountability, in line with the democratic and inclusive character of the organisation. The principles apply both to the internal organisational and financial aspects as well as thematic scope and content. Through its different communication channels, the Forum transmits the results of its work to members, partners, donors and the general public alike in the different levels and geographical areas of action. In addition, the inclusive character of the Forum facilitates dialogue with different partners and stakeholders, creating a solid process of communication and accountability that channels adequately the impact and challenges of the Forum.

Based on its mandate and the state of the world, the Forum has a political relevance and a solid foundation in its global parliamentarian membership base. Since its foundation in 2002, the organisation has developed to encompass a broader geographical and thematic scope and vital results, experiences and partnerships have been achieved.

The effective fulfilment of the Forum's objectives is underpinned by an adequate platform to maximise sustainability of outcomes. To further strengthen its strategic long-term planning, impact and financial management, the Forum has established policies to regulate financial and administrative practices and principles. Results, risks and challenges are assessed, evaluated and reported on a yearly basis. Narrative and financial reports are provided as stipulated in the agreements with donors. The Board of the organisation has a vital role to play as ambassadors for the organisation and in providing strategic guidance to the Secretariat on the overall thematic and financial situation, being the entity with final responsibility for the organisation.

The Forum has also introduced a Code of Conduct - a document that shall guide the behaviour of Forum Members, staff, its Board and other stakeholders that interact with the Forum in order to safeguard a professional, sound and respectful working environment for everyone involved. The Code of Conduct also aligns to the European Union legislation for General Data Protection Regulation

(GDPR) to respect the privacy of all stakeholders involved in our work, only sharing information that is already public. Other vital steering documents, complementary to the Code of Conduct, are for example the Anti-Corruption and Procurement policy. The policies are based on applicable laws and regulations to follow the principles of effective use of resources, promotion of solid administrative routines and transparency in the management of financial resources.

In conclusion, mentioned efforts are therefore in place to ensure continued organisational and thematic sustainability and accountability.