



## **Multi-stakeholder dialogue: Parliamentary action on the 2030 Agenda – SALW control in the MENA region**

September 24-25, 2019

Generations for Peace, Amman, Jordan

### **PARLIAMENTARY ACTION PLAN**

#### **Introduction**

The state of the world underlines the need to prioritise the prevention and reduction of armed violence. Today's world is marked by violence and armed conflict, as well as global terrorism and organised crime. Armed conflicts and violence, independent of the scale, are perpetuated by the availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), increasing the need for concise and effective steps to tackle their uncontrolled proliferation.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is severely affected by armed violence, with some countries facing armed conflicts, terrorism, violent extremism and occupation. These issues are fuelled by the uncontrolled availability of SALW, creating an acute need for SALW control in the region<sup>1</sup>. Apart from causing injury and loss of life, SALW-related violence has severe effects on sustainable development, good governance and contributes to the persistence of armed conflict. Further, it facilitates violations of human rights, gender-based violence and impedes economic investment, having a negative impact on public health systems and productivity levels by draining public resources away from education and socio-economic development.

The seminar where this Parliamentary Action Plan is adopted aims to build on the on-going efforts towards universalisation and implementation of 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.4, the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA) 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. It seeks to use the momentum that the 2030 Agenda, the UN PoA and the ATT have created, in order to gather parliamentarians from countries in MENA in an effort to facilitate the exchange of experiences, challenges and best

---

<sup>1</sup> SIPRI 2018 'Arms transfers and SALW controls in the Middle East and North Africa: Mapping capacity-building efforts.' SIPRI Background Paper

practices that surround the legislative work on the three instruments. It also considers the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas and the effective implementation of their respective UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 1325 and 2250.

The present Parliamentary Action Plan is a result of the seminar panel presentations and discussions identifying main conclusions from the participants' perspectives. It outlines main priorities and actions needed to reinforce parliamentary ownership, participation and understanding of the ATT and the UN PoA,<sup>2</sup> within the framework of SDG 16 as well as the WPS and YPS agendas. It should serve as a tool for strengthening parliamentary action in the field of armed violence reduction and prevention and consider other relevant instruments.<sup>3</sup>

This Action Plan focuses on parliaments' role in strengthening the response to armed violence and SALW proliferation and has been designed to:

- Support the universalisation and/or effective implementation of the ATT, the UN PoA, UNSCRs 1325 and 2250, addressing synergies between the instruments within the framework of Agenda 2030, SDG 16;
- Guide parliamentarians in their work related to the ATT, UN PoA, UNSCRs 1325 and 2250 within the framework of SDG 16, to ensure that the legislative response is both nationally appropriate and consistent with the aims of the instruments;
- Suggest mechanisms for effective oversight of government;
- Recommend methods to strengthen links between the executive and legislative branches of government and between parliaments and civil society, especially women's and youth organisations on the armed violence prevention and reduction agenda – strengthening the social contract.

Three action areas have been identified and are based on the key roles of a parliamentarian;

1. Legislation
2. Oversight
3. Awareness raising

This Action Plan will provide, from the parliamentary perspective in the MENA region, an input to the important international fora linked to the review of the above instruments e.g. Biennial Meetings of States and Review Conferences of the UN PoA, Conferences of State Parties of the ATT as well as the Assemblies and meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. This Action Plan is an important complement to the existing Action Plans approved at seminars in Africa, Asia and Latin America, adopted 2017-2019.

---

<sup>2</sup> Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA)

<sup>3</sup> Consider the Firearms Protocol, as it is a legally binding instrument, as well as the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 16.4 and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA).

## **Recommendations on Universalisation and Implementation of 2030 Agenda SDG 16, the ATT, the UN PoA and UNSCR 1325 and 2250**

Parliamentary action is paramount to create the missing link between the local and national level related to the universalisation and implementation of SDG 16.4 the ATT, the UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250. Synergies among these instruments are fundamental to achieve 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 practices internationally. Therefore, it is fundamental to support parliamentary action to connect the dots between different tools and decisively contribute to the prevention and reduction of SALW related violence.

In all efforts, it is fundamental to include the gender equality and youth 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 and are based on their three key roles of legislation, oversight and awareness raising, the main conclusions of each area are as follows;

### **1. Legislation**

- 1.1. Ensure universalisation, domestication and implementation of SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250, including different aspects ranging from drafting of legislation to budget allocations, and work towards that politically binding instruments and tools for arms control to be legally binding and mandatory for all UN member states.
- 1.2. Ensure that international and regional treaties and instruments related to the topic of SALW control are signed, ratified and implemented by governments in compliance with International Humanitarian Law.
- 1.3. Support harmonisation of relevant legislation at the regional level, using available tools such as model legislations, e.g. UNODC<sup>4</sup> model laws on Firearms, to identify areas of improvement as well as support the regional harmonisation of laws and common standards.
- 1.4. Promote the provision of gender disaggregated research and development of armed violence reduction programmes to support legislation, including systematised national data collection on firearm-related deaths and injuries to help inform armed violence prevention policies.
- 1.5. Include the gender equality and youth perspective when working with legislation regarding SALW control, both in terms of content in the legislation and promoting women's and youth's participation and leadership roles in the legislative process.
- 1.6. Make inter-committee work at the parliamentary level, and wider consultations with diplomatic representatives, government officials, civil society organisations, women's and

---

<sup>4</sup> 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)

youth organisations, a priority to enrich legislative work, especially during the discussions, evaluation and drafting of relevant SALW control legislation relating to SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250.

## **2. Oversight**

- 2.1. Prioritise oversight of the government by relevant parliamentary committees, including actions such as tabling questions, motions and interpellations to relevant government institutions and officials. For those countries where implementation and/or reporting are slow or delayed, parliamentarians should identify the reasons: e.g. lack of political will, administrative red tape, and lack of technical capacity / trained personnel to deal with reporting issues.
- 2.2. Stay informed by seeking advice from civil society organisations and research institutes in the oversight tasks, as these can provide expertise, experiences and voice issues, as well as encouraging the active participation of parliamentarians in processes.
- 2.3. Ensure financial sustainability such as encouraging governments to secure sufficient funding for effective implementation through state budget or external sources e.g. the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund and/or secure the allocation of the necessary budgets to allow state agencies to collect statistics relevant that facilitates the evaluation of implementation.
- 2.4. As parliamentary participation can bridge the gap in universalisation, implementation and domestication of relevant international SALW control instruments, take measures to secure parliamentary inclusion in relevant UN processes, and insist on parliamentary participation as part of delegations to relevant meetings and conferences.
- 2.5. Promote inter-agency coordination, avoid duplication of efforts and harmonise with international efforts and hold regular meetings between cross-party groups of legislators and the ministers responsible.
- 2.6. Promote and implement systematised national, gender disaggregated data collection, conducted by government bodies as well as research institutes, on firearm-related deaths and injuries to help inform armed violence prevention policies.

## **3. Awareness-raising**

- 3.1. Raise awareness on the universalisation and implementation of SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250 among fellow parliamentarians, both in relevant committees and in the plenary and include experts in the dialogue to underpin rationale.
- 3.2. Promote the development of formal or informal cross-party groups/networks in order to raise awareness on SALW-related violence and champion relevant instruments to curb the uncontrolled flow and use of illicit SALW.

- 3.3. Approach parliamentary leadership (Speakers, committee chairs, group leaders etc.) to include the issues related to implementation of the above instruments on the parliamentary agenda.
- 3.4. Table questions in parliaments to relevant government institutions: For those countries where ratification or implementation is slow or delayed, parliamentarians should identify the reasons: e.g. lack of political will, administrative red tape, lack of technical capacity/trained personnel etc.
- 3.5. Table motions in relation to relevant instruments to generate political interest.
- 3.6. Encourage stronger parliamentary action 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.
- 3.7. Join forces with young people, both as a target group but also as an ally in the implementation of SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250 at the national, regional and international level.
- 3.8. Raise awareness among the population, as a better understanding of the provisions to national firearm control laws, SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250 is necessary both for compliance but also to gather the political support needed to implement the above-mentioned instruments.
- 3.9. Link with civil society organisations, including at grass-root level, government agencies and constituencies for awareness raising initiatives aimed at sensitising the population on the consequences and costs of armed violence, in order to look for the necessary solutions.
- 3.10. Engage with traditional and social media to broaden support for and understanding of the SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250.

### **Part 3 – Partnerships and resources<sup>5</sup>**

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 stipulates strengthening of global partnerships for sustainable development. The efforts of parliamentarians and the Parliamentary Forum in promoting increased or enhanced parliamentary action on SDG 16, ATT, UN PoA and UNSCRs 1325 and 2250 can be multiplied if working in partnership with organisations with similar or overlapping interests. It is therefore recommended that the Parliamentary Forum and its members seek partnerships and structured dialogue with a range of actors.

Parliamentary action constitutes a unique effort to create the missing link between the local and national level. Parliamentarians have an important role in identifying and highlighting good practice at the local level in order to inform national policies and legislation and to promote good practice internationally.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Plan is inspired by action plans and tools created by other international parliamentary organisations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Parliamentarians for Global Action.

**Other Parliamentary networks**

[Inter-Parliamentary Union \(IPU\)](#)

[The Arab Parliament](#)

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean](#)

[Pan-African Parliament \(PAP\)](#)

[Parliamentarians for Global Action \(PGA\)](#)

[The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons \(PFSALW\)](#)

**Intergovernmental structures**

[United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\) - Rule of Law, Justice, Security & Human Rights Team](#)

[UNDP Arab States](#)

[League of Arab States](#)

[ISACS Inter-Agency Support Unit](#)

[United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs \(UNODA\)](#)

[United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa \(UNREC\)](#)

[United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\) – Global Firearms Programme](#)

**Civil Society Organisations**

[Control Arms Coalition](#)

[International Action Network on Small Arms \(IANSA\)](#)

[International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War \(IPPNW\)](#)

[Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#)

[United Network of Young Peacebuilders](#)

[Generations for Peace](#)

[Solidarity is Global institute](#)

[All Girls For Development Yemen](#)

[Ruwwad Al-Tanmeya](#)

[Sister's Arab Forum for Human Rights](#)

[The Palestinian Centre for Democracy](#)

[West Asia-North Africa Institute \(WANA\)](#)

**Research institutes**

[Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces \(DCAF\) – Public - Private Partnerships Division](#)

[Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security \(GRIP\)](#)

[Small Arms Survey](#)

[Bonn International Centre for Conversion \(BICC\)](#)

[Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#)

[Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation – Africa Department](#)

**Other sources**

[The Arms Trade Treaty](#)

[The UN PoA](#)

[UNSCR 1325](#)

[UNSCR 2250](#)

[UNCOMTRADE](#)

[NISAT](#)

[UNROCA](#)

[Firearms Protocol](#)

[UNODC Model Law against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition](#)