

## Seminar report

### *Regional Seminar for Asia, with a specific focus on Southeast Asia*

## **Part I “Connecting the Dots: Enhancing Implementation of the Women, Peace & Security, UN PoA and 2030 Agendas – through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes”**

8 June, 2022

Venue: AYANA Midplaza Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia

**Preparatory step to the Eight Biennial Meeting of States (BMS8) on 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), 27 June- 1 July 2022**

*Objective: Strengthen parliamentary capacity and action for the implementation of the UN PoA, the Women, Peace & Security (WPS) and 2030 Agendas.*



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### Executive summary

On June 8, the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW), in cooperation with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), organised a regional seminar for Asia, with specific focus on Southeast Asia. The first part of the seminar<sup>1</sup> was entitled “*Connecting the Dots: Enhancing Implementation of the Women, Peace & Security, UN PoA and 2030 Agendas – through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes*” in Jakarta, Indonesia. In total 40 parliamentarians and representatives from the diplomatic community, international organisations and the civil society participated in the seminar<sup>2</sup>.

The intended outcome of the first part of the seminar was to increase parliamentary engagement, participation and action in the implementation 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 (UN PoA), the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the 2030 Agendas for Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) control. The seminar engaged parliamentarians from Member Parliaments of AIPA as well as AIPA’s observer Parliaments in the Asia region and other relevant stakeholders, as part of the run-up and preparation for the Eighth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN PoA (BMS 8) on 27 June-1 July 2022. Specific consideration was made to the equal inclusion of women parliamentarians in the seminar as to enhance women’s active role and participation in peace and security processes. In the seminar, parliamentary priorities and recommendations were identified, based on PFSALW’s and AIPA’s previously elaborated regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) adopted in 2018. Based on the seminar discussion and conclusions, the regional PAP was revised and approved by the parliamentarians, to guide and support parliamentary action for universalisation and implementation on WPS, UN PoA and the 2030 Agenda at the national and regional level. The conclusions from the revised PAP were later presented at a side event at BMS8 on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2022.

The first part of the seminar was realised with the financial support of United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and its Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation Fund (UNSCAR).

### Opening Ceremony

**Hon. Mrs. Nguyen Tuong Van, Secretary General of AIPA**, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to realise the regional seminar in person to strengthen common efforts for armed violence prevention following the easing of the global COVID-19 pandemic. She also expressed her gratitude for the fruitful collaboration between AIPA and PFSALW in co-organising the seminar. She then moved on to explain that the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW is a global and regional challenge, with Southeast Asia being a crossroad for SALW

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<sup>1</sup> The first part of the seminar, taking place on June 8, 2022, was included in PFSALW’s project financed by the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation Fund (UNSCAR), entitled “*Connecting the Dots: Enhancing Implementation of the Women, Peace & Security, UN PoA and 2030 Agendas – through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes*”. The second part of the seminar formed part of a PFSALW project financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada, titled “*Reducing threats to international security: Mobilising parliamentarians from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Middle East to strengthen global parliamentary action for enhanced universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty*” and took place on June 9-10, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> In total five parliamentarians from Cambodia, the Republic of Korea and Vietnam participated in the seminar, together with 35 representatives of the diplomatic community, international organisations and civil society from the following ten countries: Cambodia, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and Vietnam.

trafficking. Hence, parliamentarians, including women parliamentarians, play a vital role in strengthening efforts towards peace and development.

In his opening remarks, **Hon. Ty Sokun, Member of Parliament from Cambodia, currently AIPA Presidency** took the opportunity to stress the link between the illicit trade of SALW and organised crime, including production and trafficking of drugs, which can be observed in East and Southeast Asia. He affirmed Cambodia's commitment to taking the lead in the fight against transnational crime. In combatting illicit SALW trafficking and its links to the drug trade, it is important to further promote regional cooperation, including related to custom and border control, anti-corruption, enhancing capacities of law enforcement institutions and implementing relevant regional and international instruments such as the UN PoA, United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, the 2030 Agenda, the Firearms Protocol (FP) and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

**Mr. Jamshed Kazi, UN Women Indonesia Country Representative and ASEAN Liaison**, reflected on the importance of harmonising approaches to WPS, SALW and disarmament in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region through regional and national frameworks, as to enhance the protection of women's rights and allow stronger recognition of women's voices and agency. In the context of ASEAN, parliamentarians have a key role in bridging the gap between policy commitments made in the international fora and their application at the national and regional level. Parliamentarians can support the implementation of the WPS Agenda by taking initiative to, and advocating for, legislative reforms, ensure adequate budget is allocated to the implementation of relevant policies, and, as representatives of their constituencies, amplify the local perspective and lived experiences of gender-based violence (GBV). Finally, ensuring availability of adequate evidence and data is important in monitoring progress on the 2030 Agenda, specifically Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.4 on reducing illicit arms flows and SDG 5 on gender equality.

**Ms Karin Olofsson, Secretary General of PFSALW** emphasised that in order to effectively address the uncontrolled spread of SALW in the region, it is key to strengthen parliamentary action for enhanced implementation of the UN PoA, 2030 Agenda and WPS Agenda. She further highlighted that the gender equality perspective is one of the strategic priorities of PFSALW, based on research showing that women's active role and participation in peace and security processes is vital for enhancing sustainable and durable peace. Thus, part I of the regional seminar sets out to increase parliamentary understanding and ownership of relevant international instruments that guide and regulate conventional arms control as part of the run-up and preparation for the Eight Biennial Meeting of States (BMS 8) on the UN PoA at the United Nations (UN) in New York on 27th June- 1st July 2022. She concluded by expressing sincere gratitude on behalf of PFSALW for the fruitful collaboration with AIPA and to the UNODA and its UNSCAR Fund for the financial support enabling the realisation of such a crucial gathering on parliamentary capacity-building and knowledge exchange.

### **Session I: Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.4, linking to SDG 5, in Southeast Asia**

*Objective: Enhancing parliamentary knowledge on commitments and status of implementation related to the 2030 Agenda, SDG 16.4, as well as its links to SDG 5 on gender equality, as a basis for translation into proposals for concrete parliamentary action to prevent and reduce Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)-related violence in the region.*

The first keynote speaker, **Ms Agata Walczak, Governance and Parliamentary Strengthening expert, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, affirmed the interconnectedness of SALW control and other dimensions, such as peace and security, law enforcement, GBV, livelihoods, education, public health and international cooperation and trade. Drawing on the extensive experience of UNDP from working with parliaments, she also noted that parliaments are the only oversight mechanism formally mandated to holistically look at several sectoral responses at the same time, including ensuring adequate budget allocation, overseeing that powers are used responsibly and that there is transparency and national ownership. Hence, parliaments have a key role in contributing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, including SDG 16.4. Furthermore, she commented that gender equality is the responsibility of all parliamentarians, as parliamentarians are equally responsible to the men and women in their constituencies. Moreover, if institutions are to operate on a gender sensitive basis and adequately address the needs and aspirations of all groups in the society, women must be equally represented in leadership positions.

In her presentation, **Ms Bianca Pabotoy, Women, Peace and Security Project Officer, Center for Peace Education (CPE), Miriam College**, focused on the links between SDG 16.4 and SDG 5. She pointed out that while men constitute the majority of victims of armed violence, as well as the primary perpetrators in the illicit use and trade of arms, women suffer from the consequences of SALW proliferation in significant ways. As an example, firearms are used to facilitate rape, sexual abuse and domestic or intimate-partner violence. She urged parliamentarians to develop gender-responsive and cross-sectoral initiatives on arms control, for example through the elaboration of National Action Plans (NAPs) explicitly linking SALW and WPS, as well as through safeguarding that resources are invested in the already existing national and regional capacity, such as CSOs, as part of strengthening peace and security processes.

In a parliamentary response, **Hon. Thi Hong An Tran, Member of Parliament from Vietnam** accounted for the important progress made by Vietnam until date regarding the achievement of SDG 16, including judiciary and legislative reforms, measures to mobilise politicians as well as the population, and efforts to combat organised crime. She further noted that while Vietnam is striving to collect data on SDG 16.4, for example by issuing a set of sustainable development statistical indicators in 2019, the currently available national statistics are not sufficient to adequately measure SDG 16.4 in accordance with the guidelines of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Hence, it is an area where further strengthening is needed in the coming period. Finally, she took the opportunity to share news of an emerging trend in Vietnam where criminal groups have taken advantage of cyberspace to sell and buy illegal firearms, making the illicit trade increasingly difficult to control. It is therefore vital to review national legislation as to prevent the illegal trade of SALW in cyberspace.

**H.E. Muhammad Hassan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia**, expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to present the perspective of Pakistan at the seminar, following Pakistan recently having acquired observer status to AIPA. He reflected on the negative consequences of the misuse of SALW, including the factors facilitating SALW proliferation such as illicit trade, brokering and weak management of state stockpiles. Every day, men, women and children fall victims of armed violence committed with SALW by criminals or insurgents.

Therefore, Pakistan commends the UN Assembly for rightly pointing out the need to significantly reduce illicit SALW flows in the 2030 Agenda, SDG 16.4, and confirmed Pakistan's full commitment to the implementation of the UN PoA. He further noted that the estimated 75 million firearms in Southeast Asia are contributing to violence and insecurity, having a negative impact on development and economic growth. Hence, it is important that the international community continues to support developing countries in combatting armed violence.

**In the open floor debate**, the importance of SDG 16 and SDG 5 in ensuring women's meaningful participation was mentioned, specifically looking at the targets and the common objectives of the SDGs, and acknowledging overlapping areas. Furthermore, it was suggested that the lack of collection of data in the region related to the targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda, including on SDG 16 and SDG 5, is making it increasingly difficult for parliamentarians to effectively exercise their oversight role. Contributing to the lack of proper data collection is the widespread misconception that SDG 16 is only relevant to countries in armed conflict or with very high rates of armed violence. Moreover, the importance of budget oversight was discussed, specifically the need to apply a gender perspective to the budget, thereby allowing it to serve as a blueprint for more gender sensitive practices. It was noted that while several countries in the region have comprehensive frameworks and policies for gender equality, they are not having any real impact as the policies are not reflected in the budget. The positive example of the Philippines was specifically highlighted, where 5% of the budget for all Government offices is reserved for gender development. It was also highlighted that the traditional gender equality agenda has not been producing sufficient result. However, the WPS Agenda presents a particularly effective angle to engage parliaments, including parliaments with few women parliamentarians, to create discussion on political leadership on the gender balance oversight, and to promote a systemic relationship between parliaments and the civil society. Gender equality is not a woman's issue but relevant for sustainable development overall, and as such it is the responsibility of the entire society.

## **Session II: International conventional arms regulation instruments – implementation of the UN PoA, linking to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda.**

*Objective: Explore achievements and challenges in the implementation of the UN PoA at the regional and national level, linked to the WPS Agenda and other relevant international instruments.*

**Mr Max Menn, Representative of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC)** began by giving an overview of the impact of illicit firearms being used to facilitate violent crimes such as homicides, robbery and extortion. In 2017, 464,000 people were killed globally in homicides, which is five times more people killed in a homicide than in armed conflict. 50% of all homicides were committed with firearms. While men are the majority of victims of homicides, he underlined that 82% of victims of domestic violence are women and that guns are the most common weapon used. He then moved on to remind that UN member states through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and SDG 16.4 have committed to significantly reduce illicit arms flows by year 2030. The UN PoA, the FP and the ATT are mutually reinforcing instruments supporting the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. The FP and the ATT are legally binding frameworks for the political commitments in the UN PoA, thereby creating a common denominator in arms control measures and reinforcing the

commitments made under the UN PoA. He concluded by encouraging states in the region to ratify the FP, as only two out of eleven countries in Southeast Asia are currently State Parties.

**Ms Ida Scarpino, Coordinator on gender mainstreaming control of SALW, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD)** drew attention to the fact that armed conflicts and violence in parts of South and Southeast Asia are fuelling the demand for SALW, including through illicit sources. Despite strict legislative controls on firearm possession in many Asia-Pacific countries, civilian firearm possession vastly outnumbers state-held weapons. While civilian arms often have been obtained through legal channels, they can be misused in the context of weak SALW control frameworks. She also underlined that the presence of SALW further aggravates fragile settings and exposure to violence, with disproportionate impact on women and girls, including during the pandemic. While UN member states through the UN PoA have committed to harmonise national policies and action plans on SALW with the WPS Agenda, for example at the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States on the UN PoA in 2021, the low UN PoA reporting on behalf of states in the region makes it difficult to assess progress. Of the 93 national reports received globally in 2020/2021 on the UN PoA, only 18 came from the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, out of 14 NAPs on WPS in Asia-Pacific, only four include specific reference to SALW. Hence, she encouraged parliamentarians to ensure gender-disaggregated data is collected as to improve understanding of the gendered impacts of SALW, and that parliamentarians advocate for the regular compilation and submission of UN PoA reports.

**Mr. Alistair Gee, Executive Director– Centre for Armed Violence Reduction (CAVR)** reviewed the UN PoA and specifically pointed out the importance of proper management of government as well as civilian held arms. With regards to state stockpiles, it is essential to keep accurate records and monitor as to ensure that weapons are not diverted. Similarly, regarding civilian held arms, it is key to ensure that legally possessed arms do not enter the black market where they may be used in crimes. He further explained that it is not the number of SALW in a country that is contributing to a greater risk of violent crimes and deaths. Rather, it is the lack of control which is contributing to the increased risk of the misuse of SALW. As an opportunity to combat the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW in the region, he noted that the region in general has a solid legislative framework on SALW control and furthermore that community reporting can have a positive impact on decreasing levels of armed violence. In this regard, it is important to ensure that community members, including family members, are aware, feel safe and have the means to report the existence of illegal guns in their home or community. Finally, he recommended parliamentarians to explore the software solution [ArmsTracker](#) which can support countries in the implementation of different provisions of the UN PoA, such as management of manufacturing, stockpiles, tracing and brokering of SALW, as well as the website [Gun Policy](#) which provides data on SALW.

Following the panellists' presentations, **Hon. Un Sokunthea, Member of Parliament from Cambodia**, based on her over 30 years' experience of serving as a police officer and 8 years as a politician, commented on the negative impacts of carrying guns, as well as the achievements of Cambodia regarding strengthening women's participation in peace and security processes domestically and internationally. The important steps towards empowering women, including in decision making where women currently constitute around 20% of parliamentarians in Cambodia, have been made possible by the peace achieved in the country

following extended war and conflicts. She concluded with the statement that women are strong because of men, and that men are strong because of women. Hence, men must be women's allies in strengthening their voices and agency in peace, security and decision making.

**Hon. Thi Hong An Tran, Member of Parliament from Vietnam**, presented efforts of her country in improving the legal system related to crime prevention and control, in accordance to the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementary Protocols and promoting international cooperation activities. The approaches applied in building the legal framework in Vietnam included; to promote transnational crime prevention and control activities, to conduct reviews on combatting illegal migration, and to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In the efforts to tackle the negative consequences of SALW, Vietnam provides direct guidance from the central to local levels in crime prevention and control carried out through various activities to strengthen the construction and improvement of the legal system on crime prevention.

In the **open floor debate**, the interconnectedness between legal and illegal SALW was discussed. It was stressed that legal weapons have severe effects on humans and societies, such as in the case of the current war in Ukraine, and that these weapons are at high risk of diversion and entering the illicit market. Overall, in Asia, countries have highly restrictive gun regimes. Nonetheless, many civilians possess a firearm which is a key reason for continuing efforts to prevent SALW diversion, including diversion of state held weapons.

**Session III; first working session: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on the implementation of the UN PoA, the WPS agenda and SDG 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda and other relevant instruments, and follow-up discussion and revision of the previous regional PAP followed by approval.**

*Objective: 1) In groups share results, positive experiences and challenges in the parliamentary work on the implementation of the UN PoA, the WPS agenda and SDG 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda and other relevant instruments based on the previously adopted regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) from 2018. 2) Brief review of the PAP to identify needs for revision and update based on the conclusions from the seminar discussions.*

All participants were divided into three groups with a distribution of parliamentarians and other stakeholders in each group. With the support of a facilitator in respective groups, discussions focused on results, positive experiences and challenges regarding the implementation of the UN PoA, the WPS Agenda and SDG 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda based on the previously adopted regional PAP from 2018. Moreover, each group reviewed the PAP to identify needs for revision and update based on the conclusions from the seminar discussions.

**Group 1** noted that the lack of inter-agency coordination and information sharing continues to be a challenge when it comes to preventing armed violence in the region, as well as the increased vulnerability of women and girls for GBV during the COVID-19 pandemic. As opportunity, the group highlighted increased awareness on the importance of women's role in peace and security. For example, in Cambodia, women parliamentary caucuses have realised capacity building with girls in constituencies under the campaign "Girl to leader". For the



update of the PAP, the group identified the recommendation to enhance inter-parliamentary inter-assembly coordination and information sharing, to continue to support women's participation in relevant peace and security processes and to ensure that the needs of all are included in arms control.

**Group 2** discussed the lack of a unified firearms database, as well as the need for capacity building of front lines officials, such as law enforcement, customs officers, border patrols etc. Collaboration with civil society and international organisations was identified as a key opportunity moving forward. As the key recommendation from the group, it was stated that parliamentarians must take into consideration the reason for continued demands of firearms in the region, including related to drug trafficking and violent extremism, in combating uncontrolled flows of SALW.

**Group 3** claimed that the legislative framework in Asia is qualitative overall related to SALW control, but that implementation is lacking. Hence, awareness raising and oversight are the most prioritised areas for parliamentarians in the upcoming period. As part of oversight, it is key that parliamentarians advocate for countries to submit reports in relation to their international reporting commitments, such as the UN PoA. Moreover, it is important to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to peace and security processes, in particular in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic where most resources have been allocated to emergency issues such as public health.

In the final session of the seminar, the participants reviewed and discussed the suggestions presented by each group regarding modifications to the regional PAP first approved in 2018. Based on the review, the revised PAP was approved by the participants.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Based on Part I of the seminar, the regional PAP from 2018 was reviewed and approved in a revised version, focusing on UN PoA, 2030 Agenda and the WPS Agenda. Based on Part II of the regional seminar, a separate regional PAP with focus on ATT universalisation and implementation with links to the WPS Agenda was approved. Due to methodological reasons, at the seminar as such the discussion was held gathered while maintaining the focus on the respective instruments abovementioned. However, for conceptual and editorial clarity, two separate, stand-alone PAPs were elaborated as part of the final documentation.

## Seminar report

### *Regional Seminar for Asia, with a specific focus on Southeast Asia*

## **Part II: “Reducing threats to international security: Mobilising parliamentarians from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Middle East to strengthen global parliamentary action for enhanced universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty”**

9-10 June, 2022

Venue: AYANA Midplaza Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia

*Objective: Strengthen parliamentary capacity and action for the universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), linking to the WPS Agenda.*



### Executive summary

On June 9-10, the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW), in cooperation with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), organised a regional seminar for Asia, with specific focus on Southeast Asia. The second part of the seminar<sup>4</sup> was entitled “*Reducing threats to international security: Mobilising parliamentarians from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Middle East to strengthen global parliamentary action for enhanced universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty*” in Jakarta, Indonesia. In total 40 parliamentarians and representatives from the diplomatic community, international organisations and the civil society participated in the seminar<sup>5</sup>.

The objective of the second part of the seminar was to strengthen parliamentary knowledge for the universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), as well as to identify the most prioritised actions to take in respective country and compile in a regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) specifically related to the topic on the ATT. Based on the regional efforts within the project in Asia, and subsequently in Latin America and the Middle East respectively, an international seminar will be hosted in 2023 to promote the achievement of set outcomes through inter- regional exchange on good practices and to evaluate actions taken thus far. Conclusions and recommendations will be compiled in a parliamentary policy publication to serve as a road-map for parliamentarians globally in the work on the ATT. Lessons learned will also be presented at a side event at the side-lines of the Conference of State Parties to the ATT in 2023 to promote parliamentary participation and leverage in international processes, as well as be shared with all PFSALW’s members and the wider public in an international social media campaign.

The seminar engaged parliamentarians from Member Parliaments of AIPA as well as AIPA’s observer parliaments in the Asia region and other relevant stakeholders. Specific consideration was made to the equal inclusion of women parliamentarians in the seminar as to enhance women’s active role and participation in peace and security processes.

The second part of the seminar was realised with the financial support of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada.

### Opening Ceremony

The second part of the seminar was opened by **Hon. Mrs. Nguyen Tuong Van, Secretary General of the AIPA**, who welcomed the distinguished parliamentarians, panellists and other participants joining the event, and expressed her gratitude to PFSALW for the productive collaboration in realising the seminar with focus in parliamentary action for universalisation and implementation of the ATT. She then emphasised the vital role of ASEAN Member

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<sup>4</sup> The first part of the seminar, taking place on June 8, 2022, was included in PFSALW’s project financed by the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation Fund (UNSCAR), entitled “*Connecting the Dots: Enhancing Implementation of the Women, Peace & Security, UN PoA and 2030 Agendas – through increased parliamentary engagement and action in international processes*”. The second part of the seminar formed part of a PFSALW project financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada, titled “*Reducing threats to international security: Mobilising parliamentarians from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Middle East to strengthen global parliamentary action for enhanced universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty*” and took place on June 9-10, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> In total five parliamentarians from Cambodia, the Republic of Korea and Vietnam participated in the seminar, together with 35 representatives of the diplomatic community, international organisations and civil society from the following ten countries: Cambodia, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and Vietnam.

Parliaments in taking decisive action to prevent and reduce armed violence, and to work across borders to combat the uncontrolled proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW) in the region.

**Ms. Vicky Singmin, Chargé d'affaires, Mission of Canada to ASEAN** took the opportunity to give a global overview in the form of key statistics from the Small Arms Survey, highlighting that over 1 billion SALW circulate worldwide, approximately 85% in civilian hands, causing the death of 223 300 people every year. She further observed that uncontrolled SALW threatens the rule of law, human rights, democracy and facilitates gender based violence (GBV). The ATT is a key instrument to prevent uncontrolled proliferation of SALW. Since becoming a State Party to the ATT in 2019, Canada has actively promoted the Treaty and advocated for its universalisation and implementation, for example by providing support to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund. In addition, Canada is also pleased to support PFSALW and its work for increased parliamentary action on the ATT.

In her opening remarks, **Ms. Karin Olofsson, Secretary General of PFSALW** expressed gratitude to AIPA and all participants for the shared commitment to prevent SALW-related violence, and to Canada's Ministry for Foreign Affairs for the financial support to PFSALW allowing the second part of the regional seminar to take place. She further noted that in Southeast Asia, countries are severely affected by the uncontrolled proliferation and trafficking of illicit SALW. The region is a crossroad for arms smuggling, illicit craft production and drug-trafficking across the extensive maritime borders. As a negative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, armed groups in the region have also taken the opportunity to expand their activities when states are preoccupied with responding to the virus. Hence, the urgency of the situation calls for concise steps by all, in specific parliamentarians, including women parliamentarians, to ratify relevant international instruments, in particular the ATT and its links to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda.

#### **Session IV: Universalisation and implementation of the ATT in Asia, with specific focus on Southeast Asia, linking to the WPS Agenda and other relevant international frameworks**

*Objective: Enhancing parliamentary knowledge on the ATT, status on universalisation, and explore achievements and challenges in the universalisation and implementation of the ATT at the regional and national level, linking to the WPS Agenda and other relevant frameworks such as the UN PoA, SDG 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda and the Firearms Protocol.*

In his presentation, **Mr Max Menn, Representative of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC)**, accounted for the synergies between the Firearms Protocol (FP) and the ATT, noting that common denominators are particularly pertinent in the areas of export control and the enforcement of ATT obligations. While the FP mainly covers illicit trade in firearms, the ATT primarily regulates aspects of the legal trade. Through the vital oversight function of parliamentarians, it is key to review legal arms transfers in line with the provisions of the ATT, and in cases where diversion of arms is detected, parliamentarians must ensure follow-up investigations are undertaken with the support of the FP. Combined, the two instruments constitute a strong foundation for combatting uncontrolled proliferation of SALW. As both instruments are legally binding and mutually reinforcing, he encouraged

parliamentarians to consider jointly ratifying and implementing them, as ratification of both instruments remain low in the region.

**Mr. Alistair Gee, Executive Director– Centre for Armed Violence Reduction** also pinpointed the continued need to enhance universalisation of the ATT in Southeast Asia where few countries currently are State Parties. Six out of 26 countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific have ratified the ATT, eight are signatories and 12 are yet to join the Treaty. A key challenge in this regard is to address the common misconception that joining the ATT is jeopardising States’ sovereignty. He further noted the benefits regarding joining the ATT as an important instrument to address two common challenges in the region with regards to SALW proliferation. Firstly, while countries overall have solid regulation regarding importation of SALW, illegal shipments in transit through a country’s territory, e.g. by sea, are often not regulated and are therefore not stopped. Secondly, several countries in the region are not regulating brokering of SALW, meaning that individuals and companies may engage from a distance in activities related to SALW trafficking taking place in another country without being held accountable.

In his parliamentary response, **Hon. Ty Sokun, Member of Parliament from Cambodia** gave an overview of Cambodia’s commitment to the ATT, where the country has been a signatory of the Treaty since 2013 and as part of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) commonly participates in international conferences and capacity building activities related to the ATT. He also recalled the recent history of war in Cambodia, where a high number of SALW, explosives, ammunition and landmines were imported from foreign nations. Only through the dedicated efforts to remove these weapons from the society, for example through the burning of weapons in the ‘Flame of Peace’ ceremonies, has the country been able to safeguard peace and sustainable social and economic development in recent years.

In **the open floor debate**, the question on how to promote ATT universalisation in the region was further discussed, including how to tackle States’ reservations about joining the Treaty. One aspect specifically highlighted was States hesitancy to report on import of weapons. It was pointed out that the information on which ATT State Parties are asked to report, is information already published by the exporters. Hence, it is important to ensure States are aware of the fact that they are not expected to reveal any new information that could endanger national security. Furthermore, the increasing awareness on the benefits of becoming a State Party was also highlighted, including the fact that the ATT is an efficient tool to counter arms smuggling. The importance of making information about the ATT available in the local languages was also emphasised, and experts referred to the [existence of an ATT toolkit](#) available in the languages of several countries in the region.

#### **Session V: Towards inclusive processes on peace, security and sustainable development: Strengthening parliamentary action for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on WPS**

*Objective: To strengthen the gender equality perspective in parliamentary action for the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence.*

**Ms Bianca Pabotoy, Women, Peace and Security Project Officer, Center for Peace Education (CPE), Miriam College,** reiterated the importance of linking SALW control and the WPS Agenda, specifically by including references to SALW in National Action Plans (NAPs) on the WPS Agenda. In armed conflict, women continue to be subjected to GBV, where sexual violence may be used as a tactic of war. By including language of arms control in NAPs on WPS, it is possible to increase awareness on the need for increased arms control as to safeguard women's rights and safety. It also opens up a space for women to play a role in addressing the impact of SALW proliferation. The Philippines is one of few countries in the region with a NAP on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which makes specific reference to SALW, identifying firearms as enablers of armed conflict. In the NAP, the action point "Develop, enact, and implement policies that ensure protection and security for women affected by armed conflict" allows for the increased participation of women in decision making processes on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

**Ms Agata Walczak, governance and parliamentary strengthening expert, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** observed that while NAPs on WPS generally have high aspiration, on average only one in three NAPs' implementation are budgeted for. Moreover, lack of coordination between governments, state agencies and civil society, as well as lack of national ownership, monitoring and accountability contributes to NAPs often having limited or no impact on women's lives. However, these challenges can be effectively addressed by parliaments in light of their cross-cutting mandate related to budget, legislation, oversight of expenditure, policy implementation and public debate. By sharing best practices from Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Nepal and Sierra Leone among others, she encouraged parliamentarians to promote the elaboration of NAPs on WPS that are time bound, measurable, well-resourced and cross-sectoral.

Following the panellists' presentations, **Hon. Eunhee Cho, Member of Parliament, Republic of Korea** took the floor for a parliamentary response, sharing the background of the high level of violence experienced by women and girls in the Republic of Korea especially during the war period, and the experience of the country regarding strengthening the implementation of the WPS Agenda. In order to tackle violence against women and girls, the international community should address the issue holistically. She mentioned that three NAPs have been implemented in 2014, 2018, and 2020 respectively, through guidance by the National Assembly and with coordination of national agencies and ministries in the Republic of Korea. She further elaborated on the important progress achieved on gender equality until date, including for the first time reaching over 19% women in Parliament in 2020. While the commitment to gender equality remains high at the political level, a backlash is noted among the population, in particular in the young generation, where the perception that women's rights are advanced at the expense of men is becoming more common. As one example, she highlighted the fact that only men are required to do military service, giving young women the opportunity to advance their careers before their male counterparts.

**Hon. Ty Sokun, Member of Parliament, Cambodia,** shared the fact that women's participation as civil servants in Cambodia has grown from 32% in 2007 to 41% in 2020, and that the number of women parliamentarians also has increased from 5.8% in 1993 to 20.8% in 2018. Moreover, Cambodia aims to increase women's participation in peacekeeping operation from current 14% to 20% by 2024. The latest policy recommendations during Cambodia's National Forum on Women in Leadership and Governance highlighted women's skills development, women's empowerment, promotion of equal opportunity, encouragement of

women's participation in decision making and leadership roles, promotion of cross-sectoral collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnership to design and implementing gender-responsive policies, and provide structural and cultural solutions to holistically resolve the gender-related issues.

In addition, **Hon. Tran Thi Hong An, Member of Parliament, Vietnam** took the floor to share Vietnam's commitment since the post-war recovery period to support women and persons with disabilities to safeguard gender equality and equal human rights. The gender equality perspective has been mainstreamed into legislation, relevant international instruments have been implemented and women's participation in security and peace has increased. As examples of Vietnam's efforts, she presented an international conference with the UN to strengthen women's role in peace building and the establishment of a Women Parliamentarian Group in the National Assembly of Vietnam in 2021.

In **the open floor debate**, a discussion with regards to the NAPs of the countries took place, specifically to address the WPS Agenda and the possibility to include the WPS elements into the existing gender-related laws and regulations. Ways of addressing backlash of women's rights were also discussed, including the need to emphasise that gender equality consists of promoting men and women's equal opportunities as opposite to being a matter only for women. The discussion also centred on one of the standing committees of the AIPA General Assembly, Women Parliamentarian of AIPA (WAIPA), which mainly focus on women and children issues in various sectors. It was also confirmed that the WPS Agenda is receiving limited attention in the ASEAN region due to lack of understanding and awareness. Therefore, activities to increase the understanding on WPS were identified as necessary. The context of the Republic of Korea was highlighted, where around 50 members of the National Assembly are women. The Republic of Korea also has a special Ministry of Gender Equality and Family which has as objectives to plan and coordinate women's policy and women's rights and to prevent violence against women. It is also within the aspiration of the National Assembly of Korea to tackle the issue of violence against women and other gender-related issues.

### **Session VII: National and regional instruments and legislative tools for preventing illicit SALW-proliferation – in relation to the Arms Trade Treaty**

*Objective: Examine the national and regional instruments and legislative tools available in the prevention of uncontrolled SALW-proliferation in the region.*

In light of the human suffering and negative social and economic effects on societies caused by armed conflicts, **Mrs Shobha Shrestha, Executive Director for Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal** underscored that it is vital for countries to join forces in combatting the unregulated arms transfers through ratification and implementation of the ATT. Furthermore, she stated that military spending is increasing globally. In the wake of the global pandemic, it has become clear that States should prioritise sustainable development, and arms control as an integral part, rather than increasing military spending. She then accounted for the situation in Nepal related to armed violence where it is estimated that only 15% of SALW are legally registered as the majority of arms are held by criminal groups. Civil society remains highly committed to raising awareness on the need to enhance arms control, including through the establishment of a SALW commission.

**Ms Ida Scarpino, UNRCPD**, presented examples of activities by UNRCPD on approaches to prevent SALW proliferation. For example, in Nepal, a national workshop was organised gathering parliamentarians, civil society, government representatives and the police to raise awareness on the ATT, the ratification process and the benefits to the country in becoming a State Party. One of the key results from the activity was the translation of the ATT and the ATT toolkit into Nepali. She highlighted that even countries that are not arms exporter will gain from joining the Treaty, as becoming State Party will activate a series of improvements to national legislation and policy regarding increased control of arms flow, ensuring the country does not become a hub for arms smuggling. Moreover, at the international level, countries will gain credibility, and contribute to global and regional security. In Laos People's Democratic Republic, a national consultation workshop was conducted to review and harmonise the country's national action plans relevant to gender responsive SALW control, gathering various relevant stakeholders, including government representatives and civil society. Following the workshop, the government expressed its ambition to formalise consultations on SALW control gathering all relevant stakeholders on a regular basis to share experiences and knowledge. In her presentation, Ms Scarpino recommended countries to consider establishing national coordination mechanism on SALW.

In a parliamentary response **Hon. Tran Thi Hong An, Member of Parliament, Vietnam** also shared her perspective, reconfirming Vietnam's commitment to implement international (for example the UN PoA and the ATT) and regional instruments (for example the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Transnational Crime and ASEAN Association of Police Commanders) as well as national policies and legislation regarding increased SALW control. In Vietnam, civilians are prohibited from possessing weapons, and the production, purchase, sale, licensing, management and use of SALW are strictly controlled by state management agencies. However, a remaining challenge is to collect and destroy illicit SALW circulating in the society left over from the war. Moreover, regional and international cooperation is necessary to effectively prevent organised crime and SALW trafficking across borders, for example cooperation among parliaments to strengthen the work of building a system of legal documents. She also noted the recommendation for States to increase the control measurement to tackle illegal arms trade within countries; the recommendation to establish information channels and improve efficiency of information exchange activities on illegal weapons trafficking, and proposal to organise trainings, conferences, seminars, technical assistance programs to exchange information as a way to prevent SALW-violence.

**Hon. Jae Ho Park, Member of Parliament, Republic of Korea** highlighted that the misuse of SALW continues to be a major cause of armed conflict and violence globally, leading to a significant number of violent deaths in recent years. The SALW issue is also interconnected to other broader areas such as international peace and security, terrorism, drugs, and other transnational crimes. Based on the Republic of Korea having ratified the ATT, he took the opportunity to present the actions taken in country regarding enhancing SALW control, including establishing a system to prevent the circulation of illegal SALW, improved record keeping and tracing system, the enforcement of the Act of Safety Management of Guns to manage the life cycle of SALW to prevent illicit SALW trafficking, and prohibiting the spread of manufacture instructions to 3D print weapons, for example in online sales. He noted that in 2021, there had been no report of any diversion of SALW, demonstrating the effectiveness of the policies and legislation in place.



In the **open floor discussion**, many countries' representatives expressed their commitment to the eradication of uncontrolled proliferation of SALW. Comments also focused on the status of the ATT in the region. The participants reviewed in more detail the example of Cambodia where the country has not yet ratified the ATT, as the ratification needs to be done by the Government side first, but can be underpinned by parliamentary action. Parliamentarians can also adopt comprehensive legislation that contributes to the effective implementation of ATT provisions in practice. Lack of political will was pointed out by the panellist as one reason for the country not having joined the Treaty. Discussions also focused on peace keeping forces as well as the platforms within AIPA and the ASEAN, such as the WAIPA and Political Committee of AIPA, and SOMTC of ASEAN where parliamentarians can continue to engage for disarmament at the regional level.

**Session VIII, second working session: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda.**

*Objective: 1) In groups share results, positive experiences and challenges in the parliamentary work on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, linking to the WPS Agenda. 2) In groups identify the main lessons learned and key recommendations for parliamentary action onwards in the region for ATT universalisation and implementation.*

**Group 1** shared positive examples of actions undertaken in Cambodia, including public hearings in the Parliament with relevant ministries, civil society and law enforcement agencies on SALW legislation and the status of the ATT. The example of awareness raising campaigns at the community level in the constituencies was also presented, where parliamentarians have worked with the police and other local actors in raising awareness on the importance of weapons control. The group noted that increased collaboration between the government, parliament, civil society, law enforcement and development partners would be a vital opportunity for future strengthened actions on the topic. Moreover, it was recommended taking action for enhanced regional knowledge exchange between parliamentarians in the ASEAN region to promote ATT ratification, taking action to promote capacity building among parliamentarians at the national level and convene meetings with government counterparts to report back regarding the conclusions from the seminar and follow up on the status of ATT ratification.

**Group 2** also reviewed positive results achieved in respective countries, for example successful measures to increase women's representation in leadership positions, WPS trainings for the security sector, as well as gender sensitive implementation of legislation and policies such as in the case of the Philippines firearms law. As challenges, the group highlighted the fact that parliamentarians may have different backgrounds and may not have experience from working with arms control. It was also noted that as firearms regulations are overall strong in the region it could be more difficult to raise awareness on the added value of joining the ATT. At the same time, having solid firearms regulation in place was also identified as an aspect making it easier for a country to join the ATT. The group's key recommendations for future action in the field were to strengthen targeted support to parliamentarians on security issues, including regarding recent research, and to enhance parliamentary cooperation and information exchange between countries.

**Group 3** focused its presentation on the challenges identified, including the lack of resources to arms control during the COVID-19 pandemic where States have concentrated its resources to emergency responses. With regard to opportunities, the group pointed out that more countries joining the ATT would contribute to increased harmonisation, recognition and impact of the Treaty. The group recommended to focus future efforts on enhancing the understanding of parliamentarians on the added value and benefits of the ATT, as well as developing a model law adapted to the ASEAN context. Finally, the group recommended enhancing international cooperation and capacity building programmes.

### **Session IX, third working session: Approval of the regional Parliamentary Action Plan on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, with links to the WPS Agenda**

*Objective: Adopt the PAPs with inclusion of parliamentary priorities related to universalisation and implementation of the ATT with links to the, WPS Agenda.*

In the final session, the participants returned to plenary to review and discuss the key recommendations on ATT universalisation and implementation compiled into the PAP as put forward by each group. Based on the review, the PAP was approved by the participants.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Closing remarks**

**Hon. Mrs. Nguyen Tuong Van, Secretary General of AIPA** thanked the panellists, parliamentarians and other participants for their dedicated and productive participation in the seminar. She also stated her belief that the qualitative outcome of the seminar, including knowledge gained, will serve as an excellent foundation upon which parliamentarians can act once returned to respective parliaments to promote peace and sustainable development in their countries as well as in the region.

**Ms Karin Olofsson, Secretary General of PFSALW** also expressed her sincere gratitude for the commitment and dedication of all participants during the seminar. She reiterated that all have a shared responsibility to make the world a more peaceful place. As has been made clear during the seminar, the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda as well as other frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and UN PoA, are vital instruments to implement for the achievement of peace and sustainable development. Parliamentarians are a strong driving force in taking action and play a key role in contributing to the implementation of the instruments. She concluded the seminar by inviting the participants to sign PFSALW's [Call for Action](#) which encourages the donor community to continue to invest in parliamentary organisations for the achievement of human security and sustainable development.

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<sup>6</sup> Based on Part I of the seminar, the regional PAP from 2018 was reviewed and approved in a revised version, focusing on UN PoA, 2030 Agenda and the WPS Agenda. Based on Part II of the regional seminar, a separate regional PAP with focus on ATT universalisation and implementation with links to the WPS Agenda was approved. Due to methodological reasons, at the seminar as such the discussion was held gathered while maintaining the focus on the respective instruments abovementioned. However, for conceptual and editorial clarity, two separate, stand-alone PAPs were elaborated as part of the final documentation.

**List of participants:**

<b>Country/organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Committee/function</b>
<b>Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff</b>		
Kingdom of Cambodia	Hon. Ty Sokun	Secretary of the Commission on Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information, and Media (Head of Delegation)
	Hon. Mrs. Un Sokunthea	Secretary of the Commission on Interior, National Defense, and Civil Service
	Mr. Ly Mengtyth	Chief of ASEAN and AIPA Office
Socialist Republic of Vietnam	Hon. Ms. Tran Thi Hong An	Member of Foreign Affairs Committee
	Ms. Pham Thi Ngoc Ha	Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Department
Republic of Korea	Hon. Jae Ho PARK	Public Administration and Security Committee, Special Committee on Confirmation Hearing for the Nominee for Commissioner of the National Election Commission, and National Assembly Special Committee to Support the Bid for Expo 2030 Busan
	Hon. Eunhee CHO	House Steering Committee, Foreign Affairs and Unification Committee
	Ms. Seohyeon PARK	Programme Officer
	Ms. So Hyun KIM	Parliamentary staff
	Ms. Hye Ryeong SEON	Parliamentary staff
<b>Experts</b>		
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Mr. Agata Walczak	Governance and parliamentary strengthening expert
Center for Peace Education (CPE), Miriam College,	Ms. Bianca Pabotoy	Women Peace and Security Officer

Philippines		
Centre for Armed Violence Reduction (CAVR)	Mr. Alistair Gee	Executive Director
United Nations Office on Drug and Crime	Mr Max Menn	Associate Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer
United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD)	Ms. Ida Scarpino	Regional Project Coordinator – Gender & Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN Women Indonesia	Mr. Jamshed Kazi	UN Women Indonesia Country Representative and ASEAN Liaison
Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal	Mrs. Shobha Shrestha	Executive Director
<b>Diplomatic representatives</b>		
Permanent Mission of Lao People's Democratic Republic to ASEAN	Mr. Sengpraarthid Snookphone	Deputy Permanent Representative
	Mr. Ekto Vongphakdy	Third Secretary
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	H. E. Muhammad Hassan	Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia
	Masooma Bushra Ali	First Secretary
Cambodia Mission	Lin Chaukakada	Counsellor
Mission of Japan to ASEAN	H. E. Chiba Akira	Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN
Mission of Republic of Korea to ASEAN	H. E. Hee-seog KWON	Ambassador of Republic of Korea to ASEAN
	Ms. Youngeun LEE	First Secretary
Vietnam Mission	Doquang Huy	Second Secretary
Mission of Canada to ASEAN	Ms. Vicky Singmin	Chargé d'affaires
PFSALW Secretariat	Ms. Karin Olofsson	Secretary General
	Ms. Emmanuelle Texier	Programme Officer
AIPA Secretariat	Hon. Nguyen Tuong Van	Secretary General
	Mr. Mario Pandu Dewono	Deputy Secretary General
	Ms. Putri Gita Chandra Lubis	Secretary to Secretary General

	Ms. Royyan Hadela Isnanda	Publicity Officer
	Ms. Pugit Chandra Lubis	Director of Committees
	Mr Sandi Nursahamdani	Committees Officer
	Mr. Efran Arieza	ICT Officer
	Mr. Resky Wiwoho	Director Information and Communication Technology
	Mr. Tumiran	AIPA staff
	Mr. Adi Witjaksono	Director Finance and Administration
	Mr. Wahyu Samodra	Specialist Officer