



“Connecting the Dots: Advancing 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) and the Women, Peace & Security Agenda (WPS) by enhancing parliamentary capacity and action in East Africa and Asia”

Summary - Recommendations on parliamentary actions for enhanced implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA) and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The Fourth Review Conference (RevCon4) Side-event hosted by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW) in collaboration with the Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control (GENSAC) as well as the Government of Chile, taking place on June 20 2024.

Based on a chain of regional seminars within PFSALW’s project “*Connecting the Dots: Advancing 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) and the Women, Peace & Security Agenda (WPS) by enhancing parliamentary capacity and action in East Africa and Asia*”, key parliamentary recommendations have been identified for parliamentary action towards enhancing the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA), the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) Agenda. The project is funded by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation Fund (UNSCAR). In a regional seminar for Southeast Asia in collaboration with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) on October 4-5 2023, and a regional seminar for East Africa in collaboration with the Parliament of Uganda on June 6-7 2024, previously adopted regional Parliamentary Action Plans (PAPs) were reviewed and adopted in revised versions as to ensure their continued relevance in guiding further parliamentary action in respective regions. The seminars were part of the run-up and preparation for the Fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and builds on PFSALW’s previous “Connecting the Dots” projects for 2020-2023 in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Southeast Asia.

The three key parliamentary roles are:

1. **Legislation** is needed to ensure universalisation, domestication and implementation of the instruments. This includes drafting legislation, as well as the legislative procedures to discuss, evaluate and pass bills that allow the ratification of treaties.
2. **Oversight** is required to ensure that legislative decisions made regarding the instruments are implemented; it is necessary for holding governments accountable and to secure cooperation between relevant agencies during the implementation of said instruments.
3. **Awareness raising** ensures the implementation of key instruments at different levels by creating political will and public understanding. This mainly takes place between parliamentarians and the constituents but can also be directed towards parliamentary colleagues on the national and international level.

Based on the review and revision of the previous [Parliamentary Action Plan for Southeast Asia first approved in 2022](#), and the key parliamentary roles stated above, the main recommendations for parliamentary actions ([Final Parliamentary Action Plan for Asia 2023](#)) concluded at the regional seminar for in Asia on October 4-5, 2023 are as follows:

1. Awareness Raising

- Promote awareness raising and/or campaigns as the main priority of ASEAN in the implementation of Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and SALW-control measures.
- Promote peace education, security and the sustainable development agenda through storytelling about the country's history, and increase awareness on transnational crime, cleaning of war remnants, mine clearance and national firearms control laws.
- Support the incorporation of women's agenda into the peacebuilding and development processes within the ASEAN identity, by involving weaving elements such as familial bonds, culture, art, shared concerns, and faith that are distinct from its security aspects.

2. Legislation

- Ensure the political commitments in the UN PoA are harmonised with national laws and/or regulations.
- Consider adopted resolutions by the UN General Assembly, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (RPA WPS) as the foundation for amending and enacting relevant national legislation.
- Establish and/or strengthen regional legislative cross border cooperation and coordination.

3. Oversight

- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated in budget processes to the WPS Agenda.
- Urge women participation and inclusion in peace and security processes, as well as ensuring that SALW-control measures adequately address the needs of all, including women.
- Encourage the development of National Action Plans on the WPS Agenda including gender responsive SALW control measures.

Based on the review and revisions of the [Parliamentary Action Plan for Africa first approved in 2022](#), the recommendations for parliamentary actions ([Final Parliamentary Action Plan for East Africa 2023](#)) concluded at the regional seminar for East Africa on June 6-7, 2024 are as follows:

1. Legislation

- Ensure signature, ratification, domestication of relevant international and regional Treaties and instruments related to the topic, such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).
- Include the gender equality perspective consistently in legislation.
- Promote the introduction and approval of a Model Law in collaboration with the Pan-African Parliament.

2. Oversight

- Maximise the monitoring and oversight of the Government by competent and or relevant Parliamentary Committees or parliamentarians themselves.
- Empower the role and protection of the population as whistle-blowers regarding the illicit flow and use of SALW.
- Address the issue of porous borders by relevant measures, including community policing, and increased collaboration between neighbouring countries.

3. Awareness Raising

- Pursue sensitisation on the SDG 16, SDG 5, UN PoA, and ATT and other instruments relevant to SALW control among fellow parliamentarians to increase political will, by submitting a report on the topic to respective parliamentary committees and ensuring access to the instrument.
- Promote and support arms amnesty initiatives among relevant Governmental entities, ensuring the protection of the population participating and encouraging the population to give up arms voluntarily.
- Address foreign based root causes in relevant fora especially relating to natural resources interest, including wild life trafficking and illicit SALW, and take advantage of existing lobby groups in relation to foreign actors to agree on workable best practices.