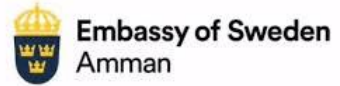




PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS



Regional Seminar for the MENA-region

“Reducing threats to international security: Mobilising parliamentarians from the Middle East to strengthen global parliamentary action for enhanced universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)”

Venue: Generations For Peace, Amman, Jordan

12-13 June, 2024

FINAL REPORT





Table of Contents

Opening session	2
Session I: Universalisation and implementation of the ATT in the MENA region, linking to the WPS Agenda and other relevant international frameworks.....	4
Session II: 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.....	8
Session III, Working session 1: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on strengthening the WPS-perspective in relation to sustainable development, peace and security processes, in specific the ATT, based on the regional Parliamentary Action Plan adopted 2019.....	11
Session IV: National and regional instruments and legislative tools for preventing illicit SALW-proliferation – in relation to the ATT.....	12
Session V, Working session 2: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda, and follow-up review on the previous regional PAP from 2019.....	18
Session VI, Working session 3: Adoption of the regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, linking to the WPS Agenda.....	19
Concluding remarks	19

Opening session

Mr. Hisham Al Taher, Chief Executive Officer of Generations For Peace (GFP), welcomed the participants to the seminar, emphasising the importance and timeliness of focusing on reducing threats to international security. He highlighted GFP's commitment to fostering peace and reducing violence through grassroots initiatives, particularly by empowering youth, women, and marginalised communities. Emphasising GFP's alignment with the seminar's goals, he noted the coincidence on building local capacity to foster tolerant, peaceful communities. He further noted that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been a regional leader in advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. The Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP), launched in 2018 to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, demonstrates Jordan's commitment to enhancing women's participation in peace and security processes, protecting women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV), and ensuring their voices are heard in conflict prevention and resolution. In closing, Mr. Al Taher called for collective action across party lines and borders to achieve the shared goal of a peaceful and secure world, encouraging all to work together toward building a more peaceful future.

In his opening remarks, **Hon. Alkhalaileh Ahmad, Chairman of the Political Modernisation Committee in Jordan**, highlighted Jordan's key role in regional peace and social progress, noting



Jordan's international peacekeeping role and the country's continued commitment to fostering stability in the region. Addressing the ongoing conflict in Gaza, he expressed concern over the violence and subsequent humanitarian toll. Furthermore, Hon. Alkhalailah also raised the global issue of privately owned firearms, pointing out the over a billion privately owned guns worldwide. He stressed Jordan's contribution to global and regional efforts to control the circulation of such weapons. Jordan's Parliament remains fully committed to the mission of peace, ensuring that the nation's legislative framework is in line with international law to prevent the illicit proliferation of arms. Hon. Alkhalailah acknowledged the continuous burden Jordan faces as a nation situated in a conflict-prone region, as the challenges of current conflicts require robust and proactive legislative and peacekeeping measures. On gender equality, he praised Jordan's proactive gender quota in parliamentary and governmental roles, which promotes women's participation in decision-making. Both the Government and Parliament remain committed to closing the gender gap and advancing women's roles in political and social life.

In her opening remarks, **H.E. Ambassador Alexandra Rydmark, Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan**, expressed her appreciation for the seminar and its valuable contribution to promoting regional peace and cooperation. Ambassador Rydmark extended gratitude to GFP for hosting the event, and praised the seminar's comprehensive approach and content to addressing arms control and its alignment with key international frameworks. The Ambassador emphasised Sweden's commitment to supporting initiatives that unite parliamentarians, international organisations, and civil society for peacebuilding. She highlighted Sweden's active role in regional peace efforts, including recent involvement in addressing the Gaza conflict, and acknowledged Jordan's vital efforts on the topic. She underscored Sweden's dedication to tackling illicit arms trafficking and terrorism within the framework of Agenda 2030, recognising the critical importance of international cooperation on such challenges. Sweden's alignment with EU policies further enhances its role in contributing to peace and security in the Middle East and beyond. Ambassador Rydmark welcomed the seminar's focus on gender equality and its intersection with arms control, particularly in light of the upcoming Fourth Review Conference (RevCon4).

In his opening remarks, **H.E. Ambassador Tarik Ali Khan, Ambassador of Canada to Jordan**, expressed deep appreciation to the participants of the seminar and highlighted Canada's pride in collaborating with the Embassy of Sweden and the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW) as the organisers of a seminar on such vital theme. Ambassador Khan emphasised that Jordan plays a pivotal role in the region, particularly in aligning itself with strong global norms, most notably through its commitment to the topic of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). He acknowledged Jordan's proactive stance in advancing international efforts to prevent the proliferation of SALW, thereby contributing to regional peace and stability. The Ambassador also stressed the vital role of parliamentarians in addressing GBV in the context of arms control, noting that the indiscriminate use of arms often exacerbates gender violence, particularly in conflict zones. As such, ensuring a comprehensive approach to SALW control that integrates the gender perspective is essential in reducing violence against women and vulnerable groups. Upholding the rule of law was central to his message, underlining the need for international cooperation to foster peace and security while protecting human rights. Ambassador Khan's remarks reinforced Canada's commitment to the universalisation of the ATT and its alignment with the WPS Agenda,



a key focus of the seminar. Finally, he underscored the importance of international partnerships and the need for continued cooperation to address the challenges posed by the illicit arms trade and its gendered impacts.

Ms. Karin Olofsson, Secretary General of PFSALW, welcomed participants to the seminar, conveying gratitude to the Swedish Embassy in Amman as co-organiser, and to the Government of Canada for the financial support, as well as to GFP for hosting the event. She emphasised that PFSALW is the only membership-based organisation gathering parliamentarians globally across party lines, specifically working to reduce and prevent Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)-related violence. PFSALW includes over 350 parliamentarians from nearly 100 countries, contributing to more peaceful and sustainable societies through parliamentary action, by capacity development, policy-shaping, and awareness-raising. Ms. Olofsson highlighted the urgent relevance of the seminar's topic, given current global conflicts, particularly the war in Gaza. She noted that more than 1 billion SALW circulate globally, with 85% in civilian hands, causing approximately 260,000 deaths annually. The MENA region has been identified as the least peaceful region for eight consecutive years, with several countries having a high rate of civilian-held firearms. She stressed that the year 2024 marks the Tenth Anniversary of the ATT, a treaty designed to regulate conventional arms trade and prevent diversion of arms. Ms. Olofsson also underlined PFSALW's commitment to gender equality, noting the importance of women's participation in peace and security processes, particularly in the MENA region, where women hold only 16.5% of parliamentary seats. She further noted that the seminar aims to equip parliamentarians with tools to promote the ATT's universalisation in alignment with the WPS Agenda. The recommendations will be compiled into a revised regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) expected to be adopted at the seminar's final part, building on the original plan adopted in Amman in 2019. Furthermore, Ms. Olofsson invited participants to sign the PFSALW's Call for Action, which encourages stronger parliamentary efforts to prevent armed violence. She also introduced the 'Words Over Bullets' social media campaign, with invitation to participate. In closing, she expressed hope that, despite global conflicts, collective efforts from parliamentarians, international organisations, and civil society will continue to promote peace and sustainable development.

Session I: Universalisation and implementation of the ATT in the MENA region, 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 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), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol).

Mr. Fadi Abi Allam, Head of the Permanent Peace Movement, addressed the critical and interconnected issues of peace and the arms trade in the Middle East. He highlighted that the unregulated flow of conventional arms has become a driving force behind the region's protracted conflicts and severe humanitarian crises. The ATT is a legally binding landmark global agreement



to regulate conventional arms trade and prevent weapons from being involved in human rights abuses, organised crime, terrorism, and conflict. Despite its significance, the MENA region—heavily impacted by arms trade-related issues—has yet to fully embrace the ATT. Based on available statistics, the Arab world accounts for nearly half of global conventional arms imports, and several countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Iraq, have consistently ranked among the top arms importers; with the UAE recently emerging as a key regional arms producer.

The extensive importation of arms has contributed to the region's prolonged conflicts, organised crime, terrorism, and even societal violence, including GBV and domestic abuse. Arab States' reluctance to fully engage with the ATT stems from a variety of factors. A key issue is the focus on nuclear disarmament, which many Arab States argue has overshadowed the need for conventional arms control, especially in a region where conventional weapons are the primary tools of conflict. It is also contended that the ATT falls short by not addressing the production and storage of arms, which are critical components in preventing the misuse of weapons. Furthermore, Arab countries have expressed concerns that the treaty could undermine the right to self-defence, although the ATT explicitly recognises this right in line with the UN Charter. Another significant barrier to Arab participation in the ATT is the concern that its human rights criteria could be politicised, potentially inviting external pressure or interference in domestic affairs. Additionally, regional security concerns play a major role especially for countries depending on a steady supply of arms to maintain military balance in a volatile region, particularly given the current security challenges. Economic interests also come into play, particularly for arms-producing nations, as the arms industry is perceived as an important economic sector. Despite the concerns, some Arab countries have taken vital steps towards engaging with the ATT; as Bahrain, the UAE, Libya, Djibouti, and Comoros have signed the treaty, while Lebanon, Mauritania, and Palestine have ratified it. Aforementioned steps, though limited, represent progress in the region's approach to international arms control. The ATT's entry into force in 2014 marked an important milestone for regulating the arms trade globally, including in the MENA region. The treaty has contributed to increasing awareness of the impact of unregulated arms trade and has encouraged arms flows control, although significant challenges remain. The severe humanitarian impact by the widespread use of conventional arms in conflicts has resulted in millions of displaced people, severe human rights violations, and a massive humanitarian toll on civilians. By limiting the flow of weapons, the ATT could contribute to reducing violence against women and fostering more inclusive peace processes in the region.

Finally, Mr. Abi Allam highlighted the connection between the ATT and UNSCR 1325, emphasising the integration of arms control into NAPs to combat GBV and strengthen women's roles in peacebuilding. Recommendations were put forward to encourage increased Arab engagement with the ATT. The need to address the specific concerns of Arab States is palpable, including their security needs, sovereignty, and economic interests. By linking the ATT to broader global agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly SDG 16.4, there is potential to create a more conducive environment for Arab States to participate in arms control initiatives. Additionally, it was suggested that military assistance to the region be conditioned on adherence to the ATT, which could incentivise further commitment. Lastly, regional cooperation and dialogue was highlighted as an essential component for overcoming the challenges that hinder Arab States from fully embracing the ATT.



Ms. Shirine Jurdi, Board Member Control Arms and President of WILPF Lebanon, addressed common misconceptions about the ATT, particularly focusing on the role of parliamentarians in supporting its objectives. She outlined the key goals of the ATT: establishing international standards, preventing illicit arms trade, and stopping the diversion of weapons into illegal channels. She emphasised the challenges faced by the ATT, especially in poorly regulated armed conflicts like in Gaza, where violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and human rights are prevalent. She specifically mentioned Article 6.3, which prohibits the authorisation of conventional arms transfers if there is knowledge that the arms would be used in acts of genocide or crimes against humanity, and Article 7.3, addressing the illegal use of weapons that result in serious violations under customary international law. Ms. Jurdi stressed the need for parliamentary involvement to bolster ATT participation and address aforementioned challenges more effectively. She also noted the lack of reporting from Lebanon under the ATT and mentioned that assistance is available to improve compliance. In terms of progress, she highlighted Mexico's campaign to address GBV within the context of arms control, which serves as a model for addressing similar issues globally.

Ms. Kheira Djouhri, Project Officer at the Small Arms Survey (SAS) addressed the significant role of gender considerations in tackling SALW-related violence within the MENA region. She pointed out a stark gender disparity in violence, noting that men are responsible for approximately 90% of homicides, while women, though less frequently killed, are disproportionately affected by non-lethal violence, particularly sexual and domestic violence facilitated by firearms. However, she highlighted a critical challenge: much of the gender-disaggregated data, especially concerning firearms, is outdated, underscoring the need for more current and comprehensive statistics to effectively understand and address the specific impact on different groups. Ms. Djourhi emphasised the ATT as a vital tool in preventing GBV in the context of arms trade. The ATT requires that States consider the risk of exported arms being used in serious acts of GBV before authorising such transfers. She outlined key decisions from the ATT's Fifth Conference of States Parties (CSP5) that advocate for increased research on gender and GBV, particularly in collecting and analysing gender-specific data. She also highlighted the importance of sharing national practices for implementing Article 7.4 of the ATT, which focuses on preventing exported arms from contributing to GBV. In addition, conclusions from CSP5 concerned updating reference materials on GBV to include Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)-produced documents and emphasised the need for gender-balanced representation in ATT-related discussions to ensure diverse perspectives are reflected in policies.

On a global scale, Ms. Djourhi pointed to Argentina's recent proposal for a "Guide to Good Practices" as an example of positive advancement, along with other collaborative efforts, such as the Arms and Gender meeting held in Santiago, Chile, in October 2023. At the national level, she cited the policies of Argentina and Peru, which consider GBV risks in civilian firearm authorisation, and the establishment of gender focal points within Small Arms Commissions in certain West African nations to strengthen gender-sensitive policy and oversight in the arms sector. Ms. Djourhi further connected the ATT with other frameworks, particularly UNSCR 1325. She argued that tackling SALW- proliferation from a development-focused perspective is essential,



especially in addressing the underlying causes of armed violence. She cited the African Union's "Silencing the Guns" campaign as an example, where disarmament is linked with national development initiatives in countries like Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso. She also outlined the vital role of parliamentarians in advancing ATT universalisation and ensuring governmental accountability. Parliamentarians can play an instrumental role by rallying public support, scrutinising government adherence to ATT commitments, and leveraging their oversight responsibilities to access relevant data. Furthermore, Ms. Djourhi underscored the importance of regional cooperation, encouraging parliamentarians to build networks to keep arms control issues actively on policy agendas.

Parliamentary Responses:

Hon. Dina Al Bashir, Member of Parliament in Jordan emphasised her country's growing efforts in **arms control**, despite not yet being a member of the ATT. She acknowledged the challenges faced by the MENA region, including ongoing instability and the illicit flow of arms, which require urgent action by parliamentarians. Hon. Al Bashir called for enhanced incentives to encourage countries to join the ATT, stressing that every nation bears responsibility for controlling arms flows and ensuring regional security. She underscored the need for collective action in tackling the issues, urging parliamentarians to play a proactive role in advancing arms control measures across the region.

Hon. Dr. Fawsi Samhouri, representing the Palestinian National Council, focused on the conflicts in the Middle East, drawing attention to the repeated violations of IHL by countries such as Israel. He emphasised that the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW has significantly worsened such violations, intensifying the instability in the region. Dr. Samhouri further asserted that Palestine is enduring what he referred to as genocide, driven in large part by the widespread use of SALW. He highlighted the critical need for the international community to address the uncontrolled SALW proliferation and the resulting humanitarian crises in Palestine, calling for stronger enforcement of international law in the conflict areas.

Hon. Elias Hankach, Member of Parliament in Lebanon, called for increased regional cooperation among parliamentarians to address the illicit flow of arms and provide stronger support for the Palestinian cause. He emphasised the importance of collective efforts in the region to combat the challenges posed by the illegal arms trade. Hon. Hankach also mentioned the escalating tensions along Lebanon's southern border with Israel, highlighting the urgency for parliamentarians to work together across borders to mitigate rising security threats and promote stability in the region. Hon. Hankach highlighted the need to tackle the root causes of conflict and uncontrolled arms proliferation, rather than just treating symptoms, and recognised the seminar as an ideal platform for discussing action-oriented solutions. Such events allow parliamentarians, policymakers, and experts to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and build the foundation for concerted regional action. Hon. Hankach also stressed the crucial role of civil CSOs, such as those represented by Ms. Jurdi, in advancing relevant efforts. He pointed out that CSOs often provide invaluable research, insights, and proposals that can help bridge gaps in policy and ensure that real, sustainable change is made. He urged the participants to ensure that the work and recommendations of CSOs are not



only acknowledged but also actively incorporated into parliamentary and policy-making processes, so that the efforts contribute meaningfully to tackling the aforementioned issues.

In the **open floor** discussion, participants explored the importance of knowledge-based actions to effectively address the uncontrolled proliferation of arms. Emphasis was placed on the urgent need for legislation that prevent countries from committing war crimes, regardless of ATT signatory status, reinforcing the principle that accountability should extend beyond treaty membership. Moreover, the discussion highlighted the need to reconsider the UN and other international frameworks to better protect women's lives, particularly in conflict areas. Participants underscored the importance of revising international treaties to ensure such agreements effectively safeguard women's security and well-being during times of conflict. Further attention was drawn to remarks by the UN Secretary-General on the critical need for collective security and a shared future. Reflecting on the momentum of public protests in support of Palestine, participants considered how such powerful collective force might be further channelled to mobilise people and press governments toward effective ATT implementation. Concerns were also raised about the misuse of technology, particularly in market driven advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and similar fields, which are occasionally repurposed for violence. The urgency of addressing the dual-use nature of technology emerged as a vital component of international security discussions. In calling for action, parliamentarians were encouraged to engage in regional lobbying; asserting that it is topical to begin such efforts. Advocacy for cohesive, consolidated messages—unified and intersectional—at future ATT meetings was recommended to enhance impact. Lastly, a 'name and shame' strategy was suggested as an effective tool for holding governments accountable and increasing awareness of regulatory inconsistencies.

Session II: 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 Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)-related violence.

In her intervention Ms. Shirine Jurdi, Board Member of Control Arms and President of WILPF Lebanon, highlighted key challenges in the MENA region, notably the lack of resources. She explained that the scarcity creates significant barriers to progress, as many States face difficulties in coordinating strategies due to ongoing conflicts. One of the critical issues pointed out was the absence or inadequacy of National Action Plans (NAPs) in MENA countries, with Lebanon serving as an example. Lebanon's NAP, she revealed, operates on a zero budget, making implementation almost impossible. She also made a broader point, linking the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW to poverty and various other socio-economic factors, as the issue of SALW is not purely political but one of humanity, affecting the most vulnerable sectors of society. A key message of her presentation was the importance of ensuring that civil society does not normalise violence and the widespread availability of SALW. She stressed that civil society must continue to highlight such challenges rather than accepting them as the norm. Additionally, she mentioned that the Lebanese delegation would continue working on the topic of the present seminar, specifically incorporating



a gender lens into the SALW control approach. Lastly, Ms. Jurdi also highlighted the pushback on WPS and security issues in Libya, noting that it has become extremely difficult to even discuss the topics openly, due to reluctance based on deep-rooted cultural and systemic factors behind such resistance.

Ms. Bojana Balon of the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) presented on the critical importance of integrating a gender perspective into arms control, highlighting SEESAC's substantial work in data collection and analysis. She emphasised that robust data is foundational for understanding and addressing the gendered dynamics of armed violence, which SEESAC has gathered from six countries across the Western Balkans, particularly examining domestic violence and its connection to firearms. Ms. Balon noted that firearm-related violence extends beyond conflict zones; in the Western Balkans such incidents frequently occur in domestic settings, reflecting a broader, non-conflict-related aspect of such violence. Recent years have seen an increase in firearm seizures in the Western Balkans, demonstrating the region's proactive measures in controlling weapons proliferation. However, she pointed to several key gender-related issues, such as data reveal a distinct gender dimension within firearm-related incidents, with both firearm ownership and perpetration of violence predominantly involving men. Specifically, 83.3% of firearm-related incident victims are male, as are the majority of perpetrators. While men make up the bulk of both victims and perpetrators, women also experience significant impact, especially within domestic violence contexts, underscoring the importance of a gender-inclusive approach to arms control policies.

Ms. Balon stressed that thorough data collection is essential for policymakers and lawmakers, who depend on such information to design effective, evidence-based policies and legal frameworks. Including a gender perspective within the analysis is crucial for evaluating and enhancing both current and future legal measures, ensuring the frameworks reflect the true dynamics of firearm-related violence. SEESAC has developed a comprehensive methodology and guidelines that provide practical, actionable steps to address such challenges. The methodology includes targeted training for security forces, where SEESAC has prioritised educational programmes to foster a more profound understanding of gender dynamics in arms control. SEESAC also facilitates information sharing and collaborative problem-solving, supporting joint solutions to strengthen regional cooperation. Further, SEESAC is actively promoting gender equality within the military and other security institutions, advocating for the recruitment of women and encouraging a more balanced gender representation in the security sector. In conclusion, Ms. Balon highlighted SEESAC's role in underscoring the need for gender-sensitive approaches in arms control. By fostering data-driven policies that consider the unique gendered aspects of firearm violence, SEESAC is supporting the Western Balkans to develop a safer and more inclusive security landscape.

In her intervention, **Ms. Kheira Djourhi of the SAS** discussed the integration of gender perspectives into SALW control policies and programmes. The presentation began by underscoring the gendered impact of armed violence, citing data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) showing that 90% of homicides are committed by men, while women disproportionately experience non-lethal violence, particularly in domestic settings involving firearms. Emphasis was placed on the necessity of a gender-responsive approach to effectively address the specific needs and risks associated with firearms proliferation. The



intervention highlighted that integrating gender into SALW control involves promoting women's meaningful participation and ensuring policies are tailored to gender dynamics. An example included the development and evaluation of NAPs on SALWs in countries such as Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Benin, and Senegal, where efforts have identified synergies between SALW control and the WPS Agenda. The process incorporated consultations with international practitioners, CSOs, and donors, focusing on creating policies that are coherent and centred on human security needs. A shared commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly gender equality, was identified as central in international mechanisms like the UN PoA, the ATT, and the Global Framework for Life-Cycle Management of Ammunition.

The intervention illustrated overlapping objectives between SALW control and WPS efforts, both working toward inclusive, secure societies. National processes included mapping the CSOs involved in SALW initiatives and fostering diverse participation from representatives of women's organisations, WPS actors, and youth organisations. An example from Burkina Faso involved training women in SALW control within the NAP framework, while Sierra Leone integrated the Ministry of Planning to link such initiatives with national development strategies. Guidelines have been developed for assessing gender responsiveness in implementing SALW control measures and creating gender-sensitive NAPs. The guidelines provide national bodies with structured approaches to incorporate gender perspectives effectively for sustainable, inclusive security policies. The role of parliamentarians was pinpointed as essential for promoting gender-sensitive arms control. Parliamentarians are encouraged to participate in National Commission activities, monitor and evaluate NAPs, support access to relevant data for oversight, and promote women's meaningful participation in security-related policies at the national level. Engagement in parliamentary committees and national strategy planning was highlighted as instrumental in strengthening accountability and representation in such efforts. In conclusion, Ms. Djourhi advocated for a human-security approach focused on demand factors that drive armed violence. The importance of policies and actions addressing gender-differentiated needs in an interconnected manner was emphasised. By applying a "nothing about us without us" approach, policy-making can facilitate meaningful participation for both women and men, with potential adaptations in processes to ensure inclusive engagement in security matters.

Parliamentary responses:

Hon. Halimé el Kaakour, Member of Parliament in Lebanon, provided insights into Lebanon's NAP and the efforts undertaken by various stakeholders to address domestic violence and promote gender equality. A key objective within the NAP is reducing domestic violence, which includes provisions requiring victims to report incidents to the police to receive support. The approach also prioritises strengthening penalties for perpetrators and compensating victims as part of a comprehensive response. Hon. el Kaakour highlighted Lebanon's legislative strides, such as a proposed gender quota law, aiming to increase female representation in decision-making roles. CSOs and universities have been key partners in promoting a gender-sensitive approach across sectors, contributing expertise and resources for improved programme outcomes. Regarding the Lebanese Government's gender perspective within security, Hon. el Kaakour noted that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is incorporating gender considerations in the operations, including training programmes specifically for women. However, she pointed out the significant obstacles



posed by limited inter-ministerial cooperation, which hampers cohesive action across government agencies. Lebanon faces compounded challenges due to the Gaza conflict, the ongoing refugee crisis, and internal issues such as corruption, which strain the country's social and economic structures. Hon. el Kaakour stressed the need for robust evaluation tools, as current mechanisms lack crucial aspects necessary for effective assessment and reporting, limiting the capacity to measure programme success accurately. Finally, she emphasised that cooperation among stakeholders should to a larger extent be grounded in concrete plans, projects, and strategies. Strengthening structured collaboration remains essential for the effective implementation and progress of the NAP and other gender-focused initiatives in Lebanon.

Hon. Khaled Ayyad, Member of the Palestinian National Council, addressed the challenges posed by non-compliance with UN resolutions, using the ongoing conflict in Gaza as an example. He argued that failure to uphold such resolutions significantly undermines the international system and erodes its credibility. Hon. Ayyad illustrated that armed conflict often serve as an extension of political tensions, highlighting that political interests should not interfere with, or override, international law. He emphasised the importance of maintaining a separation between politics and legal principles on the international stage to uphold justice and stability. Lastly, Hon. Ayyad remarked that violence against women is viewed as a profound violation in Palestine, underscoring that such acts are regarded as unacceptable within the Palestinian society.

Session III, Working session 1: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on strengthening the WPS-perspective in relation to sustainable development, peace and security processes, in specific the ATT, based on the regional Parliamentary Action Plan adopted 2019

Objective: In groups share results, positive experiences and challenges of parliamentary action to implement the WPS Agenda linked to SALW-violence prevention and reduction and the ATT, based on the regional Parliamentary Action Plan for MENA adopted in 2019

Group 1, with representatives from Lebanon, Algeria, Jordan, and Palestine shared achievements and challenges in advancing the WPS Agenda. Lebanon reported progress through the establishment of National Committees to address cases of disappeared persons and the proposal of a Civic Status Law. However, significant challenges persist, including gaps in policy development, limited evaluation mechanisms, and the ongoing illicit arms flow. The group emphasised the need to increase female representation in government and to translate policies into enforceable laws that support the WPS Agenda. Palestine highlighted the adoption of laws promoting gender parity, with 25% of ambassadors now being women, and steps taken to address Gross Domestic Product (GDP) concerns for sustainable development. Nonetheless, structural barriers remain due to Israeli policies impacting children's rights, detention practices, and instances of impunity. Issues such as restricted housing options for Palestinian refugee women were raised, which impact their socio-economic independence and safety. Participants stressed the urgent need to abolish discriminatory laws and address the plight of over 900,000 Palestinian refugees.

Group 2, consisting of representatives from Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan shared insights into achievements and challenges within Jordan and Lebanon. In Jordan, advancements included



increased female representation in parliament and the adoption of a new law that strengthens protection for women, particularly regarding private gun ownership. The law signifies a positive legislative step towards WPS objectives. However, challenges remain in securing infrastructure and financial resources to support women's participation in decision-making processes. Jordan has expressed a commitment to further increase female representation in parliament and continue promoting WPS integration within governance structures. Lebanon is currently in Phase 2 of its WPS implementation, with work underway on drafting new supportive laws. Despite the progress, there are still cultural barriers to meaningful women's participation, alongside limitations in infrastructure and resources. The group noted a continued need for prevention measures against GBV and increased integration of women at all levels of arms control processes.

The open floor discussion highlighted the role of National Commissions for SALW. Currently, none of the represented countries have a National Commission focused on addressing illicit SALW proliferation, representing a significant gap in national SALW reduction and prevention efforts. Establishing such Commissions would enhance coordination and strengthen enforcement mechanisms at the national level. The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) offer support to countries in developing national mechanisms to counter SALW proliferation, referencing successful models such as those implemented by ECOWAS. In other regions, such initiatives have proven effective, as for example in Uganda, where similar Commissions collaborate closely with civil society and parliamentarians to facilitate dialogue and strengthen oversight in SALW control. Participants also discussed the importance of incorporating gender strategies into SALW control, drawing comparisons to African nations where dedicated National Commissions have achieved substantive progress. The Commissions represent diverse interests from government, CSOs, and academia, providing a solid foundation for advancing SALW policies with an inclusive, human-security approach. The session concluded with a call for strengthened parliamentary advocacy, particularly at the regional level, to advance WPS objectives within the SALW and ATT frameworks. Participants agreed on the need to develop cohesive, collective messages for ATT meetings to reinforce parliamentary action and accountability in addressing SALW issues. Finally, participants underscored the importance of intersectional advocacy, as lobbying efforts should ensure the comprehensive representation of gender-related issues across security and peace initiatives, thus presenting a unified and inclusive front in advancing WPS goals.

Thursday 13 June 2024

Session IV: National and regional instruments and legislative tools for preventing illicit SALW - proliferation – in relation to the ATT.

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

Mr. Fadi Abi Allam, Head of the Permanent Peace Movement, delivered a presentation focusing on the collective efforts of Arab States to combat illicit arms trafficking. He highlighted the importance of regional collaboration and enhanced law enforcement as crucial elements in addressing the challenges posed by the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW in the region. Between 2001 and 2010, 21 Arab States established national focal points to combat the illicit trafficking of



SALW, with several countries creating national coordination bodies to support the efforts. By 2010, 17 Arab countries had submitted national reports outlining the progress in implementing the UN PoA. Mr. Abi Allam noted that most Arab countries had ratified the Arab Convention on Combating Terrorism (1999), which addresses the issue of illicit SALW trafficking, and emphasised the Arab League's role in organising regular meetings to enhance cooperation among Member States. He explained that Arab States have been actively reviewing and updating respective national laws related to SALW, focusing on restricting controls over imports, exports, and border security. Many States have developed advanced systems for marking and tracing firearms, which are crucial for monitoring the movement of weapons. Mr. Abi Allam also highlighted disarmament and peacebuilding initiatives, citing examples such as Sudan's efforts to safely collect and destroy SALW. Additionally, he pointed to transitional justice programmes in countries like Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, and Iraq, designed to address the root causes of violence and instability.

Mr. Abi Allam proposed the development of a binding regional treaty that would establish common standards for SALW trade across Arab States. He underscored the need for strengthening the role of the Arab League in coordinating regional efforts to combat illicit arms trafficking. He also urged Arab States to continue supporting existing regional initiatives and to build national capacities with the support of international assistance. However, several challenges facing the region were outlined, such as armed conflicts and internal strife having significantly contributed to the illegal proliferation of SALW; challenging regulation and enforcement of arms control measures. Other obstacles include weak national capacities, porous borders, corruption, and external interventions, all of which undermine the effectiveness of SALW control efforts. Despite the aforementioned challenges, Mr. Abi Allam expressed optimism about the political commitment shown by some Arab States in addressing the issue. He pointed to regional mechanisms such as the Riyadh Arab Agreement for Judicial Cooperation, which provide crucial support for regional efforts.

Ms. Bojana Balon, Head of the SEESAC, delivered a presentation on regional approaches to arms control, highlighting SEESAC's critical role in Southeast Europe and its broader global influence. Ms. Balon underscored the importance of regional cooperation and information sharing in combatting the illicit proliferation of SALW. SEESAC has played a key role in facilitating strategic coordination through the SALW Commissions and the Southeast Europe Firearms Expert Network (SEEFEN). The initiatives promote cooperation and the exchange of intelligence among law enforcement agencies, while also helping policymakers stay informed on emerging trends in arms control at both regional and global levels. The Western Balkans Roadmap, initiated by SEESAC and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), has become a cornerstone for controlling SALW in the region. Ms. Balon outlined the roadmap's ambitious goals, which aim to harmonise arms control legislation with EU regulations and reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition, and explosives. The roadmap also seeks to increase public awareness, reduce the demand and misuse of firearms, and systematically destroy surpluses of seized weapons. A set of 14 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has been established to measure progress towards the goals. The indicators focus on legislative harmonisation, evidence-based policymaking, and operational cooperation among regional authorities. Metrics include the number of firearms seized, the number of adjudicated cases of firearm misuse, and levels of public satisfaction regarding safety in the region. The KPIs



are vital in evaluating the success of the initiatives, particularly in strengthening intelligence-led operations and cross-border collaboration.

Despite notable progress, Ms. Balon highlighted several challenges hindering the full realisation of the roadmap's objectives. Political instability, frequent elections, and gaps in record-keeping and information sharing among law enforcement agencies continue to pose significant barriers. Additionally, limited institutional capacity, particularly with regard to staff turnover and training in areas such as firearm deactivation, has further slowed progress. Ms. Balon concluded by emphasising the elements of success that have supported SEESAC's initiatives, such as strong local ownership of programmes, sustained donor support, and the presence of functional SALW Commissions, which are the backbone of SALW control efforts in the region. The successes have enabled the Western Balkans Roadmap to be replicated globally, including in the Caribbean and Central America, where SEESAC's expertise has been instrumental in shaping similar efforts. Ms. Balon also referenced the UN Secretary-General's Report on SALW Control, which recognised the Western Balkans' progress and highlighted SEESAC's work as an exemplary model of effective regional cooperation. The report further stressed the need for integrated, whole-of-government approaches that tie SALW control efforts to broader development and violence reduction initiatives.

Mr. Jonathan Madaki, Programme Specialist on SALW from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) West and Central Africa (WACA) Regional Hub, discussed the ongoing challenges and strategies in controlling SALW in WACA. He highlighted critical obstacles, including porous borders, inadequate stockpile management, insufficient law enforcement capacity and weak, inconsistent legal and regulatory frameworks. Many national laws are not harmonised with regional and international agreements, such as the ECOWAS Convention on SALW, the ATT, and the Kinshasa Convention, complicating efforts to effectively regulate SALW. Harmonising national laws with the treaties would enhance the region's ability to monitor and control arms flows, reduce illicit trafficking, and foster increased regional cooperation. To address the challenges, capacity-building initiatives have been implemented to strengthen the capabilities of law enforcement, defence forces, and inter-agency intelligence agencies, which play a critical role in arms control. Furthermore, Mr. Madaki stressed the importance of community engagement and public education in the fight against illicit SALW proliferation. Public education campaigns are essential to raise awareness about the dangers of illicit weapons and to encourage community participation in disarmament and arms collection initiatives. Linking disarmament efforts with broader community development programmes can also underpin resilience in communities affected by armed conflict.

In addition to national efforts, Mr. Madaki underlined the role of regional and international cooperation in strengthening SALW control. He discussed the progress made under regional arms control frameworks like the ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP), which has fostered cross-border cooperation through the establishment of cross-border units to monitor and manage arms flows between countries. Mr. Madaki also explored the impact of international treaties and agreements on regulating arms transfers. He emphasised that treaties such as the ATT, the UN PoA, and regional conventions play an important role in promoting responsible arms transfers by setting global standards. The agreements help prevent the diversion of weapons to extremist groups or criminal organisations and contribute to enhanced transparency in arms trading.



Provisions such as end-user certificates, documentation requirements, and cooperation mechanisms allow for improved tracking and tracing of weapons, thereby reducing the risk of illicit proliferation. Despite the progress made, significant challenges remain in fully implementing and enforcing SALW control measures in WACA. While national legislation has been strengthened in recent years, and regional cooperation has improved; gaps in enforcement, corruption, and limited financial resources continue to hinder efforts to curb illicit arms flows. The implementation of stronger legal frameworks, capacity-building initiatives, and international support is essential to address the challenges. In his recommendations, Mr. Madaki called for the development of a regional SALW framework for the MENA region, similar to the ECOWAS Convention. Such framework would allow MENA countries to standardise their SALW regulations, improve import and export controls, and establish SALW Commissions.

Mr. Muhammed Edabbar, representing Peace and Security Cluster at Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY), discussed his work on implementing the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) Agenda in North Africa, underscoring the critical role that youth play in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and security processes. He highlighted the significance of engaging young people as key stakeholders in creating sustainable peace, emphasising that their voices and perspectives must be included in decision-making at all levels. Mr. Edabbar referenced the "Silencing the Guns" initiative in the African region, noting that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been working on a draft resolution addressing the issue. The initiative aims to curb the flow of illegal arms and reduce armed conflicts across the continent, with a strong focus on youth involvement. Unfortunately, he pointed out, legal frameworks and policies sometimes lag behind, which hinders the full realisation of the vision. Mr. Edabbar elaborated on the importance of including youth in the security agenda, explaining that young people often make up a significant portion of the population in conflict-affected areas. Yet, youth's involvement in peace and security processes is often limited. He stressed that by empowering youth through the YPS Agenda, youth can become agents of change, driving efforts to prevent violence, promote peace, and contribute to long-term stability. By including youth in discussions on disarmament and conflict resolution—especially in regions like North Africa, which is heavily impacted by the illicit arms flow—governments and institutions can foster more inclusive, effective approaches to building peace.

Parliamentary responses

Hon. **Elias Hankach** proceeded to read out a statement on behalf of **Hon. Mayada Shreim, Member of Parliament in Jordan**, who due to unforeseen circumstances was absent during the specific session, leaving a prepared statement. In the statement, Hon. Shreim addressed the critical legislative initiatives in Jordan aimed at controlling the spread of SALW and reducing armed violence. The statement emphasised the importance of the topic from a parliamentary perspective in Jordan, highlighting the various laws and national plans currently in place. The statement pointed out the significant challenges Jordan faces regarding the widespread availability of SALW and their negative impact on Jordanian society. Given the challenges, the necessity of effective legislation to regulate such weapons was underscored. The statement mentioned the key pieces of legislation that govern peace and security in Jordan, specifically the Firearms and Ammunition Law, which sets the terms for the use and possession of firearms and ammunition, including SALW. It also referenced Article 330 of the Penal Code, which penalises the use of firearms



without cause. Moreover, the Jordanian Customs Law was highlighted, which regulates the import and export of firearms, ammunition, and military equipment, including light weapons, often referred to as "bladed weapons" in Jordanian terminology. The statement further underscored Jordan's National Plan for Controlling SALW, which not only combats the spread of such weapons but also emphasises the involvement of women in peace and security initiatives. Jordan's alignment with international agreements, such as the ATT, was praised as underpinning improvements of the regulation of SALW globally. In conclusion, the statement urged all relevant parties—government bodies and civil society alike—to work together to ensure the effective implementation of the laws and to raise awareness about the importance of legislation in maintaining security and stability. Finally, a call was made for strong legislation to limit the spread of illicit weapons and foster peace and security in Jordan and the region.

Hon. Mohamed Mechegueg, Member of Parliament from Algeria, began by congratulating the event organisers and participants, emphasising the importance of such discussions. He mentioned that Algeria has been an observer in the Review Conferences (RevCons) and that the government has shown growing interest in the ATT. The Ministry of Defence is currently investigating the issue of ratifying the treaty, with the government actively exploring ways to reduce the transfer of arms. Hon. Mechegueg stressed that the ATT should be used as an instrument to control arms transfers, but it is not designed to interfere with the internal affairs of States. The treaty must include provisions and mechanisms that give Member States the opportunity to participate fully within its domestic framework. He underlined the symbolic importance of the ATT, noting the treaty brings attention to the critical need to combat the illicit arms flow, which remains a major issue across the region. Reflecting on Algeria's experiences, Hon. Mechegueg spoke about the lasting impact of the Algerian War and the country's struggle against terrorism. Such difficult periods, he explained, have forged a stronger Algeria, more resilient in the face of threats. He highlighted Algeria's long-standing principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, while in parallel supporting causes like that of the Palestinian factions. The approach is driven by Algeria's desire for stable neighbouring countries, as regional peace directly impacts on national security. Hon. Mechegueg also reflected on Algeria's transformation from a period of international isolation to becoming the third-strongest economy in Africa. He highlighted the growing role of civil society, which has been significantly strengthened and now plays a more active part in governance. Algeria's experience in combating terrorism and managing arms control, he added, positions it as a key player in fostering regional cooperation to combat the illicit arms trade and promote peace. He expressed Algeria's commitment to engaging more actively with international frameworks like the ATT, not only to enhance national security but also to contribute to broader regional stability.

Hon. Qasem Belal, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) and a member of the Palestinian National Council, began by congratulating the PFSALW, the Swedish Embassy in Amman, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Canada for organising the event. Hon. Qasem emphasised PAM's commitment to addressing the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW, which is a central focus of the organisation's work. PAM brings together 32 member parliaments from the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf regions, and it continues to monitor and address human security concerns, particularly the flow of illicit arms in the region. Jordan, one of



PAM's founding members, is a key partner in the efforts, actively working with both regional and international organisations. Hon. Qasem highlighted PAM's vigilant monitoring of illicit arms trafficking, particularly in Libya, which has become a hub for arms smuggling due to the country's ongoing political deadlock. Weapons in the hands of private militias have escalated conflicts, both domestically and internationally. He cited data from the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, which identifies the Middle East as the world's "illicit arms depot", where arms flow freely, often disregarding UN arms embargoes and originating from older conflicts. Conflicts in the Middle East, combined with the presence of various proxy and mercenary groups, have created a highly volatile situation. Hon. Qasem pointed out that arms trafficking has become especially lucrative for terrorist and criminal groups, who exploit existing trafficking routes towards Europe and Asia. According to the UN, the Sahel region is now the epicentre of global terrorism and a key hub for illicit arms trafficking. Technological innovations such as three-dimensional printing, social media, and the dark web have added new complexities to the illicit arms trade, allowing for easier weapon production. In addition to fuelling conflict, the trafficking of arms has had a profound impact on civilians. Hon. Qasem raised concerns about the increasing number of civilians, particularly women, buying arms from illegal markets for self-protection. However, such weapons are often used to commit or facilitate serious acts of GBV. Women are disproportionately affected by such crimes, becoming both direct victims and indirect targets of the broader cycle of violence that comes with widespread arms proliferation. PAM has worked closely with the UN Secretariat and other agencies to provide parliamentarians with the necessary tools to harmonise national legislation with international instruments aimed at combating terrorism. In his concluding remarks, Hon. Qasem emphasised the critical role parliamentarians play in combating weapons trafficking. PAM will continue to advocate for the adoption of the ATT among its Member States in the Middle East. He expressed PAM's readiness to collaborate with all countries and organisations represented at the seminar to implement concrete initiatives aimed at addressing the uncontrolled proliferation of arms and promoting security across the region.

The open floor discussion featured a range of questions and comments related to national security, arms control, and the impact of technology on arms proliferation. Participants discussed Jordan's legal definition of 'white weapons' and its interpretation within the context of national security, including perspectives on the potential benefits of expanding the definition. Furthermore, participants explored Algeria's gun laws, seeking clarity on domestic firearms regulations. The discussion also covered the dynamics of arms proliferation within the Palestinian Authority, examining whether it is influenced by community decisions or government directives. Additionally, perspectives were shared on the role of international donors in addressing actions by Israel, along with broader inquiries into the factors behind weapon manufacturing and the root causes of conflicts. Participants expressed appreciation for the inclusion of topics on technology's role and its implications for everyday security, encouraging further dialogue on the subject. The discussion clarified that responsibility for arms regulation lies formally with the state parties that have ratified relevant treaties. The growing issue of arms trading on the dark web was highlighted, with emphasis on its significant impact across the Arab region. While technology's positive implications were acknowledged, its dual-edged nature was noted, as digital advancements can also facilitate illicit activities, particularly in the arms trade. Observations were made on regional



trends, including shifts toward cash-based transactions and the exploration of technology's role in arms tracing on behalf of National Commissions. Examples were given, such as Ghana's use of technology in border control systems to enhance oversight, underscoring both the potential and the challenges of technological applications in arms control.

Session V, Working session 2: Exchange of parliamentary experiences on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda, and follow-up review on the previous regional PAP from 2019.

Objective: 1) Based on working session 1 on previous experiences, in groups discuss key priorities onwards to strengthen the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, linking to the WPS Agenda. 2) Brief review of the PAP from 2019 to identify needs for revision and update based on the conclusions from the seminar discussions, with focus on the ATT and linking to WPS.

Group 1 focused on several key issues. For Lebanon, participants highlighted the ongoing work of national committees for disappeared persons and the development of proposals for a civic status law. Lebanon has made notable progress towards implementation after ratifying the ATT. Efforts include an awareness campaign conducted with CSOs and parliamentarians to enhance understanding of key frameworks such as the UN PoA, SDG 16, and UNSCR 1325. Lebanese CSOs have also produced guidelines to explain the international framework of firearms control and contributed to the drafting of Lebanon's national PoA report in 2019. Networking around firearms control has been ongoing within Lebanon and across the MENA region. Additional actions include a legal study on the country's arms and ammunition laws, as well as the production of short films to raise awareness of the dangers of firearms use during social events, such as weddings. A project has also been proposed to establish a National Commission on SALW, which is currently under consideration by the Prime Minister.

In Palestine, the group discussed the challenges posed by discriminatory laws, children's rights abuses, and the difficult living conditions for women, particularly in relation to housing and security. Palestine's major advocacy point includes pressuring arms-producing States to reduce their output in order to mitigate violence. Efforts are underway to establish a National Commission dedicated to the effective implementation of the ATT, along with increased networking with MENA countries to support ATT-related initiatives. Future actions identified for both countries aim to strengthen national and regional arms control initiatives. In Palestine, proposed actions include advocating for an ATT protocol to impose sanctions on States that supply arms to terrorist organisations or violate IHL, such as Israel. Other goals include encouraging States with advanced technology to monitor and report on arms movement across borders and integrating ATT provisions into school curricula. A further focus is on reducing children's exposure to violent content in media. Challenges were also discussed, with Lebanon identifying issues such as a lack of inter-ministerial cooperation, institutional weaknesses, security and stability concerns, the ongoing refugee crisis, and a presidential vacancy since October 2022, with a caretaker government currently in place. For Palestine, the primary challenge remains the occupation and the impunity surrounding Israeli actions, which hinders all forms of reform.



Group 2 addressed the intersection of gender and arms control. For Jordan, the discussion centred on the country's progress in gender equality, including the adoption of stronger laws regarding private gun ownership. Regarding Lebanon, the conversation focused on tackling GBV and the urgent need for increased women's participation in decision-making processes, both in government and in peace and security initiatives. CSOs have produced guidelines to explain the international framework of firearms control and contributed to the drafting of Lebanon's national PoA report in 2019. Networking around firearms control has been ongoing within Lebanon and across the MENA region. As highlighted by the previous group, Lebanon's additional actions include a legal study on arms laws and awareness-raising efforts on the risks associated with firearm use at social events. Concerning legislation, the group emphasised the importance of developing an Arab convention addressing SALW and ATT issues. The group also proposed creating action plans for SALW control, promoting the establishment of National Commissions on SALW, and advocating for a legally binding mechanism to ensure CSO participation in arms control policymaking and representation at regional and international conferences. In terms of awareness-raising, the session underscored the need for a standardised message that community leaders can use to encourage a moral commitment among the public to cease the use of firearms during social gatherings, fostering a safer culture around arms usage in everyday life.

Session VI, Working session 3: Adoption of the regional Parliamentary Action Plan (PAP) on the universalisation and implementation of the ATT, linking to the WPS Agenda.

Objective: Based on the previous seminar working sessions, adopt the PAP with inclusion of parliamentary recommended actions related to universalisation and implementation of the ATT, linking 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 presented by each group. Based on the review, the PAP was approved by the participants.

Concluding remarks

In a concluding remark, reflecting on the adoption of the revised regional PAP, Hon. **Elias Hankach** highlighted the progress made in raising awareness among key stakeholders conducted by the PFSALW amid ongoing regional conflicts, including the war in Gaza. While acknowledging that the war may conclude within the next 8 to 12 months, he stressed the importance of transforming the current devastation into actionable steps for peace and reconstruction. He underscored the importance of the seminar in fostering such efforts, noting that many of the countries represented are neighbouring States to active war zones, which increases the urgency of regional collaboration. Hon. Hankach stressed the urgency to move forward with individual yet coordinated actions among the participating parliamentarians. He concluded by expressing hope that the collaborative efforts of parliamentarians, civil society, and regional organisations would lay the foundation for long-term stability and peace.

Ms. Karin Olofsson, Secretary General of the PFSALW, concluded the seminar by expressing her gratitude to the distinguished panellists for their valuable expertise and to all participants, including the honourable Members of Parliament, for their active engagement and valid



contributions. She also extended her appreciation to MFA Canada for the financial support enabling the realisation of the seminar, and to the Swedish Embassy in Amman for the collaboration, as well as to GFP for the professional assistance in hosting the event. Ms. Olofsson emphasised that all stakeholders share a collective responsibility to contribute to a more peaceful world. The discussions highlighted key instruments such as the ATT and the WPS Agenda, demonstrating the significant role parliamentarians can play in advancing such initiatives through legislation, oversight, and awareness-raising. Ms. Olofsson applauded the approval of the revised PAP, a critical tool summarising the key parliamentary recommendations based on the discussions, as well as serving as a guiding document for parliamentarians in future legislative, oversight, and awareness-raising actions at national, regional, and international levels, as to advance the implementation of the WPS Agenda and other peace and security instruments, such as the ATT.

Ms. Olofsson extended a warm invitation to all parliamentarians present to join the PFSALW as members, emphasising that membership is open to any Member of Parliament who shares the Forum's objectives. Membership offers access to the Forum's activities, publications, and support from the Secretariat, and that a larger membership base enhances the capacity to reduce armed violence through parliamentary action. In conclusion, Ms. Olofsson expressed optimism that, despite the challenges posed by ongoing conflicts—both globally and in the region—the joint efforts of parliamentarians, international organisations, civil society, and the diplomatic community would continue to promote peace and sustainable development. She reaffirmed the importance of enhancing the implementation of the ATT and the WPS Agenda, for the security and well-being of all people in the MENA region and around the world.

List of participants

Member of Parliament	Country	Organisation
Hon. Mohamed Mechegueg	Algeria	Member of Parliament
Hon. Dina al Bashir	Jordan	Member of Parliament
Hon. Mayadah Shriem	Jordan	Member of Parliament
Hon. Halimé El Kaakour	Lebanon	Member of Parliament
Hon. Elias Hankach	Lebanon	Member of Parliament
Hon. Qasem Belal	Palestine	Member of Parliament
Hon. Dr. Fawsi Samhoury	Palestine	Member of Parliament
Hon. Khaled Ayyad	Palestine	Member of Parliament
Experts and civil society representatives		
Ms. Peppi Väänänen	Finland	Rule of Law Associate Officer - UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States
Mr. Filippo di Carpegna	Italy	Rule of Law, Security, and Human Rights Specialist - UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS



Ms. Shirine Jurdi	Lebanon	Board Member Control Arms and President of WILPF Lebanon
Mr. Fadi Abi Allam	Lebanon	President - Permanent Peace Movement
Ms. Razan Taha	Jordan	Capacity and Programmes Development Manager Generations For Peace
Mr. Hisham Al Taher	Jordan	CEO - Generations For Peace
Mr. Mohamed Eddabar	Libya	Peace and Security
Ms. Bojana Balon	Slovenia	Head of the Southeast and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)
Ms. Kheira Djouhri	France	Project Officer, Small Arms Survey
Ms. Karin Olofsson	Sweden	Secretary General, The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW)
Mr. Alexander Höwitz	Sweden	Programme Officer, The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW)
Diplomatic community		
H.E Ambassador Tarik Ali Khan	Canada	Ambassador of Canada to Jordan
Mr. Antoine Terrar	Canada	Embassy of Canada
H.E Alexandra Rydmark	Sweden	Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan
H.E Omar Mohameed Mosaad	Yemen	Deputy Ambassador of Yemen to Jordan
Government representatives		
H.E. Alkhalaileh Ahmad	Jordan	Chairman of the Political Modernisation Committee in Jordan.