



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Overview: status of compliance of international instruments related to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)- control

Southeast Asia in context

Several countries have been affected by conflict, terrorism and organised violence in Southeast Asia. This situation highlights the importance of including parliamentarians in prevention and reduction of illicit flows of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) for the achievement of more peaceful and sustainably developed societies. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has stated its concern about the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons and signalled that effective regulation and control of aforementioned weapons is important for peace, stability, and sustainable development. ASEAN further underscored the importance of 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), as well as the 2021 Seventh Biennial Meeting of States Parties (BMS 7)¹. The COVID-19 pandemic has, in addition to its negative impact on human lives and health, slowed down socioeconomic development dramatically, jeopardising progress achieved towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, as well as making visible the disparities that underpin conflict and armed violence. Political will, and hence parliamentary action, is crucial to recover and fully implement the above-mentioned instruments for the benefit of the population.

Summary of international regulatory initiatives and their status in the Southeast Asian region

The tables below outline the status and compliance in universalisation and reporting of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), 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 Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the sustainable development goal 16.4.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the member states of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. For this project, the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW) is cooperating with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) to enhance parliamentary capacity building, policy shaping and awareness-raising efforts around these initiatives. Statistics from August 2020 on the ATT demonstrate, for instance, that among the AIPA member states, 5 out of 10 states have signed the ATT.² The UN PoA requires a biannual National Report. Of the AIPA states, 5 out of 10 delivered a national report in 2018 and 2 out of 10 delivered a National Report in 2020.³

¹ United Nations First Committee Statement delivered by Viet Nam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2020): <https://vnmission-newyork.mofa.gov.vn/en-us/News/ConsulateNews/Pages/19.10.2020.aspx>

² Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), (2020): <https://thearmstradetreaty.org/treaty-status.html?templateId=209883>

³ 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), (2020): <https://smallarms.un-arm.org/national-reports/>



Importance of parliamentary action

The status of the different regulating initiatives highlighted underpins the importance of parliamentary action on prevention and reduction of illicit SALW-related violence.⁴ PFSALW regards parliamentarians’ legislative, oversight and awareness-raising functions as key and strives to facilitate increased engagement and action in international processes. It is especially relevant that this engagement is retained given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as to support the building-back better efforts taking place in societies after the pandemic.

Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

ATT is a legally binding treaty that regulates the international trade in conventional arms and seeks to prevent and eradicate illicit trade and diversion of conventional arms by establishing international standards governing arms transfers.⁵

Country	Ratification (2013-2021)	Signatory (2013-2021)	Initial Reports /Annual Reports (2013-2021)
Brunei Darussalam	No	No	-
Cambodia	No	Yes	-
Indonesia	No	No	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	No	No	-
Malaysia	No	Yes	-
Myanmar	No	No	-
Philippines	No	Yes	-
Singapore	No	Yes	-
Thailand	No	Yes	-
Vietnam	No	No	-

Sustainable Development Goal 16.4.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

As promoting sustainable development through the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda is a priority for ASEAN, it is key to consider the reduction in illicit trade of small arms and its role within the SDGs.⁶ Target 16.4 of the 2030 agenda is intrinsically connected to peace and reduction of uncontrolled SALW flow by its indicator 16.4.2 “Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments”.⁷ There is however a lack of data on this indicator with only 17 states worldwide having reported on indicator 16.4.2 and with none of them being ASEAN states.⁸ This underlines the need for

⁴ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), (2018): <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/>

⁵ ATT (2020): <https://www.thearmstradetreaty.org/>

⁶ ASEAN, (2020): https://asean.org/storage/2020/02/Co-Chairs-Press-Statement_2nd-ASEAN-EU-Dialogue-on-Sust-Dev-final.pdf

⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), (2020): <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>

⁸ United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), (2021): <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>



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continued determined work towards achieving effective SDG monitoring to facilitate SDG management and implementation progress.

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)

Under the UN PoA, a politically binding instrument, governments agreed to improve national small arms laws, import/export controls, and stockpile management – and to engage in cooperation and assistance.^{9, 10}

Country	National Reports on the Programme of Action (2003-2020)
Brunei Darussalam	-
Cambodia	2004, 2008, 2018
Indonesia	2003, 2005, 2009, 2010
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-
Malaysia	2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2018, 2020
Myanmar	-
Philippines	2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2018
Singapore	2014, 2016, 2018
Thailand	2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020
Vietnam	2006

The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol)

The Firearms protocol is the only legally binding instrument to counter the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition at the global level.^{11, 12}

Country	Signature (2001-2021)	Ratification/Acceptance/Approval Accession/Succession (2001-2021)
Brunei Darussalam	No	-
Cambodia	No	Yes
Indonesia	No	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	No	Yes
Malaysia	No	-
Myanmar	No	-
Philippines	No	-

⁹ UNODA (2021): <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/programme-of-action/>

¹⁰ UN PoA (2020): <https://smallarms.un-arm.org/national-reports/>

¹¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), (2021): <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html>

¹² United Nations Treaty Collection (2021): https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-c&chapter=18&clang=en



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Singapore	No	-
Thailand	No	-
Vietnam	No	-

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA)

UNROCA is a non-binding report mechanism where countries are requested to report on their export and imports. A majority of official arms transfers are captured there, according to the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs.¹³

Country	Conventional Arms Register (2003-2019)
Brunei Darussalam	2003, 2006, 2007
Cambodia	2003, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014
Indonesia	2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2002, 2009
Malaysia	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
Myanmar	-
Philippines	2003, 2004, 2006, 2008
Singapore	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019
Thailand	2003, 2004, 2009, 2011
Vietnam	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016

National Action Plans for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security seeks to address the disproportionate and unique impact of conflicts on women by encouraging its member states to involve women and their perspectives in peace and security operations to promote and maintain peace and security.^{14 15}

Since the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is related to mainstreaming various vital concepts related to the topic, it is complex to measure and report its implementation. The elaboration and implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) is one adequate way to work towards and measure the national implementation of UNSCR 1325, a relevant resolution as reaffirmed during the 2020 East Asia summit.¹⁶

Country	National Action Plans (2000-2020)
Brunei Darussalam	-

¹³ United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), (2019): <https://www.unroca.org>

¹⁴ United Nations Security Council (UNSC), (2000): <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2000/10/un-security-council-resolution-1325>

¹⁵ PeaceWomen (2020): <http://peacewomen.org/member-states>

¹⁶ ASEAN (2020): <https://asean.org/storage/2020/11/33-EAS-Leaders-Statement-on-Women-Peace-and-Security-FINAL.pdf>



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Cambodia	-
Indonesia	2014-2019
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-
Malaysia	-
Myanmar	-
Philippines	2010-2016, 2017-2022
Singapore	-
Thailand	-
Vietnam	-