

Regional seminar

“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

Jakarta, Indonesia

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

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION PLAN¹

Part 1 – Introduction and purpose

The state of the world, marked by violence and conflict, underlines the need to prioritise the prevention and reduction of armed violence. According to the Small Arms Survey, more than 1 billion Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are circulating worldwide, 85% in the hands of civilians², causing the death of approximately 223 300 people every year³. The number of forcibly displaced people due to conflict, violence and persecution has reached over 89 million, the highest number since the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) records began.⁴ The situations behind forced displacement are highly linked to the misuse of SALW. Armed conflicts and violence, independent of their scale, are perpetuated by the uncontrolled availability of SALW, increasing the need for concise and effective steps to tackle its proliferation. The uncontrolled proliferation of SALW

¹ The present PAP was approved at the second part of the regional seminar for Southeast Asia, taking place on June 9-10, 2022. The first part of the seminar 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”. As a result of the first part of the seminar, a separate PAP with focus 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), Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and the 2030 Agenda was elaborated and approved.

² Small Arms Survey, Estimating Global Civilian-held firearms numbers, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/weapons-and-markets/tools/global-firearms-holdings.html>

³ Small Arms Survey, “Global Violent Deaths in 2018”: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/W-Infographics/SAS-GVD-March-2020-update.pdf>

⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2021, Figures at a glance, <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

has widespread human, economic and social costs. Furthermore, it threatens democracy and good governance and facilitates violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Civilians are the main victims of violations of IHL in armed conflicts.⁵ The serious human, social and economic effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic further underscore the need to prevent armed violence as to build back better.

In 2018, 596,000 persons died of lethal violence, including 93,700 women and girls, and millions more were affected by armed violence.⁶ Globally, firearms were used in about 38% of all violent deaths in 2018, which resulted in 223,300 deaths. Alone in Asia in 2017, in almost 50% of the homicides a firearm was used.⁷ Apart from causing injury and loss of life, armed violence has severe effects on sustainable development, good governance and contributes to the persistence of armed conflict. Further, it facilitates violations of human rights, gender-based violence and impedes economic investment, having a negative impact on public health systems and productivity levels by draining public resources away from education and socio-economic development.

Globally, between 2012 and 2016, occurred around 1 million firearms related deaths, whereas 44% of the homicides were committed with firearms during 2016.⁸ The sub-regions most affected by lethal violence by firearms are—in decreasing order between 2012 and 2016—South America (with a rate of violent 18 deaths per 100,000 population), Central America (16), the Caribbean (8), and Southern Africa (6).⁹ The change between 2016-2017 in terms of homicide and direct conflict death amounted to 11,500 more homicides in Central America and 8,200 more homicides in South America, whilst Southeast Asia experienced a rise in conflict related deaths amounting to 3,600.¹⁰

In Southeast Asia, countries are severely affected by the uncontrolled proliferation and trafficking of illicit SALW. The region is a crossroads for arms smuggling, trafficking, illicit craft production, drug-trafficking and the countries' extensive maritime borders. The context, combined with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, underscores the need of concerted efforts in the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence.

Given the complexity of the issues, parliamentarians are crucial actors in the prevention and reduction of uncontrolled SALW proliferation, through their legislative, oversight and awareness raising functions.

The objective of the regional seminar was to strengthen parliamentary knowledge for the universalisation and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), linking to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, 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. The seminar was realised as part of a project financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada, 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*". 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 of the Parliamentary

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross, 2013, Contemporary challenges for IHL, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/contemporary-challenges-ihl>

⁶ UNODC, Global Study on Homicide 2019 (Vienna, 2019): <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html>

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Small Arms Survey, "Global Violent Deaths 2017, Time to Decide" (2017): <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Reports/SAS-Report-GVD2017.pdf>

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Small Arms Survey, "Darkening Horizons, Global Violent Deaths Scenarios, 2018-30": <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Violent-Deaths-Scenarios.pdf>

Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons' (PFSALW) members and the wider public in an international social media campaign.

The seminar engaged parliamentarians from Member Parliaments of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (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 present PAP is the result of the seminar discussions identifying main conclusions from the participants' perspectives as well as needs for revisions based on the previously adopted PAP in 2018.

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

- Support the universalisation and effective implementation of the ATT and its links to the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and other related instruments;
- Guide parliamentarians in their work related to the ATT and the WPS Agenda to ensure that the legislative response is both nationally appropriate and consistent with the aims of the instruments;
- Suggest mechanisms for effective oversight of Government;
- Recommend methods to strengthen links between the executive and legislative branches of Government and between parliaments and civil society on the armed violence prevention and reduction agenda – strengthening the social contract.

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

1. Awareness raising
2. Legislation
3. Oversight

Part 2 – Recommendations on Universalisation and Implementation of the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda

Based on the three key roles of a parliamentarian; legislation, oversight and awareness raising, below follows the most important recommendations for actions to be taken in the region. The recommendations serve as point of departure to reach maximum results when it comes to implementation and universalisation of the ATT linking to the WPS Agenda, as well as fulfilling States' obligations on international frameworks considering vital aspects such as transparency and accountability. In all efforts, it is fundamental to include the gender equality perspective -the role of women -, as well as the youth perspective in relation to other relevant international instruments on conventional arms control.

1. Awareness Raising

- 1.1 Enhance the understanding among MPs on the importance and rationale on ratifying the ATT, including clarifying benefits and misconceptions.
- 1.2 Promote awareness raising campaigns in, and with, constituencies in a systematised way to improve understanding of provisions related to national firearms control laws, and present the views of the constituencies in relevant committees.
- 1.3 Promote targeted capacity building initiatives for MPs, including regional knowledge exchange and parliamentary diplomacy within ASEAN to promote the ratification of the ATT.

- 1.4 Increase dialogue and exchange between international community and parliaments.
- 1.5 Raise awareness on the importance of SALW control, e.g. control the type of arms that are allowed for private military companies.
- 1.6 Implementation of 1 to 2-year campaigns for SALW eradication under the guidance of the United Nations.
- 1.7 Encourage member countries of the UN to assist in the awareness work related to illicit SALW, mine clearing and unexploded ordnance.
- 1.8 Promote identification of resources for awareness raising activities related to cleaning of war remnants.
- 1.9 Raise awareness through the publication of relevant legislation and invite to public consultation.

2. Legislation

- 2.1 Promote a regional Model Law adjusted to the ASEAN context on the topic of increased SALW control and the ATT as to encourage further legislative actions and subsequent applications.
- 2.2 Prioritise the signature and ratification of the ATT, as well as the Firearms Protocol.
- 2.3 After the ratification and the approval, ATT must be translated into national laws.
- 2.4 Consider resolutions by the UN General Assembly as a base for improving and amending national legislation, as part of a process guided by the United Nations in an inclusive fashion.
- 2.5 Written communication on behalf of Presidents of Parliaments to the executive power to encourage the submission of all related laws concerning SALW control.
- 2.6 Establish and/or strengthen cross border cooperation and coordination.
- 2.7 Create national SALW commissions and committees for cross-border cooperation and coordination.
- 2.8 Initiate enactment of relevant laws regarding the topic of SALW control.

3. Oversight

- 3.1 Initiate dialogue with the Government to request update on status regarding pending ATT ratification process and present recommendations to advance the process.
- 3.2 Initiate a public hearing with representatives of the Government and civil society based on the Parliamentary Action Plan and seminar report.
- 3.3 Ensure accountability on behalf of the cabinet by relevant parliamentary oversight action.
- 3.4 Ensure checks and balances of the actions being undertaken by the executive power.
- 3.5 Investigate and evaluate the implementation during the budget hearing related to SALW control.
- 3.6 Elaborate National Action Plans on SALW control, and ensure their approval by the Government.
- 3.7 Follow up on implementation of current legislation, including enforcement of laws.
- 3.8 Encourage UN Regional offices to provide a mechanism to support assessment on the progress of law enforcement related to SALW control.
- 3.9 Report on the conclusions from the seminar to the national parliament.

Part 3 – Partnerships and resources¹¹

The efforts of parliamentarians in promoting universalisation and implementation of the ATT and its links to the WPS Agenda can be multiplied if working in partnership with organisations with similar

¹¹ The Plan is inspired by action plans and tools created by other international parliamentary organisations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Parliamentarians for Global Action.

or overlapping interests. It is therefore recommended that PFSALW and its members seek partnerships and structured dialogue with a range of actors.

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

Other Parliamentary networks

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

[ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly \(AIPA\)](#)

[Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption \(GOPAC\)](#)

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

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

Intergovernmental structures

[Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#)

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

[ISACS Inter-Agency Support Unit](#)

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

[United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific \(UNRCPD\)](#)

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

Civil Society Organisations

[Control Arms Coalition](#)

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

[International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War \(IPPNW\)](#) – Armed violence and health perspective

[Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#) – Gender perspective related to SALW and Women Peace and Security

Research institutes

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

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

[Small Arms Survey](#)

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

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

Other sources

[The Arms Trade Treaty](#)

[The UN PoA](#)

[The 2030 Agenda](#)

[UNSCR 1325](#)

[Firearms Protocol](#)

[UNCOMTRADE](#)

[NISAT](#)

[UNROCA](#)