



EU Statement

By

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European External Action Service

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and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

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Mr Chairman,

1. I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia^{*}, Montenegro^{*}, Iceland⁺ and Serbia^{*}, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.
2. The EU considers that continued international cooperation and assistance remain key for the successful implementation of the PoA and should therefore continue to form an integral element of any PoA and ITI meetings.
3. Assistance and cooperation hold a central role in the objectives and means contained in the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition, adopted in December 2005. Since the 2012 Review Conference, the EU, as well as its Member States, have continued to provide significant assistance to states, sub-regional, regional and international organizations to fully implement all provisions of the PoA. This assistance covers a whole range of activities, including stockpile management and security, the disposal of surplus SALW and ammunition, or the enhancement of record-keeping, marking and tracing capacities. These assistance programmes usually combine capacity-building elements with the provision of equipment and technology. Alone in 2012, the EU Member States and the EU institutions spent almost 20 million USD on assistance for reintegration and SALW control.
4. The EU has been particularly keen to promote regional cooperation in the field of SALW, which is a key aspect to achieving sustainable results and support states in fulfilling their obligations deriving from the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. This can be illustrated by two ambitious regional projects supported by the EU. The first project aims at supporting the fight against the illicit accumulation and trafficking of firearms in Africa, via the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA). This project inter alia aims at raising the awareness and knowledge of relevant institutional and civil society actors on legislative and institutional aspects and at strengthening the African Regional Police Chiefs Organisations and the capacity of law enforcement agencies to fight cross-border trafficking. The second one, implemented by the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of SALW (SEESAC) and the UN Development Programme, has been providing support to countries in the Western Balkans to fully implement their obligations deriving from the UN Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. This includes stockpile security activities, the destruction of surplus SALW, improvement of capacities for SALW marking, tracing and record-keeping, as well as awareness raising campaigns.

^{*} The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

⁺ Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.

5. The EU along with its Member States have also shown their readiness to support individual states that have urgent needs as regards the control of SALW – a case in point is Libya, where we are supporting the Libyan state institutions to exercise effective national control over their conventional weapons and ammunitions, in particular in the area of physical security and stockpile management.
6. Finally, the EU would like to highlight to the ambitious assistance programme it has recently adopted to assist a number of third countries, upon their request, in strengthening their arms transfer systems, in line with the requirements of the Arms Trade Treaty. While this assistance package is related to the ATT, which is a separate framework, we consider that the supported activities will, overall, contribute to the objectives of the Programme of Action.
7. These examples demonstrate the broad scope of assistance that the EU and its Member States are providing and can provide in support of the implementation of the PoA and the ITI objectives.
8. The EU hopes that BMS5 will be used to discuss the effectiveness and possible improvement of the existing cooperation and assistance, underlining the need for national ownership, including by looking at issues such as the measurability and evaluation of assistance, the importance of identifying and prioritising assistance needs, as well as of coordination amongst donors.
9. Mr Chairman, the European Union looks forward to the work ahead of us in the remainder of this week and will spare no effort to ensure that this meeting will agree on substantial and result-oriented recommendations to reinforce the Programme of Action.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.