

## Implementing the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms: *What needs to be done?*

7-8 February 2002

Jongny s/Vevey, Switzerland

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SUMMARY REPORT



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## Abbreviations used in this report:

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CASA	United Nations Coordinating Mechanism on Small Arms
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
DDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
NISAT	Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers
OAS	Organisation of American States
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNDC	United Nations Disarmament Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation

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## 1. Introduction

On 7-8 February 2002, the Geneva Forum gathered 36 experts from governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and research institutes to discuss the implementation of the UN “Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects”<sup>1</sup> adopted in July 2001 in New York. The meeting had three goals: To generate an overview of small arms work that is already underway in different parts of the world, to highlight the main challenges and opportunities facing this work and, finally, to come up with concrete proposals on how to advance the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to share information on and compare experiences of their efforts to stop the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in their respective countries and regions. The discussions underlined three main points: that a significant amount of political will has been generated by the adoption of the Programme of Action, that numerous initiatives are already underway in various parts of the world in an effort to implement its provisions, and that there is a strong desire among numerous governments, regional organisations and non-governmental organisations to coordinate and cooperate with one another in fighting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The discussions also indicated, however, that shortcomings exist in many aspects of the effort to stem the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons. Prominent among these is the lack of resources and capacity to carry out necessary work. The workshop also uncovered an important difference in the overall approach to the Programme of Action between those who wish to focus on implementing what is contained in it and those who wish to further strengthen it by adding further provisions (some of which existed in previous drafts of the Programme of Action). It is likely that both of these approaches are needed – a narrow focus on implementing what has already been agreed upon in the Programme of Action accompanied by an ongoing search for further useful tools to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

There was broad agreement, however, that implementing what is contained in the Programme of Action would be an impressive achievement. Fully implementing the Programme of Action would also go a long way towards indirectly achieving goals not specifically stated therein – e.g., full implementation would make it extremely difficult for governments to transfer firearms to non-state actors. In a similar vein, work in other areas of the UN system can help fill in what some perceived to be gaps in the Programme of Action – e.g., progress on the UN Sanctions Committee could serve to strengthen the regulation of small arms brokers.

Government representatives in particular stressed that focusing too broadly on the issue of small arms could run the risk of ignoring what had been agreed in the Programme of Action. They argued that it would be more effective to carry out work in areas where agreement had been reached than to attempt to begin work in areas where there was no agreement. Those who held this view thought also that the Programme of Action is broad enough to allow different initiatives to progress at different speeds and does not hinder action where action is possible.

This report presents a summary of the information and ideas exchanged in the workshop. It is organised in accordance with the workshop’s principal goals: Section 2 reports on ongoing small arms work in various parts of the world, section 3 underlines the principle gaps in and obstacles to this work, and section 4 presents a summary of the principal recommendations to emerge from the workshop.

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<sup>1</sup> A/CONF.192/15

## 2. Ongoing Small Arms Activities

Participants provided an overview of the types of small arms work in which they are engaged in various parts of the world, producing a useful “snapshot” of a very wide range of activities being conducted at the national, regional and international levels. The overview presented below, while not exhaustive, does provide an impression of the momentum that has already been achieved since the adoption of the Programme of Action in July 2001.

### a) UN General Assembly Resolution

**Colombia, South Africa** and **Japan** co-sponsored a draft resolution based on the UN Programme of Action in the October/November 2001 General Assembly First Committee. The General Assembly subsequently adopted the resolution on 24 December 2001.<sup>2</sup> The following work on implementing specific parts of this resolution has already begun:

*UN Study on Identification and Tracing:* The **UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA)** is in the process of forming a panel of governmental experts that will assist the Secretary-General in conducting a UN study on the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable states to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons, as called for by the Programme of Action<sup>3</sup> and the 2001 General Assembly resolution.<sup>4</sup> The panel, when completed, will comprise about 23 experts.

*Preparations for 2003 Biennial Meeting:* The date, venue and duration of the first biennial follow-up meeting in 2003 will be decided by the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. It is the responsibility of **Japan** to place a recommendation on this before the other two countries sponsoring the small arms resolution – **Colombia** and **South Africa**.

### b) UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA)

While UN member states carry the primary responsibility for implementing the Programme of Action, **DDA** is the UN body charged with helping member states to do so. Participants recognised the pivotal role played by DDA in helping implement the Programme of Action and foresaw an even more significant role for it in the future. Participants recognised, however, that DDA is a small department with limited capacity and that its human and financial resources would need to be augmented in order for it to fulfil the expectations being placed upon it by states and NGOs alike in the context of implementing the Programme of Action. Particular recommendations of further activities that DDA could undertake in support of implementing the Programme of Action are contained in the final section on recommendations.

DDA has already undertaken a fact-finding mission on small arms to Kenya and has received a request from the Argentinean state of Mendoza to aid in its implementation of the Programme of Action especially with regard to weapons collection and destruction programmes.

### c) National legislation, regulations and administrative procedures

The **Regional Human Security Centre** in Jordan is in the process of organising a workshop to analyse the Programme of Action with a view to assessing how national legislation regarding small arms could be strengthened in the region. **Kenya** is currently reviewing its firearms act with a view to introducing stiffer penalties for illegal firearms activities. **South Africa** has already introduced new legislation that increases penalties for the illegal possession of small arms up to a maximum of 25 years imprisonment. **Thailand** is examining the possibility of strengthening laws concerning brokering and export controls related to small arms. **The Russian Federation** introduced national legislation to control

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<sup>2</sup> A/RES/56/24 V

<sup>3</sup> Section IV.1.(c)

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 10.

exports of small arms even before the 2001 UN conference. **Canada** (DFAIT) has commissioned a study on brokering related laws and activities in Canada in order to assess whether national laws and administrative procedures are up to the task of combating illegal small arms transfers through a brokering deal fixed in Canada.

d) National Points of Contact

Many countries reported having already nominated national points of contact and national coordination agencies in accordance with the provisions of the Programme of Action.<sup>5</sup> Some states, such as **Brazil** for example, have also appointed focal-points at the federal state level. Countries that had not already nominated focal points and national coordination agencies were encouraged to do so as soon as possible. Some countries that had already met their obligations in this regard, however, expressed uncertainty as to the precise role that the national points of contact were expected to play and to whom they should be reporting. Participants asked for more clarity on this issue.

e) International Assistance

**DFID** has established a small arms pool of £20 million and has made a priority of providing assistance in implementing the Programme of Action. DFID will also provide assistance to **UNDP** for collection and destruction programmes and, in 2003, will cooperate with the **OSCE, ECOWAS** and **SADC**. One of DFID's priorities is to help countries develop national action programmes on small arms, to continue working with and funding small arms NGOs and groups conducting policy oriented research and analysis on small arms.

Numerous other countries reported on their international assistance programmes specifically related to small arms. For example, **Norway** is cooperating with **UNDP** on a pre-assistance small arms study in Afghanistan and **Switzerland** is supporting work carried out with the support of the **UNDP** Trust Fund in the Great Lakes region of Africa and in the Balkans.

f) Capacity Building

In 2001, national and regional workshops on small arms were held in **Jordan**, the first of their kind in the middle-east. The **OSCE** has held border control seminars and trainings in Central Asia. **Egypt** is offering scholarships to government officials from African states to study small arms issues such as surplus management, storage, protection, etc. **Switzerland**, within the framework of the **Partnership for Peace**, will continue to conduct trainings on small arms stockpile management and security as well as on weapons collection and destruction.

g) Highlighting the Humanitarian and Human Rights Impact of Small Arms

The **Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue** is working with non-state actors and other armed groups to instil an understanding of the humanitarian and human rights consequences of small arms. It is building a coalition of humanitarian and human rights groups to advocate greater awareness of the human consequences of the illicit trade in small arms. It is conducting research, along with the **World Health Organisation, Johns Hopkins University** and the **Small Arms Survey**, on the impact that small arms have on the conduct of humanitarian work in the field.

h) Information Sharing

The **OSCE** has undertaken its first exercise in information sharing based on the OSCE document on small arms.<sup>6</sup> The information exchange was well subscribed and it represents one of the broadest exchanges on small arms and light weapons ever undertaken. The OSCE is further improving its information exchange by developing templates for reporting annually from now on. Based on the information exchanges and the OSCE document on

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<sup>5</sup> Section II.4 and 5.

<sup>6</sup> FSC.DOC/1/00 (24 November 2000)

small arms, the participating states are also considering creating a best practice handbook on aspects of policy and practice on small arms, which could provide states with an elaboration of model practices to guide their own policy-making.

i) Marking and Tracing

**South Africa** has reached agreement with manufacturers of small arms to introduce unique markings for each weapon produced. While very much supportive of the UN study on Identification and Tracing, **Switzerland** is studying together with **France** other paragraphs of the Programme of Action that deal with this issue to see how they could best be implemented.

j) Brokering

**The Fund for Peace** has conducted extensive research on the issue of arms brokering, and has produced, i.a., a "Model Convention on the Registration of Arms Brokers and the Suppression of Unlicensed Arms Brokering" (available at [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org)). **Norway** has initiated a discussion of brokering within the Wassenaar Arrangement and, in light of the relevant paragraphs of the Programme of Action and the General Assembly resolution, plans to consult interested countries in the coming months with a view to a possible follow-up meeting on this issue prior to the first UN biennial meeting in 2003.

k) Record-Keeping

**South Africa** is creating a central database for small arms belonging to the military and the police. While the database won't necessarily specify the numbers of weapons held, it will facilitate the tracing of weapons. It is also auditing the small arms holdings of all state bodies such as, for example, the Forestry Department. South Africa will keep records on small arms for a minimum of 10 years.

l) Weapons Collection and Destruction

In 2001, **Brazil** destroyed 100,000 firearms in Rio de Janeiro alone. In the same year, **South Africa** destroyed 26,000 redundant or obsolete state-held firearms as well as many more used in crime. Between 1998 and 2001, the **Russian Federation** destroyed half a million old and obsolete firearms and, following the 2001 small arms conference, it is taking additional measures to destroy such weapons. **Switzerland**, within the framework of the **Partnership for Peace**, will expand its training course on stockpile management and security to include the subject of weapons collection and destruction programmes. **Canada** reported progress in the destruction of surplus small arms, which has been a normal practice, not a policy, of Canadian armed and security forces. The Canadian DND plans to adopt an official policy mandating Canadian forces to destroy surplus small arms and a new Firearms Act will require the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to destroy excess small arms.

m) Public Awareness

**Kenya** has initiated programmes to sensitise the public to the dangers of small arms. **South Africa** has instigated public awareness campaigns in an attempt to change young people's attitude towards guns. **Malawi** has introduced programmes – with the support, i.a., of **NISAT** and **Norway** – to increase cooperation between the police and community organisations in dealing with the problem of small arms. These programmes are increasing the reporting of crime to the police in Malawi and are also increasing the number of arms being handed over to police by civilians. **UNICEF** is conducting a "life skills" project with young people in Kosovo – both in and out of school – to, i.a., educate young people about the dangers posed by small arms. UNICEF will also conduct qualitative research in Kosovo on the factors preventing young people from adopting safe and tolerant practices, including the relative influence of family members, peers, teachers and others.

What needs to be done?

n) Various National Initiatives

**Tanzania** has developed a 5-year plan of action on small arms that involves a comprehensive mapping of the small arms situation in the country and specifies what institutions need to be established in order to tackle the problem. **Switzerland** has established an inter-agency working group to compare and contrast various regional and international documents on small arms – including the UN Programme of Action, the OSCE document on small arms and the Vienna firearms protocol – to see where common action is needed and/or possible. **Argentina** is working on a draft voluntary agreement with the owners of internet sites based in Argentina that sell firearms. The agreement aims to cut down on the illicit trade in small arms over the internet by instigating a “web seal” that would certify the source of the firearms being sold.

o) Various Regional Initiatives

An **East African** police-chiefs coordination committee has been established. **SADC** is working to get its small arms protocol ratified by all member governments and has also formed a committee to deal with small arms issues on regional basis. Two priority areas for SADC are cooperation with the United States in a joint working group on small arms and continued cooperation with European Union. The office of **Stability Pact** and **UNDP** will set up a regional small arms clearing house in Belgrade to match projects with donors. The focus of this clearing house will be on cooperation between governments and NGOs. **ASEAN** considers the small arms issue to be closely linked to that of transnational crime and is considering introducing small arms as a separate issue in future ASEAN meetings. A **Mercosur** firearms group, which includes coordination at the level of intelligence agencies, was established in 2001 and is scheduled to hold its next meeting in March 2002 in Buenos Aires. It is also testing an on-line database linking the six member states that will allow each country to access the others’ data on small arms. In November 2001, a Mercosur seminar took place in Santiago to examine the implementation of the Programme of Action from a regional perspective. One proposal made was to organise a meeting between customs authorities in the region and **Interpol** with a view to strengthening and harmonising customs controls. A follow-on meeting is scheduled for the first half of 2002. The **Security Research and Information Centre** in Nairobi, in cooperation with **Interpol**, has developed a draft small arms protocol for the Horn and Great Lakes regions of Africa, which it has passed on to national police organisations in 10 countries.

p) Research

The **Institute for Security Studies** in South Africa has undertaken research on people’s attitudes towards firearms and on the impact that weapons availability has on young people (especially young, demobilised former combatants). The **World Health Organisation**, taking its cue from Section III, paragraph 18 of the Programme of Action, is coordinating a study, together with the **Small Arms Survey**, on the health impacts of small arms that focuses not only on direct effects but also on broader socio-economic effects. Two pilot studies will be conducted shortly in Mozambique and Brazil. The first edition of the **Small Arms Survey** yearbook, which profiled the small arms problem, was launched at the 2001 small arms conference. Its focus has now shifted to generating new information through research. The 2002 edition will focus on the humanitarian dimension of the small arms problem while the 2003 edition will have the development dimensions of the problem as its theme.

q) Upcoming Conferences

*African Conference on the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action: Needs and Partnerships*: This conference is scheduled to take place in Pretoria on 18-21 March 2002. The conference is co-sponsored by **Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland** and the **UK** who – along with **Kenya, Mali, Nigeria** and **South Africa** – form the organising committee of the conference.

### 3. Gaps and Obstacles

As alluded to in the introduction, the discussions demonstrated that at least two understandings are possible of what constitute “gaps” in connection with the Programme of Action. The first understands it to mean gaps in the Programme of Action itself – i.e., perceived shortcomings in the ability of the Programme of Action to deal with the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The second, on the other hand, understands it to mean gaps in implementing what *is* contained in the Programme of Action – i.e., inadequate action to realise the provisions it does contain. In briefly setting out below the main gaps in and obstacles to efforts to stem the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons identified during the workshop, this distinction is retained.

a) Gaps in the Programme of Action (*what it does not contain*)

- The human dimension of the small arms problem is underplayed; a satisfactory linkage is not made between small arms and human rights and their implications for international humanitarian law are not elaborated.
- Export controls and the provision of small arms and light weapons to non-state actors are not adequately addressed.
- The civilian possession of military style small arms and light weapons is not addressed.
- There are no calls for legally binding international agreements on brokering and marking & tracing.

b) Gaps in and obstacles to implementing the Programme of Action (*what it does contain*)

*Capacity Building and Resources:*

- Skills and resources at levels that do not currently exist are needed to implement fully the Programme of Action. There is also a more fundamental problem related to resources that must be recognised: Some developing countries find it impossible to invest resources in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons when many of their citizens do not have enough to eat. The priorities of these countries must be respected and extra effort invested in helping them overcome their development and small arms problems, which are often closely related.
- Overall, there are insufficient funding commitments from governments and the international donor community to support implementation of the Programme of Action. One important reason for this is that the small arms issue has not been sufficiently integrated into the work of national development agencies.<sup>7</sup>
- Sufficient information does not exist on the financial resources available to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Moreover, the little information that does exist does not always specify the purpose for which funds have been earmarked or the procedures to be followed in order to apply for financial support.
- Lack of capacity remains a problem and the need for training remains a high priority. For example, the **East Africa** and **Great Lakes** Programme of Action on small arms does not have an adequate secretariat to drive it forward.

*Institutions:*

- There is some degree of confusion regarding how the national points of contact should function and to whom they should report.
- Some countries are finding it difficult to move small arms related issues beyond their ministries of foreign affairs. Moreover, many countries that have succeeded in doing so are experiencing a lack of coordination and cooperation between government agencies.

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<sup>7</sup> It is a promising sign, however, that the organisers of the 18-21 March 2002 small arms meeting in Pretoria have asked that officials of national development agencies be included in delegations.

What needs to be done?

This problem is exacerbated in countries with federal political systems where states play an important role in implementing the Programme of Action.

- Evaluations of existing national legislation on small arms still need to be carried out in many countries.
- Many countries have not yet developed national plans of action to deal with the problem of small arms.
- The UN **Coordinating Mechanism on Small Arms (CASA)** has not yet achieved its full potential in connection with implementing the Programme of Action and should be upgraded and strengthened.
- The lack of an adequate definition of *small arms and light weapons* is causing problems for some countries when it comes to implementing the Programme of Action.
- Adequate guidelines and templates to help governments report on small arms issues in their jurisdiction have not yet been developed.
- The fact that information on small arms submitted by governments under the terms of the Programme of Action may be made public will restrict the kind of information that governments will submit. It is important, therefore, that regional mechanisms are developed through which more sensitive information can be shared.

*Complex long-term needs:*

- Basic data on small arms are often hard to come by. In particular, there is not enough information on the small arms problem in certain regions, especially Central Asia and the Middle East.
- A better understanding of the demand side of the small arms equation is needed, especially as it relates to the erosion of state authority and state collapse.
- A systematic means of evaluating the effectiveness of work to stem the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons does not at present exist. Although some basic elements of such a system are evident, more creative thinking needs to be brought to bear on this problem in order to develop a rigorous means of evaluating small arms programmes.

#### 4. Principal Recommendations

The principle recommendations to emerge from the meeting may be divided into those that should be undertaken immediately (and do not require national legislative action) and those that should be implemented over the medium and longer term.

*In the short-term, all governments could:*

- Nominate a point of contact for small arms issues.
- Nominate or create a national coordinating agency and/or institutional structure to coordinate national, regional and international small arms activities.
- Once these have been established, begin work immediately on a national plan of action to implement the Programme of Action that includes cooperation with civil society and especially with women's groups.
- Develop an inventory of existing national institutions and resources that can be mobilised in implementing the Programme of Action.
- Conduct an evaluation of how the country is effected by small arms and how best to implement systems of record keeping and registers of small arms production and brokering.

*Over the medium and longer-term, the following issues should be addressed:*

1. Mainstreaming the Implementation of the Programme of Action

- a) Countries should recognise that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a serious impediment to development and, consequently, should integrate the issue of small arms into their development assistance programmes.
- b) The human dimension of the small arms problem has still not been sufficiently elaborated or understood. Further research and more intensive public awareness programmes are needed in order to stress the adverse impact that small arms and light weapons have on societies and communities around the world.
- c) The **Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA)** mechanism within the UN needs to be made more effective and proactive. It should be the forum in which small arms activities planned by one Agency receive input from all other Agencies. In order to achieve this, dedicated CASA staff should be appointed (at least one professional and one support staff) and the level of Agency representation at CASA meetings should increase.
- d) UN peacekeeping operations could play an important role in mainstreaming the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons if, for example, a disarmament component were built into the mandates of peacekeeping missions.
- e) The impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on children should be highlighted during the **UN Special Session on Children** scheduled to be held in New York on 8-10 May 2002.

2. Resources and Capacity-Building

- a) There is not enough information on the financial resources available to combat the illicit trade in small arms. Moreover, the little information that does exist does not always specify the purpose for which funds have been earmarked. A comprehensive survey of the sources of small arms funding – including Bretton Woods institutions, governments and foundations – should be conducted and made widely available. This could be carried out by DDA, UNDP or IANSA and the results made available on the Web. The UN and IANSA could also act as a clearing-house to match available funds with suitable projects.
- b) More training is needed, especially on the national and regional levels, in order to maximise the effectiveness of human resources dedicated to combating the illicit trade in small arms, in particular in the areas of policing and customs control. When conducting such trainings, special emphasis should be placed on using expertise already available in the countries or regions concerned. Donors could also be encouraged to increase their support of capacity-building work conducted through **UNDP**.
- c) National development agencies should be made an integral part of every government's work in fighting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Only then would it be possible to mobilise sufficient resources to address the problem adequately.
- d) Building capacity in law-enforcement and customs agencies is particularly important. It would help to introduce a regional element to the training of law-enforcement and customs officials in order to encourage the regional harmonisation of national law-enforcement and customs practices.
- e) In order to identify the most promising civil society small arms projects in various parts of the world, governments could authorise their embassies to use limited amounts of funds to support local projects aimed at combating the problem of small arms. Because of their direct connection with these projects and their ability to monitor and evaluate them from close-up, embassies would then be in a good position to make recommendations to their governments regarding which projects should be funded in a more substantial way.

What needs to be done?

- f) Even relatively small, symbolic destructions of firearms can have disproportionately large effects in some areas, since they create a kind a precedent that eliminates obstacles to future collections and destruction of small arms. Every opportunity should be taken, therefore, to organise such destruction ceremonies, however small they may be.

### 3. Information Sharing

- a) A template could be developed in order to facilitate standardised voluntary reporting by governments on all aspects of small arms – i.e., production, holdings, trade, collection and destruction, etc. In particular, the lessons learned by regional organisations that have already engaged in information-sharing exercises – such as, for example, the **OSCE** – should be codified and shared with other regional organisations. The experience of some countries has been that detailed templates – in the form, for example, of questionnaires – not only make it easier to provide the correct information but also has the added benefit of highlighting gaps in small arms activities being carried out by countries.
- b) A clearing house for the exchange of information is of particular importance, especially when it comes to informing about national focal points, coordinating agencies, plans of action, etc. This could be carried out by DDA in conjunction with other UN bodies.
- c) In order to encourage the practice of information sharing, the Secretary-General of the United Nations could send a letter to all UN member states encouraging them to live up to their reporting commitments under the Programme of Action.
- d) A broad range of indicators could be developed, perhaps by **DDA**, in order to monitor success in implementing the Programme of Action.
- e) Meetings similar to this one organised by the Geneva Forum should be integrated into other kinds of UN meetings, such as, for example, sessions of the **United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)**.
- f) A glossary of definitions of terms relating to small arms and light weapons should be developed.

### 4. Regional Initiatives

- a) A meeting bringing together regional organisations should be convened for the purpose of sharing lessons learned and best practices with regard to implementing the Programme of Action. (The **Organisation of American States (OAS)** was mentioned as a possible convener of such a meeting).
- b) Each region could develop a matrix that would set out commitments contained in the Programme of Action alongside those contained in regional small arms instruments and matching them with specific actions to be carried out at the regional and national levels (the **Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress** in Costa Rica has already created such a matrix for Central America that could serve as a model). A series of regional meetings of governments could be organised in the run-up to the 2003 biennial meeting to develop these regional matrixes and to examine overall progress in implementing the Programme of Action.
- c) Legislative Action Groups could be established on a regional basis to develop model legislation to combat the illicit trade in small arms for possible implementation in countries in the region. This method would likely be less cumbersome and time consuming than attempting to harmonise existing national legislation.
- d) More intensive effort and more resources should be dedicated to following up on regional declarations on small arms such as, for example, the **Nairobi Declaration** and the **Bamako Declaration**.

- e) Special effort should be made to promote understanding and implementation of the Programme of Action within **ASEAN** and in the **Middle East**. Further research should also be carried out on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in these regions. In particular, bilateral or trilateral arrangements on small arms between countries in these regions should be put in place as a means of encouraging more vigorous regional activity.
- f) Countries should recognise that the regional and global implementation of the **Vienna Firearms Protocol** will support implementation of the Programme of Action and should take appropriate action to support implementation of the Protocol.
- g) Small arms NGOs need to become more active regionally and work cooperatively in implementing the Programme of Action at the regional level.

#### 5. The Role of Civil Society

- a) Central to the discussion of civil society's role in implementing the Programme of Action is the issue of funding NGO activities. New mechanisms are needed to match available resources with suitable civil society projects. These might include regular meetings between donors and small arms NGOs or might involve a greater role for **IANSA** as a clearing-house for matching funds with projects. To the extent possible, civil society small arms projects should be funded in such a way that work can be carried out in a focused and sustained manner.
- b) Many effective grass-roots NGOs working to alleviate the problems posed by small arms are unable to raise sufficient funds to sustain their work because of an inability to draft effective funding proposals and to monitor and evaluate projects. Civil society organisations with expertise in this area should dedicate more effort to passing on this skill to less experienced groups.
- c) Governments and academic institutions could play a leading role in encouraging civil society activity on small arms in areas where it does not exist or exists only in a limited way.

#### 6. 2003 Biennial Meeting

- a) It is most important that the 2003 biennial meeting be an inspiration for further action to stop the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. All interested parties – governments, NGOs and UN Agencies – must, therefore, do their utmost to make as much progress as possible before this meeting.
- b) It will be important to decide on the modalities of NGO participation in the 2003 biennial meeting as early as possible in order to be able to dedicate the entire meeting to the issue at hand – considering the implementation of the Programme of Action. Since the 2003 meeting will not be a negotiating forum, the issue of NGO access should be reasonably straightforward. To ensure that this is the case, NGOs should make clear at an early stage what kind of access they would like. **Japan** could then include in its draft small arms resolution in the First Committee the proposed modalities of NGO access.

#### 7. What More Can be Done in Geneva?

- a) The pre-Conference Geneva initiative of **Norway, South Africa** and **Switzerland** regularly to convene a group of states interested in the issue of small arms and light weapons should be revived. NGOs and UN Agencies could be invited to some meetings of this group, as necessary, in order to provide briefings and activity updates. It would be important, however, to reserve this forum primarily as a place where governments discuss their small arms activities and plan future actions.

What needs to be done?

- b) **The Geneva Forum** and the **Small Arms Survey** could act as a kind of “institutional memory” to be placed at the disposal of new mission members who take up the small arms portfolio in Geneva.
- c) The small arms coordination work that **the Geneva Forum** has been carrying out with **UN Agencies and Intergovernmental organisations** could be intensified and an effort made to ensure a high level of representation at coordination meetings. The Geneva Forum should also examine ways of strengthening the New York/Geneva axis on small arms issues.
- d) **DDA** should designate a formal small arms focal point in Geneva and **CASA** should hold one or two meetings a year in Geneva.
- e) The Geneva small arms community would benefit greatly from regular briefings from Amb. Camilo Reyes on the progress of his efforts to advance the Programme of Action and from his continuing advice regarding suitable activities that could be organised from Geneva.





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