ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE
*(OSCE)*

EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
*(EAPC)*

# SUMMARY REPORT

## *Synergy Conference for Regional Organizations on the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW*

## NATO HQ, Brussels, 28-30 May 2008







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## List of Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ACCS | NATO Arms Control and Coordination Section |
| ASG/PASP | NATO Assistance Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| AU | African Union |
| BMS | Biennial Meeting of States |
| CAN | Andean Community (Comunidad Andina de Naciones) |
| CARICOM | Caribbean Community |
| CASAC | Central American Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Programme |
| CIFTA | Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials |
| CIS | Commonwealth of Independent States |
| CPC | Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE Secretariat |
| DDR | Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration |
| EAC | East African Community |
| EAPC | Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of Western African States |
| ECOSAP | ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme |
| GRIP | Groupe de Recherche et d'Information sur la Paix |
| IO | International Organization |
| ISS | Institute for Security Studies, South Africa |
| ITI | International Tracing Instrument |
| LAS | League of Arab States |
| MANPADS | Man-Portable Air Defence Systems |
| NAMSA | NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency |
| NCB | National Central Bureaux |
| OAS | Organization of American States |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| PoA | United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects |
| PRIO | International Peace Research Institute, Oslo |
| PSSM | Physical security and stockpile management |
| RACVIAC | Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre |
| RECSA | Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States |
| RIBIN | Regional Integrated Ballistic Information Network |
| RO | Regional Organization |
| SCR | EAPC-OSCE Co-Sponsored 2008 Synergy Conference for Regional Organizations on the Implementation of the UN PoA on SALW |
| SALW | Small Arms and Light Weapons |
| SARPCCO | Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization |
| SEESAC | South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms |
| SIPRI | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute |
| SSR | Security Sector Reform |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |

| | |
|---|---|
| UNIDIR | United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research |
| UN-LiREC | UNODA Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean |
| UNODA | United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |
| UNRCPD | UNODA Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific |
| UNREC | UNODA Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa |
| WA | Wassenaar Arrangement |
| WCO | World Customs Organization |

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 On 28-30 May 2008, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) co-organized a "Synergy Conference for Regional Organizations on the Implementation of the UN PoA on Small Arms and Light Weapons" (hereafter referred to as the Conference, or SCR), at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

1.2 The Conference, made possible by generous contributions from the governments of Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway and the United Kingdom, brought together participants from 30 regional organizations involved in 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 (hereafter also referred to as the PoA or Programme of Action). In addition, representatives of UN agencies, governments, and civil society participated in the discussions, adding their experience in implementing the PoA.

1.3 During the three-day conference, participants briefed each other about the activities of the respective organizations in implementing the UN Programme of Action, highlighting both areas of strength as well as remaining challenges and possible problematic areas. The Conference aimed at an interactive approach that allowed for the exchange of information and experiences among all participants. Written contributions about the general activities of regional organizations invited to the Conference supported the discussions and provide an overview of activities conducted at regional level to implement the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

1.4 The conference confirmed that the level of implementation of the UN Programme of Action varies across regions, both in terms of the depth and breadth in which issues are addressed, and in terms of thematic focus of activities. Most regional organizations involved in SALW control and implementation of the UN Programme of Action have established some kind of normative policy framework to address these issues. However, in addition to the different focus and nature of regional instruments, there are significant differences in the level of their practical implementation. Indeed, many regional organizations seem to face challenges not so much with the lack of policy instruments, but rather with insufficient implementation of already existing commitments.

1.5 Additionally, there is still insufficient information about the current state of affairs with regard to SALW controls in different regions. In order to improve implementation as well as develop effective practical interventions and further normative commitments, better knowledge has to be generated about local situations and causalities. Furthermore, lack of capacity remains an issue in many regions, especially in Africa, where regional organizations find that they cannot adequately address the pressing issues of illicit SALW proliferation without the necessary technical and financial support of donor governments and international organizations.

1.6 Based on the discussions and presentations at the Conference, it seems that an increasing number of activities are taking place at regional level around the globe to implement the PoA. These activities vary from policy documents to practical project efforts, and often address issues related to SALW from the point of view most crucial or important to the region in question. While much is being done at the regional level in various regional organizations to implement the UN PoA, cross-regional approaches seem to be scarce.

Organizations working in different parts of the globe rarely exchange information about their activities, experiences or lessons learned.

1.7 Following these main conclusions that arose from the discussions at the Conference, the Summary Report also presents several recommendations for future action at the regional level. Most importantly, the following recommendations were identified (please see pages 29 to 32 for further explanation):

- ***There exists a need to translate political decisions and commitments into practical actions.***
- ***There should be further exchange of practical expertise and best practices.***
- ***Co-ordination and cooperation within and between regions should be ensured.***
- ***Efforts in awareness-raising should be continued.***
- ***Regional Points of Contact should be established.***
- ***Regional Organizations could assist with reporting and transparency at a national level.***
- ***Donor and recipient activities should be better coordinated.***
- ***There exists a need to develop integrated efforts.***
- ***Regional cooperation on border controls should be enhanced.***
- ***Laws should be harmonized and regional best practices should be developed.***
- ***Regional-level involvement in new initiatives should be ensured.***
- ***The inclusion of all relevant actors should be ensured.***
- ***There exists a need for further data and research.***

## 2. BACKGROUND AND AIMS

2.1 The United Nation Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in All Its Aspects (hereafter PoA), particularly in Article II, contains a comprehensive set of measures to be achieved at the national, regional and global levels. On 14-18 July 2008, the UN hosts the third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) to review the implementation of the PoA in New York.

2.2 Regional initiatives (via regional organizations, multilateral cooperation, and non-governmental organizations) are vital in complementing and strengthening the implementation of the UN PoA at national and global levels. Regional initiatives are crucial in small arms control: small arms trafficking cannot be fully controlled by individual countries on their own, as illicit trade is nourished by porous borders and insufficient national controls. Traffickers are quick to adopt trade routes where national controls are weak and will take advantage of insufficient cooperation between border control authorities and differences in national regulations.

2.3 The work done by regional organizations also complements and strengthens the implementation of the UN PoA by allowing regions to address small arms problems from their own perspective and according to their particular needs. They have been very influential in helping countries improve their SALW laws, regulations and export controls as well as assisted in the destruction of large numbers of surplus SALW. These efforts have saved large numbers of lives and will continue to do so, thereby making them an indispensable part of the fight against illicit SALW trafficking and an essential component of implementing the UN PoA. Nonetheless, further efforts to strengthen regional action are necessary.

2.4 Regional activities also often act as a catalyst for global action against illicit small arms trafficking. Regional actions preceded and helped shape the PoA, and have since 2001 created reciprocal effects between regional and global actions: many regions urge new developments at the global level, while the global framework provided by the PoA helps spur action within regions.

2.5 In early June 2007, the staffs of the Conflict Prevention Centre of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CPC), the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), and the NATO Arms Control and Coordination Section (ACCS) learned that they share a common interest in holding a conference on regional implementation to support the UN PoA process.

2.6 In fall of 2007, after a series of informal consultations between the three bodies, NATO and the CPC moved to intensify their cooperation regarding the Conference. Thus, on 12 November 2007, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy (ASG/PASP) sent a letter to the OSCE Secretary General, inviting the CPC to co-sponsor and jointly organize such a conference with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). On 7 December 2007, the OSCE Secretary General responded positively to ASG's letter, supporting the concept. Shortly thereafter, the Organizations' staffs agreed to hold the three-day event on 28-30 May 2008 at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

2.7 The title of the Conference was decided to be "Synergy Conference for Regional Organizations on the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW" (hereafter also referred to as the Conference, or SCR).

2.8 From the side of the organizers, the SCR was seen as another step in a continuum of events successfully co-organized by the OSCE and the EAPC. Most recently, the two bodies co-sponsored a workshop on Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS), held on 12-13 June 2007 at NATO Headquarters, in Brussels. In addition, the event was seen as being fully in line with UN General Assembly Resolution 62/47 of 10 January 2008, which regarding the BMS states, in part:

> "[The General Assembly...] encourages all initiatives, including those of the United Nations, other international organizations, regional and sub-regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, for the successful implementation of the UN PoA, and calls upon all Member States to contribute towards the continued implementation of the PoA at the national, regional and global levels."

**Aims of the Conference**

2.9 The primary aim of the SCR was to facilitate further cooperation and promote best practices between regional organizations in implementing the PoA. It was hoped that this in turn would for its part also support the third BMS on implementation of the PoA to be held in New York in July 2008. More specifically, the SCR aimed at:

- Helping identify and facilitate synergies between regional organizations to further implement the UN PoA;
- Providing a forum for exchanging information on achievements in terms of implementing the UN PoA, best practices, and recommendations for further action;
- Identifying duplications of efforts as well as areas where more emphasis may be needed;
- Encouraging organizations to be more active and influential in combating the illicit trafficking in SALW in all its aspects; and
- Supporting ongoing UN efforts to match resources with requirements to aid organizations, which have declared their willingness to cooperate on implementation of the UN PoA.

**Topics of discussion at the Conference**

2.10 Section II, paragraphs 24 to 31, of the PoA lists and urges the following measures to be applied at the regional level to mitigate the SALW threat:

- To establish or designate, as appropriate, a point of contact within subregional and regional organizations to act as liaison on matters relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action (paragraph 24);
- To encourage negotiations, where appropriate, with the aim of concluding relevant legally binding instruments aimed at preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, and where they do exist to ratify and fully implement them (paragraph 25);

- To encourage the strengthening and establishing, where appropriate and as agreed by the States concerned, of moratoria or similar initiatives in affected regions or sub-regions on the transfer and manufacture of small arms and light weapons, and/or regional action programmes to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, and to respect such moratoria, similar initiatives, and/or action programmes and cooperate with the States concerned in the implementation thereof, including through technical assistance and other measures (paragraph 26);

- To establish, where appropriate, subregional or regional mechanisms, in particular trans-border customs cooperation and networks for information-sharing among law enforcement, border and customs control agencies, with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders (paragraph 27);

- To encourage, where needed, regional and subregional action on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in order to, as appropriate, introduce, adhere, implement or strengthen relevant laws, regulations and administrative procedures (paragraph 28);

- To encourage States to promote safe, effective stockpile management and security, in particular physical security measures, for small arms and light weapons, and to implement, where appropriate, regional and subregional mechanisms in this regard (paragraph 29);

- To support, where appropriate, national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, particularly in post-conflict situations, with special reference to the measures agreed upon in paragraphs 28 to 31 of this section (paragraph 30);

- To encourage regions to develop, where appropriate and on a voluntary basis, measures to enhance transparency with a view to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (paragraph 31).

2.11 During the SCR, regional organizations were asked to focus on these topics in their presentations and highlight the steps they have taken and are taking in their region to fulfill these objectives, as well as identify areas of shortcomings where further work is still needed.

# 3. CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

## Opening Session

3.1 In keeping with the theme of synergy, the Conference was opened by high-level representatives from the organisers, each of whom highlighted the excellent cooperation between the EAPC and the OSCE in the preparation of the conference.

3.2 Mme Aurelia Bouchez, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Regional, Economic and Multilateral Affairs within the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division of NATO, stressed from the outset the importance of the conference theme and its objectives. Describing NATO efforts to combat the illicit proliferation of SALW, Mme Bouchez made specific reference to the EAPC Working Group focusing on implementation efforts, advocacy and the exchange of information – very much in keeping with the theme of the SCR. Mme Bouchez stated that regional initiatives had proven to be a particularly promising channel for the implementation of the UN PoA.

3.3 Ambassador Aapo Pölhö, Permanent Representative of Finland to Belgium and to NATO, speaking as a representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, asserted that all concerned should strive towards building consensus at both regional and international levels. He expressed approval of the thematic approach adopted by the organisers, especially given the stated aim of supporting the similarly thematically structured UN Biennial Meeting of States. Ambassador Pölhö also stated that co-ordination and co-operation between different organisations was a priority area for the Finnish Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2008.

3.4 Mr. Paul Fritch, Director of the Office of the Secretary General at the OSCE, remarked that the illicit trade in small arms was nourished by porous borders and insufficient national controls and therefore, since small arms trafficking could not be fully controlled by individual countries on their own, regional-level initiatives played a crucial role in small arms control. Mr. Fritch described the recognition of the SCR at UN level as a step forward in giving regional organisations the acknowledgement they deserved for valuable work done in various regions to combat the problem of illicit trade and proliferation of small arms.

3.5 Mr. Daniël Prins, Chief of the Conventional Arms Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, proposed that regional organizations build on the timely initiative of the SCR by continually coming together to discuss how best to carry forward the regional perspective of the PoA and by identifying gaps in implementation and needs for cooperation. He suggested that this could be done through future synergy conferences and through meetings in the margins of the BMS in order to orchestrate the work of regional organizations in a most effective manner.

## SESSION I: Regional Instruments to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW

3.6 Mme. Agnès Marcaillou, Chief, Regional Disarmament Branch, from the **UNODA** chaired the session, and Ms. Sarah Parker, a researcher from the **Small Arms Survey** acted as the discussant.

3.7 The first working session of the Conference heard presentations from four regional organizations from different parts of the world. In her remarks, Ms. Fiona Lortan from the **African Union** (AU) presented African regional instruments to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit SALW trade with special emphasis on the AU's key SALW documents and their implementation. She underlined especially the importance of translating adopted policies into practical action. Lack of capacity to undertake practical disarmament programmes was noted as a major issue for the AU and one that would deserve further attention. An example to that effect was given on the joint disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme in Somalia.

3.8 Mr. Keo Chhea from the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations** (ASEAN) presented efforts made in Southeast Asia to combat illicit trafficking in small arms, including policies, initiatives and practical activities. The ASEAN working programme on SALW focuses on information exchange, cooperation in legal matters and law enforcement, institutional capacity-building and extra-regional cooperation. To implement the programme, ASEAN has conducted a series of regional seminars on SALW since 2000.

3.9 Following the ASEAN presentation, Mr. Fadi H. Achaïa shared with the participants the experiences of the **League of Arab States** (LAS) in implementing the PoA. He noted that LAS has organized a series of seminars and conferences on SALW and the PoA and established a regional point of contact. As a result of the LAS efforts, countries in the region have *inter alia* developed a model law on SALW and started exchanging information on regional level about the implementation of the PoA. Challenges in the LAS region remain related, among other things, to financial and technical constraints, different traditions and norms in the region and lack of public awareness about the effects of illicit SALW proliferation.

3.10 From the Americas, Ms. Alison Treppel from the **Organization of American States** (OAS) presented the main framework document in the region related to SALW controls, the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials (CIFTA), which aims at preventing, combating and eradicating illegal arms manufacturing and trafficking, and promote and facilitate cooperation and exchange of information and experiences within the region. Since 2003, OAS has also drafted model regulations on SALW control, which are currently being developed into model legislation. Areas covered include SALW marking and tracing, controls in export points, and legislative measures on criminal offences. In addition, work is underway with regard to SALW confiscation/forfeiture, record-keeping, confidentiality and exchange of information, as well as security measures and controlled delivery. Within the OAS, special efforts have been placed on the ratifications of CIFTA, implementation and capacity-building efforts and exchange of information.

3.11 As the last presentation of the session, Ms. Elli Kytömäki from the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe** (OSCE) presented the Organization's main SALW documents and their implementation, including the 2000 SALW Document and the Handbook of Best Practices on SALW gathered in 2003. She noted that SALW controls are a priority area of work at the OSCE, and the Organization has developed comprehensive answers to the problem. In addition to adopting new normative measures on SALW control

whenever needed and conducing practical assistance programmes, the Organization has in the past year stressed the importance improving the implementation of existing normative commitments.

3.12 As a conclusion of the session it was noted that a range of regional and/or sub-regional meetings (ministerial meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops) have been held in all regions on PoA implementation since 2001. With the exception of Asia-Pacific, most regions have a network of adopted policies and agreements related to SALW. However, in many cases their implementation remains patchy. In addition, raising further awareness about SALW and the PoA is still needed across regions.

3.13 Regional organizations have an important role in supporting the implementation of the PoA, for example in helping their member states to establish necessary national implementation structures, report on PoA implementation, and facilitate the exchange of information and lessons learned. It was evident from the presentations and from the nature of the instruments adopted and activities taking place, that regions have different priorities in PoA implementation: for example in Asia, transnational crime is a priority issue, whereas many regional organizations in Africa are concentrating more on post-conflict recovery. This highlights the importance of regional organizations that are well placed to deal with local, specific SALW issues. It also sets some potential limits for the need and possibilities of "synergization", since the different problems and challenges faced by different regions cannot always be dealt with a unified solution.

3.14 Inadequate resources of many regional organizations (ROs) and problems related to the implementation of regional documents remain issues of concern and were stressed both in the presentations and during the discussion as remedying further attention. It was noted that experiences and expertise gathered by different ROs vary, which further underlines the need for cross-regional sharing of information and experiences. Currently, the sharing of experiences between regions is scarce. However, for example LAS and OSCE presented a positive example of such activities with regard to the translation of OSCE Handbook of Best Practice Guides into Arabic, following a request from the LAS.

3.15 Most regions seem to have established regional points of contact as encouraged by the PoA (Section II, paragraph 24). However, these are currently not systematically recorded or maintained. While some regional organizations have adopted legally binding treaties or agreements as encouraged by the PoA (Section II, paragraph 25), most of the instruments adopted are politically binding. Model laws and best practices have been drafted or are in preparation in many regions and sub-regions. Stockpile management, DDR programmes, awareness-raising and transparency measures were highlighted as central activities in many regional organizations.

3.16 The crucial importance of cultural and sociological factors as well as that of children and youth was underlined during the discussion in the session, and it was recommended that these aspects be taken better into account when drafting model laws, implementation plans and other policy documents.

**Recommendations from Session I:**

*- Need to translate political decisions and commitments to practical actions*
*- Establishment of regional implementation frameworks or Action Plans*
*- Need for more resources and further awareness-raising*
*- Further cross-regional coordination and cooperation*
*- Regional organizations could further support their member states in PoA implementation*
*- Increased transparency within regions but also between regional organizations*

## SESSION II: Physical security and stockpile management: regional and sub-regional activities encouraging effective practices

3.17 Mr. Peter Courtney-Green, Chief of the Ammunition Support Office in the Operational Logistics Support Programme of the **NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency** (NAMSA) chaired the session, and Mr. Eric Berman, the Managing Director of the **Small Arms Survey** acted as the discussant.

3.18 Mr. Peter Courtney-Green of NAMSA opened the session by describing the NATO Trust Fund concept as a proven path for the delivery of cooperative international assistance involving NATO and Partner Countries. He noted that other international organizations had contributed to projects with donations, notably the European Union, which had been a major benefactor of NATO Trust Fund projects in Albania, and contributions in kind, such as those received from the UNDP and the OSCE in other projects, citing these as noteworthy examples of synergy in the delivery of international assistance.

3.19 Ms. Melanie Regimbal of the **UNODA Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean** (UN-LiREC) reported that several States had established national firearms commissions, several of which had been assisted by UN-LiREC. She also informed those present that firearms weapons destruction had taken place throughout the region, with the assistance of UN-LiREC, such as in Peru where 42,000 decommissioned firearms were currently being destroyed. Ms. Regimbal also identified two main challenges concerning ownership of stockpiles in the region: first, the virtual impossibility to calculate the current number of firearms stockpiled within civilian possession, and second, the lack of coordination between national authorities legally holding stockpiles. With regard to lessons learned from the UN-LiREC experience, Ms. Regimbal advocated a holistic approach involving integral assistance packages and projects tailor-made to the needs of states, while also stressing that coordination and capacity-building were aspects of fundamental importance.

3.20 The representative of the **East African Community** (EAC), Mr. Leonard Onyonyi, reported that the EAC launched a SALW Program in August 2006 to address regional proliferation of SALW through enhanced implementation of the Nairobi Protocol by Partner States in support of the other pillars of regional integration. Among the challenges faced by the EAC, Mr. Onyonyi listed donor fatigue, membership of multiple sub-regional institutions, lack of government resources to fund coordinating bodies, lack of experience in the region and lack of capacity. On this last point, he stressed the critical importance of cross-regional coordination and/or information exchanges for capacity-building and indeed for the wider approach to the problem. Mr. Onyonyi also concluded by saying that international support, both technical and material, was necessary to consolidate those gains already made and that there was a need for a broad approach to SALW as a development issue that encompassed the governance and political spheres.

3.21 Mr. Francis Forbes of the **Caribbean Community** (CARICOM) drew largely from the findings and recommendations of the Regional Task Force on Crime and Security (Task Force) when describing the fight against illicit SALW trafficking in his region. The Task Force reported that certain Member States had been less than successful in their implementation of the UN Programme of Action. CARICOM's response to regional SALW obligations in the UN PoA, as outlined by Mr. Forbes, would involve establishing legal instruments to combat illicit trade in SALW, improving physical security for SALW and developing trans-border customs cooperation and information sharing. Mr. Forbes devoted particular attention to the concept of a Regional Integrated Ballistic Information Network (RIBIN), allowing intelligence to be shared across jurisdictional boundaries. Other initiatives include encouraging Member

States to ratify the UN Firearms Protocol, addressing the issue of legislative harmonisation and developing a regional SALW strategy and PoA.

3.22 Mr. Albert Druzhinin of the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** noted that ensuring security and combating crime was one of the most requested areas of cooperation among the Commonwealth States. He described the legal and organisational system that had been formed, was operating and was being perfected, including concept documents, agreements and inter-state implementation programmes. Mr. Druzhinin detailed a series of important documents adopted within the CIS intended to ensure the implementation of the UN PoA on SALW as well as the UN Firearms Protocol. He also referred to measures being taken to develop mechanisms of exchanging information among law enforcement agencies, aiming to prevent illegal circulation of light weapons across state borders, and to ensure active cooperation between the CIS and Interpol through national central bureaux (NCB) with the aim of identifying groups or persons involved in the illegal trade of light weapons.

3.23 In his summary, Mr. Eric Berman of **Small Arms Survey** highlighted a number of issues pertaining to the session discussion. He underlined the need for proper definition of weapons surpluses, noting that these could take many distinct forms, including declaratory, technical, economic, strategic, doctrinal and a cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Berman also highlighted the importance of staff training and morale, in addition to the need to ensure appropriate accountability when introducing or seeking to implement legislation.

**Recommendations from Session II:**

*- Further effective regional practices on PSSM should be encouraged and exchanged between regional organizations.*
*- Programmes on physical security and stockpile management should aim at being holistic and taking into account country- and regional specificities.*
*- Need for cross-regional coordination and/or information exchanges for capacity-building.*
*- Need for more resources and further awareness-raising.*

## SESSION III: Weapons collection and destruction programmes (including surplus disposal) also as applied to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes

3.24 Mr. Diman Dimov, Team Leader from the **South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms** (SEESAC), chaired the session and Mr.Guy Lamb, Programme Head in the **Institute for Security Studies** (Arms Management Section) acted as its discussant.

3.25 Session III of the Conference was devoted to presentations and discussion on weapons collection and destruction, also as applied to DDR programmes. The first presentation by Mr. Nicholas Organ from the **European Commission** (EC) presented the EC's assistance programmes across regions in 2009-2011, especially as they related to weapons collection and destruction and DDR. The European Union is committed to supporting the continued implementation of the UN PoA, and the Commission for its part deals with programmes against illicit trafficking of firearms and explosive materials under both its short- and long-term funding components. Since 2001, the EC has spent over €250 million on SALW programmes, with regional focus on DDR programmes in Africa.

3.26 Following the European Commission's experiences, participants heard about the experiences of the **Andean Community** (Comunidad Andina de Naciones, CAN) in undertaking weapons collection and destruction programmes in the Andean region. Mr. Cristian Espinosa from CAN presented also the wider framework of SALW control, stressing the need for a holistic and integrated approach to weapons. Information exchange, horizontal cooperation and collection of data were highlighted as being of central importance in planning practical SALW programmes and in implementing policy documents. So far, limited numbers of weapons have been destroyed in the Andean region, but the activities are to be seen as a step in the right direction. CAN also echoed previous comments noting that the implementation of political documents needed to be reinforced and standardized within and between regions.

3.27 Also from the Americas, the **Central American Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Programme** (CASAC) gave an example of recently commenced activities in the Central American region with regard to weapons collection and destruction initiatives. Ms. Eva Casaca Gurdian from CASAC noted that CASAC started its operations only in October 2007, so no major achievements could yet be presented. CASAC takes an integrated approach to illicit SALW in Central America, looking at both control and demand of weapons. Its goals are to promote international good and best practices, south-south cooperation, national and regional capacity-building and development of regional security strategies.

3.28 The session heard also two presentations from Africa: Mr. Jonathan Sandy from the **Economic Community of Western African States** (ECOWAS) presented SALW programmes in the ECOWAS area, linking it with other security challenges in the region, such as child soldiers, refugees, danger of reoccurrence of conflicts and general political instability. He stressed the need for continued regional approach on SALW, including support to the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) Trust Fund. ECOSAP has so far hosted several national stockpile management workshops and supported countries in the region to build capacities and raise awareness on different SALW issues. It has also gained some practical positive experiences about working together with other regional organizations and UN bodies. In ECOWAS region, weapons collection and destruction exercises are proving extremely useful rural and local communities, especially in post conflict countries. However, challenges in the region remain related to problems of insufficient border controls, local manufacturing of weapons, their poor marking and tracing,

and the absence of national and sub-regional weapons collection and destruction strategies. Further support was noted to be needed for the collection and destruction surplus national stockpiles in the ECOWAS region.

3.29 As the last presenter of the session, Mr. Francis K. Sang from the **Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States** (RECSA) presented the institutional framework for SALW control in the Great Lakes region, and shared RECSA's experience in adopting and implementing Best Practices and National Action Plans. He pointed to the importance of policy frameworks, co-operation, legislative measures and capacity-building in conducting effective SALW collection and destruction programmes. Other key areas of action identified by RECSA are exchange of information and transparency regarding national databases and among law enforcement agencies regarding criminal groups. Reference was also made to the Best Practice Guides developed by Nairobi Protocol countries. International assistance and cooperation and political will were noted to be crucial in achieving the overall goal of preventing illicit proliferation of SALW. Challenges in the region were listed as weak laws, poor policy frameworks and policy implementation arrangements, as well as to the need to establish strong National Focal Points with budget support from respective governments and locate them in appropriate ministries.

3.30 Generally, it was felt that coordination and cooperation between regional organizations could and should be improved. While there have been some encouraging examples of cooperation (for example between ECOWAS, UNDP and UN in Western Africa and between SEESAC (UNDP) and OSCE in the assistance programme in Montenegro), examples showed that major challenges remain with regard to planning and conducting effective, coordinated and comprehensive SALW collection and destruction programmes. Synergies can be found if organizations are open and willing to discuss their strengths and weaknesses, forget about competition and exchange information about their activities and practices. A practical initiative in this regard could be the establishment of regional SALW & Conventional Ammunition (CA) destruction centres. However, political and practical realities must be considered in joint ventures like this, since they might evoke competition between states about practical issues such as the location of the centres, insurance issues, or coverage of SALW and CA transportation costs.

3.31 Both legal and institutional frameworks and implementation efforts were highlighted during the session. Some speakers also made references to SALW control and transnational organized crime and linked weapons collection programmes and development. Examples from inter alia Peru and Nicaragua were presented as successful projects that had combined weapons collection with development programming. In general, the need for an integrated approach with sustainable long-term impacts was highlighted. In this, some speakers pointed to insufficient resources available to regional organizations and highlighted the need of continued donor community support.

3.32 It was noted that the UN has recently developed DDR standards that hopefully will prove useful also for regional organizations in their programmes. The standards remain open for modification, should experience show that their certain elements could be improved.

**Recommendations from Session III:**

*- In order for cooperation to be successful, ROs have to forget about competition and define each others' special strengths and identity.*
*- Need for more data and research to ensure that policy responses and practical programmes are well planned and correctly address the problems/issues.*

*- Given the problem of high levels of armed violence in some regions of the world, it might be useful to look at DDR programmes in a non-traditional way, including also disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of gang members, criminals or non-state armed groups.*
*- In order for the National Focal Point on SALW to be active, adequate resources should be secured; NFP needs its own budget line.*

## SESSION IV: International tracing and illicit brokering in SALW

3.33 Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, chaired the session, while Mr. Nicolas Marsh, a Research Fellow from the **International Peace Research Institute** (PRIO), acted as its discussant.

3.34 To commence the discussions in Session IV, participants heard presentations from two researchers. Mr. Mark Bromley from SIPRI (**Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**) gave an introductory presentation to the issue of SALW marking and tracing, noting that the key challenges in this regard are the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) and the UN Programme of Action. He identified two of the key challenges facing the ITI in future years. First, to encourage states or other international actors to begin using the mechanism by submitting tracing requests. Second, to develop more harmonized reporting on the implementation of the ITI under the UN Programme of Action.

3.35 Following this, Mr. Holger Anders from GRIP (**Groupe de Recherche et d'Information sur la Paix**) presented an overview of different regional instruments and their tracing regulations. He noted that all existing regional instruments promote the marking of SALW at their manufacture with minimum information. In addition, many instruments promote standards on the placement of marks; marking at import and of recovered SALW; minimum time requirements for record-keeping; and cooperation with international organisations. However, only few instruments promote standards on marking SALW in state stockpiles and SALW sold from state stocks to civilians; on the contents of record-keeping systems and their organization; and on the contents and modalities of tracing requests.

3.36 Lack of national capacities (equipment, standard operating practices, etc.) to mark and trace weapons was identified as a problem also for regional organizations in their activities on SALW in different regions and sub-regions. In addition, reference was made to insufficient political will to activate and conduct SALW tracing requests as well as to the fact that boundaries of national and sub-national administration as they currently are, often discourage authorities to effectively respond to international tracing requests. It was noted that further requests and offers of assistance to strengthen national stockpile management capacities could be made to ensure effective implementation of SALW tracing commitments. Like with regard to many other topics of discussion, it was also noted that many regions have inadequate resources, equipment and training for marking and record-keeping of SALW. Currently, there do not seem to be many cross-regional activities on SALW tracing. One positive example in this regard was the cooperation between EAC and RECSA in the purchase of automated SALW marking machines.

3.37 It was also pointed out that even though the ITI does not specifically mention the possibility of regional organizations to make tracing requests, this is not prohibited. Should ROs so wish, they could also participate in making and responding to these requests. It was noted that several regional organisations (including OAS, OSCE, and EU) have declared regional arms embargoes. Should they initiate investigations into suspected violations they may well benefit from the ability to initiate tracing requests.

3.38 Following the discussion on SALW tracing, the session turned to the issue of SALW brokering. Mr. Nicholas Marsh from PRIO (The International Peace Research Institute, Oslo) gave an overview of SALW brokering controls at global and regional levels, including a comparison of regional instruments, and made several recommendations on how to ensure the implementation of regional agreements. Ms. Elli Kytömäki from the OSCE complemented

the approach by presenting a case study on OSCE efforts during the past year to assess and improve the implementation of its SALW brokering controls. She noted that while the adoption of the brokering decision within the OSCE was a significant achievement, there is insufficient information about how it has been implemented. The OSCE is currently in the process of assessing the level of implementation among its participating States, and thinking about possible way forward.

3.39 In his remarks, Mr. Marsh noted that Illicit SALW are primarily a regional problem, since illicit traffickers don't respect national borders or jurisdiction and arms are moved among neighbouring countries. In general global inter-continental movements of weapons take place under the authorised trade – they are then sometimes diverted into the illicit trade at the regional level. Therefore, regional solutions to illicit trafficking of SALW are needed, and regional organisations are the obvious place to find them. Many regional organizations already have political documents in place to control illicit SALW brokering. There is an interesting multi-layered approach with considerable overlap between organisations and while many states are members of several agreements others are not parties to any agreements on brokering at regional level. Some level of consensus already exists on how to deal with the issue, but important areas remain where the regional agreements do not concur.

3.40 During the discussions following the presentations some participants noted the need of model legislation on SALW brokering. It was noted that while there certainly is a need to develop more coordinated and comprehensive approach to SALW brokering, drafting model laws at regional or global levels might be difficult given countries' different legislative systems and structures.

3.41 Drawing the line between SALW brokering controls and other parts of small arms controls (air trafficking, end-user controls, etc.) can be difficult. However, it was noted that a comprehensive approach to small arms brokering is needed in order for the responses to be effective. This should link together not only the different stages of possible intermediary actions but also take into account legal controls and law enforcement concerning other forms of trafficking such as weapons of mass destruction, illicit drugs and human beings.

3.42 Possible future roles for regional organizations in supporting SALW brokering controls were noted to include: bringing together legal experts to study existing and necessary brokering controls in the region / sub-region; development of regional model legislation, operational information exchange in cooperation with regional offices of the World Customs Organizations and Interpol, and regional-level capacity-building programmes.

3.43 As in discussions during other sessions, the need for continuing awareness-raising and capacity-building was underlined. First, because there is often a high turnover of staff in government ministries and international organisations; and second, because national populations need to be kept informed. In both cases, it was felt that information needs to be disseminated on a regular basis.

3.44 Transparency in the form of national reporting was noted to be of importance, not only because the information exchanged can help increase trust and confidence but also since it can function as a tool to raise awareness and support implementation efforts. Effective marking and tracing and brokering regulations require transparent information exchange. Adequate management of this information (on the activities of brokers or the holding and transfer of arms) requires adequate bureaucratic and information systems. While technology is necessary it is much more important to develop the skills and procedures to handle the information. Reporting for example on efforts made in SALW tracing and brokering controls can raise the profile of the issue, and encourage capacity

development within governments and organisations in order to facilitate reporting. Reports can also be a useful lever for civil society and lawmakers.

3.45 It was also noted that trying to change laws, regulations and practices takes time. Therefore, one has to accept that we are engaged in a long-term process that will take many more years. Moreover, as illicit arms trafficking is a dynamic activity, constant review of laws and procedures will be necessary.

***Recommendations from Session IV:***

*On SALW marking and tracing:*

*- Establishment of national policies and measures to ensure the routine tracing of trafficked SALW.*
*- Strengthening capacities of international organisations to conduct traces on behalf of member states, where applicable.*
*- Inclusion of aggregated information on all tracing requests that were initiated / responded to by national law enforcement agencies in national reporting under the PoA / ITI.*
*- Regional Organizations could assume a more active role in supporting the implementation of ITI.*
*- Regional Organizations could further utilize and build upon the expertise gained by Interpol and its regional offices.*

*On SALW brokering controls:*

*- Regional organizations need an active implementation programme (best practice guides, country specific research, flexible approach to national legal traditions, regional seminars etc) that take into account and support global processes.*
*- In many cases, a 'push' from civil society can help, for example by addressing parliamentarians and parliamentary action.*
*- Continuing financial and technical support.*
*- Leadership within the regional organisation.*
*- Regional organizations could develop projects or meetings that would bring together legal experts from the region and outside to study existing and necessary brokering controls in the region.*
*- Support to the development of regional model legislation or best practice guidelines.*
*- Development of operational information exchange in cooperation with regional offices of the World Customs Organizations and Interpol.*
*- Need for enhanced cross-regional action.*
*- Further efforts on regional-level capacity-building programmes on SALW brokering controls.*

## Working Groups: Sub-regional or regional transparency mechanisms

3.46 The session was chaired by Mme. Christiane Agboton-Johnson, Deputy Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

3.47 The introductory session of the morning on the **Wassenaar Arrangement** (WA), delivered by Mr. Ted Seay, highlighted a number of important actual or potential points of synergy on how the WA and regional programmes could effectively collaborate, particularly on making use of the expertise and approaches which the WA has developed (e.g. guidelines) that could be effectively drawn upon by regional bodies.

## Working Group I - "International and Law Enforcement Cooperation and Information Sharing"

3.48 Mrs. Simonetta Grassi of the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, the Chairperson of the group, delivered a briefing on "International and Law Enforcement Cooperation and Information Sharing on Firearms Control" in which she focused on the Convention against Transnational Crime and particularly on the supplementary protocol on trafficking firearms. She presented a general structure of the Convention with its key provisions covering: prevention, investigation and prosecution of offences, protection of witnesses and victims, international cooperation, confiscation and control measures.

3.49 As far as the Firearms Protocol is concerned, she presented its purpose and structure, scope of application, key provisions (criminalization, confiscation, marking of firearms, import/export/transit requirements, record-keeping and tracing requirements, brokers and brokering, security and protective measures). Within "International Cooperation" she underscored: law enforcement cooperation, mutual legal assistance and its types, joint investigations, transfer of criminal proceedings and sentenced persons, extradition and special investigative techniques, collection, exchange and analysis of information as well as specific training programs.

3.50 The second speaker, Mr. Joseph Musoni from the **Southern African Regional Police Chefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO)** delivered a briefing on "The experience gained by SARPCOO in sub-regional cooperation between law-enforcement agents". In his briefing he presented the organization, structure and objectives of SARPCCO, its role in implementation of control of firearms, ammunition and other related materials. He discussed marking, tracing, handling and identification of firearms, brokering, harmonization of legislation as well as collection and destruction of firearms and ammunitions, illicit trafficking of firearms in the region. He mentioned operations "RACHEL" and "MANDUME" conducted by police officers from all SARPCCO countries, which targeted collecting of arms as well as quarterly operations against illicit trafficking of SALW and ammunition.

3.51 In the panel discussion the participants touched upon the need to revise and synchronize national firearms legislations to facilitate cooperation and exchange of information, as well as the computerization of national firearms registers/databases. Some participants pointed to financial constraints that limit effective operations, and stressed therefore the need for financial and technical assistance for stockpile management, marking and destruction programs.

## Working Group II – Border and customs control agencies

3.52 The second Working Group meeting was chaired by Lieutenant-Colonel Paul in den Bosch of the Arms Control and Coordination Section of **NATO**. Mr.Vitali Mikeladze of the **World Customs Organisation** served as Discussant.

3.53 Mr. Rory Keane of the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development** gave a presentation on his organisation's handbook on security sector reform (SSR), to which countries have formally signed up. On small arms control, Mr. Keane asserted that links to SSR programmes are rarely made in practice when undertaking SALW programmes and expressed the opinion that visible progress on police reform was often a good indicator of the success of SALW programmes. He highlighted the need to step outside a solely technical and programming approach and to design weapons collection programmes linked to development (e.g. the building of a well in return of weapons, rather than payment in cash).

3.54 On integrated border management, he reported that the respective police and military roles were often blurred – adding that there were too few links between border services and intelligence and security services – and that border management was often not a priority in SSR. The respective roles of different services had been defined in the OECD handbook. With regard to lessons learned on the issue, Mr. Keane stressed the vital importance of inter-agency/inter-ministerial cooperation and of enhanced cross border and regional harmonisation.

3.55 Representing the **Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC)**, Ambassador Nedzad Hadzimusic described his organisation's undertakings with regard to combatting illicit SALW trafficking. Having first provided an overview of RACVIAC's history, structure and mandate, Ambassador Hadzimusic stated that the focus of RACVIAC's strategic objectives was on three overarching themes, namely i/ international relations and cooperation, with a special focus on Euro-Atlantic integration, ii/ security sector reform and iii/ cooperative security environment, with the focus on arms control.

3.56 Ambassador Hadzimusic reported on RACVIAC's activities in the area of small arms and light weapons. He stated that the leading idea was to share the current experience of participating countries in regulating, preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms and ammunition, and to discuss the status of implementation of the legal obligations under the UN Firearms Protocol. The activities seek to develop consensus for a coherent and coordinated approach to the application of agreed controls as to avoid duplication of effort and to share information and knowledge amongst the authorities involved.

3.57 The ensuing group discussion covered issues as varied as border management focus in Central Asia (raised by the Finnish Presidency of the OSCE), coordination of the donor community and how NGOs might access donor support (CARICOM) and seizure of weapons (Small Arms Survey). The principal conclusion was that there was a need to focus on border management rather than border security.

## Working Group III – Public awareness and capacity-building programmes

3.58 The Chair and Discussant of the third and final Working Group were respectively Ms. Christiane Agboton-Johnson of the **United Nations Institute for Disarmament research (UNIDIR)** and Mr. David Atwood of the **Geneva Forum**. The Working Group heard

three presentations about regional level public awareness and capacity-building programmes: two from UN regional peace and disarmament centres (Africa and Asia-Pacific) and the third from UNICEF.

3.59 In the first presentation, Mr. Thierry Zang from the **UNODA Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa** (UNREC) presented the Centre and its activities in implementing practical disarmament measures in Africa. He spoke on the stakes and challenges involved in his organisation's implementation of practical disarmament measures, and reported that UNREC's activities consisted of advocacy and raising awareness, reinforcement of institutional and human capacities and concrete disarmament measures. Regarding advocacy, Mr. Zang cited public awareness campaigns on civil-military relations in Togo and on the dangers of SALW in Niger. Reinforcement of institutional and human capacities involved training of armed forces and security services (e.g. training on modern handling techniques for SALW in the Great Lakes region and in Central Africa) and, in addition, of civil society (e.g. training on practical disarmament). Finally, concrete disarmament measures were said to include support for the creation of an armed and security forces code of conduct and for the adoption of a legal instrument for SALW control in Central Africa.

3.60 Following UNREC, Mr. Xiaoyu Wang from the **UNODA Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific** (UN RCPD) presented the Centre's activities in Asia and the Pacific. Concerning the promotion of UN PoA implementation, Mr. Wang stated that, since 2003, the UN RCPD had organized five regional and subregional seminars and workshops devoted to SALW (Bali, Almaty, Nadi, Beijing and Bangkok) and that it had placed SALW as one of the key issues on the agenda of disarmament conferences/meetings it organized in the region.

3.61 In terms of the impact of these activities, he asserted that States' commitments to the full implementation of PoA had been reaffirmed, that the exchange of information, national experiences and good practices had been facilitated and that the adoption of national action plans had been promoted. He continued by noting the increased information exchange and cooperation between States, between States and international and regional organizations and also with civil society and the ongoing exploration of the establishment of effective subregional and regional mechanism for trans-border networks for info-sharing and cooperation among law-enforcement agencies.

3.62 Generally, the two presentations from the UNODA Regional Disarmament Centres highlighted a range of approaches which are being taken in support of the implementation of the PoA. These include conferences, seminars, training materials, etc. The emphasis was put on ways to build common work with regional and sub-regional bodies as sensible ways of sharing resources and avoiding duplication. A number of points were highlighted where there is potential to develop this further. For example, there are early plans being put into place to organize a meeting for the Asia-Pacific area similar to this Conference, in order to more directly be able to identify possible synergies in that part of the world, based on some of its special requirements. One of the general dilemmas noted was the fact that there are so many actors doing so many things. It is important to act to try to avoid duplication. Additionally, the dilemma of adequacy of resources for promoting appropriate PoA implementation activities was noted.

3.63 Representing the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, Ms. Julie Myers explained that her organisation had been mandated by the General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights and to represent the rights and experiences of children in small arms or armed violence meetings and fora, and partnerships. She listed active measures as including a four-country scoping study in El Salvador, Guatemala, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica in 2007, a ten-year Strategic Review of 1996 Machel Study on Impact

of Armed Conflict on Children, country interventions in Albania, Croatia, Tajikistan, Sudan, Somalia and Kosovo and awareness and community action plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The presentation highlighted the importance of thinking about the kinds of things necessary if all these PoA related activities are, in the end, to be sustainable over time.

3.64 The discussion, which followed, highlighted a number of key areas of importance. It was noted that appropriate programming must be based on good data about local situations and sensitivity to the appropriateness of programmes. In order to conduct effective programmes, better indicators should be developed to see which interventions are working and which are not producing a lasting impact. It was noted that currently, the majority of projects are planned as short-term activities — for example, 1 to 2 day conferences. These would need to be coupled with programming aiming at the medium and longer term outcomes.

3.65 Many speakers underlined the multi-actor nature of SALW, and pointed to the importance of effective partnerships not only region-to-region, but also across different kinds of actors: international organizations, governments, and civil society actors. A good example of this was mentioned being the following week's "Week of Global Action against small arms violence" as an important multi-actor initiative. Among the comments on the importance of different actors working at different levels, the question was raised as to why more in this Conference had not been made of the role of "moral authorities". The example given of this potential was how WHO campaign on vaccinations against polio had ultimately proven successful in areas where vaccination was being resisted due to the active involvement of religious leaders.

***Recommendations from the Working Group sessions:***

*- Importance of conducting also medium and long-term assistance programmes should be highlighted.*

*- Need for continued capacity-building and awareness-raising.*

*- Comprehensive approach (including border control agencies, law enforcement, etc.) should be ensured wherever relevant.*

*- More data and information about situations is still needed.*

*- Involvement of all relevant actors, be they governments, civil society (religious leaders, etc.) or expert groups is essential.*

*- Need for technical assistance and capacity-building across regions.*

**General Discussion: Overview of the PoA implementation at regional level: Synergies of effort (including international cooperation and assistance in support of the PoA, existing structures, possibilities for the future, and way forward)**

3.66 The Session for General Discussion was chaired by Mr. Peter Batchelor, who is a Team Leader at the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery at the **UNDP**.

3.67 The afternoon on Friday was devoted to general discussion about the implementation of the UN Programme of Action at regional level: what has already been achieved, and where the strengths and challenges of regional organizations' activities lie.

3.68 In the beginning of the session, Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania addressed the Conference as the Chair-Designate of the BMS3. He noted that in spite of the disappointment with the outcome of the Review Conference in 2006, implementation of the PoA commitments has continued at the national and regional levels. This is, in part, thanks to some of the regional mechanisms in place, and shows how important regional mechanisms are in maintaining momentum in the small arms process. Regional frameworks play essential role as vehicles for PoA norms diffusion and guiding its implementation, for better monitoring, coordination and assistance. Ambassador Cekuolis pointed out that generally, implementation of the PoA in states that are part of a regional or sub-regional SALW agreement tends to be broader and stronger than in countries that are not bound by such agreements. However, many sub-regions lack significant action in PoA implementation, and reinvigorating regional action in these cases remains both a challenge and opportunity.

3.69 With regard to transparency measures, Ambassador Cekuolis noted that regional organizations could assume a more active role in monitoring the implementation of the PoA and help countries in providing standardized, comprehensive and focused reports on a regular basis. Regional organizations could also help their member states to standardize reporting in order to make it less of a burden on national authorities, and a more effective tool for the identification of needs, available resources, potential projects, priorities, and opportunities.

3.70 Discussions following Ambassador Cekuolis' statement echoed the importance of regional level action in supporting the PoA implementation. The conference was seen as an extremely valuable step in activating contacts between regional organizations, and that cooperation and links between different regional actors should be maintained and further strengthened. Conferences that would bring together relevant regional organizations were seen as valuable, but it was stressed that links should be maintained also informally on a day-to-day basis.

3.71 It was noted that the list of regional points of contact should be revitalized, and the UNODA could possibly serve as a contact point in maintaining it. Examples could be drawn from the UNDP Practitioners' Forum, which comprises of experts around the globe and is thematically organized. The UN regional Centres in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Americas as well as UNDP country offices were referred to as important points of contact and support bodies for regional organizations. It was noted that some regional organizations seem to lack the necessary political will at the moment to effectively engage in PoA implementation, and that regional ownership and political will are the keys in effective regional-level action. Activities cannot be sustained only with external support and efforts.

3.72 The role of regional organizations in supporting national reporting on the PoA was emphasized, as was their possible function in creating research and practical knowledge about situation regarding illicit SALW trafficking and proliferation to ensure appropriate policy responses.

3.73 It was noted that while most regional organizations seem to struggle more with implementation of already existing documents than with the establishment of such frameworks, Asia remains a region where a lot still remains to be done also in terms of creating the necessary policy frameworks for action. It was noted that the optimal level of responses may differ from one issue and region to another. Sometimes best results can be achieved through in-depth cooperation with just a few countries in a sub-region, while in other cases the key is to ensure the involvement of as wide range of countries in a region as possible.

3.74 During the discussions, Mr. Jean-Daniel Ruch from the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and its relevance for regional organizations and the implementation of the UN PoA. He highlighted the link between reducing armed violence and promoting development, referring also to the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, where global leaders recognized the strong linkage and mutual reinforcement between development, peace, security and human rights. Regarding current activities around the Geneva Declaration, Mr. Ruch noted that following successful regional consultations in Bangkok in May, an international summit on the Declaration is planned for Geneva in September 2008.

3.75 The example of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development was noted as an open opportunity for awareness building work and how regional bodies could well seek to use this vehicle for the more holistic nature of approaching small arms work in particular contexts. Indeed, many participants echoed the need for a comprehensive approach to SALW control that would take into account also its effects on reducing criminality, increasing security and confidence and promoting development. Co-operation between but also within regions was seen as of crucial importance, and participants gave examples of well functioning coordination programmes, *inter alia* in the Great Lakes Region.

3.76 The importance of implementation plans was reiterated, and the added value of learning from other organizations and regions in drafting and executing them was underlined. In this regard, it was noted that a practical, creative response might be an exchange of technical experts between ROs. Some organizations already have experience about this kind of exchange, but more experiences could be exchanged.

3.77 Lack of resources was noted to pose major challenges especially for African regional organizations.

**Closing Session**

3.78 The PASP Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership at NATO, Mr. Robert F. Simmons, expressed in the closing remarks his thanks for the active engagement of panel chairs, discussants, presenters and participants in the substantive discussions which took place, citing this as a key contribution to the success of the Conference. He emphasized that this was not only an opportunity to exchange information and experiences among international, regional and non-governmental organizations and nations but also to realize the potential of the synergies which could be derived from harmonizing efforts. He pointed out that the conference had not been designed as an end in itself but rather as a means to lend impetus to regional cooperation in the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. He assured the participants that through their agreed work program the members of the EAPC had committed themselves to that end and to the harmonization of their collective efforts, especially at the regional level.

3.79 In his closing remarks, the representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Lt Cdr Misa Kangaste thanked all participants for their active and constructive participation that allowed everyone to learn from each others' experiences, establish new contacts and take the first steps towards co-ordinating future action in order to prevent duplications and strengthen the effect of regional level activities. He noted that interventions made during the thematic sessions on stockpile management, brokering and weapons collection, among others, proved the importance of thematic approach to the PoA, and hopefully for their part also supported the thematic approach of the Biennial Meeting of States.

# 4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summarized findings

4.1 The level of implementation of the UN Programme of Action varies across regions, both in terms of the depth and breadth in which SALW issues are addressed, and in terms of thematic focus of activities. While certain regional differences in regional approaches are understandable and desirable (following for example from the different types of challenges illicit SALW pose in different geographical regions), they can also prove problematic. Uneven implementation of PoA commitments across regions and in different regional organizations puts countries in unequal position and can create loopholes in policies and practices which then can be exploited by actors involved in illegal activities related to small arms and light weapons.

4.2 Most regional organizations involved in SALW control and implementation of the UN Programme of Action have established some kind of normative policy framework to address these issues. Some organizations have legally binding agreements while others have adopted politically binding documents to curb illicit proliferation and trade of small arms. In addition to the different focuses and nature of regional instruments, there are significant differences in the level of their implementation. Indeed, many regional organizations seem to face challenges not so much with the lack of policy instruments, but rather with insufficient implementation of already existing commitments.

4.3 Additionally, there is still insufficient information about the current state of affairs with regard to SALW controls in different regions. In order to improve implementation as well as develop effective practical interventions and further normative commitments, better knowledge has to be generated about local situations and causalities. Further efforts in research, capacity-building and awareness-raising are therefore needed also at regional level. Also, better indicators and evaluation tools have to be developed to measure the actual impact that all the efforts are actually having.

4.4 Lack of capacity remains an issue in many regions, especially in Africa, where regional organizations find that they cannot adequately address the pressing issues of illicit SALW proliferation without the necessary technical and financial support of donor governments and international organizations.

4.5 Small arms measures are not always adequately integrated into other programmes of regional organizations, such as combating transnational organized crime, terrorism, or trafficking in illicit drugs or human beings.

4.6 While much is being done at the regional level in various regional organizations to implement the UN PoA, cross-regional approaches seem to be scarce. Organizations working in different parts of the globe rarely exchange information about their activities, experiences or lessons learned. Information exchange and coordination even between organizations within the same geographical regions is often lacking or inadequate. Some experiences have shown that exporting experiences and expertise from one region to the other can be beneficial to both, and take several forms from policy-level documents to the exchange of practical mechanisms and tools.

4.7 In addition to the lack of coordination and information exchange *between* regions, challenges seem to remain also with regard to sharing information and experiences *within* regional and sub-regional organizations. Based on thematic discussions during the

Conference, this seems to be especially evident on issues related to SALW stockpile management, weapons collection and export control practices.

4.8 Additionally, the work of regional organizations in implementing the UN PoA usually is cross-dimensional and involves a variety of actors. This highlights the importance of effective partnerships not only between different regional and sub-regional organizations, but also between different kinds of actors within and across regions: international organizations, governments, and civil society actors should work together to curb illicit SALW proliferation and trade. Additionally, international organizations and civil society often have knowledge that is not readily available at regional organizations. Further cooperation between ROs and IOs should therefore be encouraged.

## Principal Recommendations

- ***Need to translate political decisions and commitments to practical actions***

4.9 Most regional organizations have developed normative policy frameworks to address illicit SALW proliferation and trafficking. However, many of them face challenges in translating the political decisions and commitments into practical implementation. More efforts should be placed on this, for example by developing regional implementation frameworks or Action Plans.

- ***Exchange of practical expertise and best practices***

4.10 As noted, current exchange of practical expertise and information between regions is insufficient. Experience has shown that exporting experiences and expertise from one region to the other can be mutually beneficial, and should therefore be encouraged.

- ***Co-ordination and cooperation within and between regions***

4.11 Currently, the sharing of experiences and expertise between regions is scarce. This should be further enhanced, both in terms of joint projects and also at the “grass-root” level through improving communication and networking between people working in different organizations. Examples of cross-regional co-operation presented at the meeting included *inter alia* OSCE-LAS cooperation in translating the OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on SALW to Arabic, and EAC-RECSA co-operation enhancing research capacity and procurement of marking and tracing equipment and training.

4.12 Further meetings between regional organizations would also be welcomed, given that the UN PoA process concentrates on one hand national level implementation and on the other hand global developments. To fill in this gap, further activities should be organized that would bring together regional level actors. Regional organizations should strive for continuing the exchange of information and experiences and lessons with each other, both formally and informally in their day-to-day activities to curb the illicit small arms trade and proliferation. In addition to insufficient exchange of experiences and information between regions, it was noted that also co-operation and co-ordination within regions is crucial and currently often inadequate. Further efforts should be made to increase transparency also within regions.

4.13 Given that Biennial Meetings of States take place in even years, regional level activities could be organized during odd years (2009, 2011, 2013 etc.). UNODA could possibly play a role in de-conflicting the schedule of regional events.

- ***Continued need to raise awareness***

4.14 Despite years of activities, general awareness about the PoA and problems related to illicit proliferation and trafficking of SALW still remains an issue in many regions. Further efforts to raise awareness are thus needed.

- ***Regional Points of Contact***

4.15 As a practical step to address the implementation of the UN PoA at the level of regional organizations, a system of Points of Contact could be established / revitalized. All regional organizations involved in SALW-related activities and the implementation of the UN PoA should identify a single Point of Contact to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the organization's SALW-related activities both within the organization and with external actors. UNODA could assume the responsibility of hosting and maintaining the register of these regional points of contacts.

- ***Assistance in national reporting and transparency***

4.16 Regional organizations should assume a more active role in monitoring the implementation of the PoA and help countries in providing standardized, comprehensive and focused reports on a regular basis. Regional organizations could also help their member states to standardize reporting in order to make it less of a burden on national authorities, and a more effective tool for the identification of needs, available resources, potential projects, priorities, and opportunities.

- ***Better coordinating donor and recipient activities***

4.17 Inadequate resources of many ROs and problems related to the implementation of regional documents remain issues of concern across regions. Further support from donor governments and international organizations is needed. At the same time, in order to ensure the efficacy and sustainability of these activities, further efforts should be made to coordinate donor and recipient activities at regional level.

- ***Developing integrated efforts***

4.18 Integrating efforts to stem the illicit trade in small arms are needed to ensure that policy responses are effective and sustainable. SALW interventions should be mainstreamed, where relevant, to broader frameworks, such as development, security sector reform or DDR programmes, and into dealing with the challenges of limited political will, poverty and crime, and the reduction of violence.

- ***Enhancing regional cooperation on border controls***

4.19 The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons thrives on ineffective national border controls, insufficient cooperation between border control authorities and differences in national regulations. Regional-level initiatives and enhanced cooperation would greatly disrupt illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

- ***Harmonizing laws and developing regional best practices***

4.20 Model laws and best practices have been drafted or are in preparation in many regions and sub-regions. Harmonization of laws would facilitate further development of best practices and the efficiency and success of both.

- ***Involvement in new initiatives***

4.21 In addition to ensuring continued and improved implementation of the already agreed upon measures, regional organizations are encouraged to stay informed and involved in new initiatives developing around small arms and light weapons, and be ready to take on new initiatives, be they related to for example further measures to improve transfer controls, arms embargo enforcement, or ammunition.

- ***Inclusion of all relevant actors***

4.22 International organizations and civil society actors such as research institutions have gained significant expertise in addressing illicit SALW trade and proliferation, analysing the complexity of the issues related to it, and contributing to the technical implementation of the UN PoA. Regional organizations should involve these actors in their work wherever relevant and possible to improve the quality, effectiveness and sustainability of their efforts.

- ***Further need for data and research***

4.23 Despite numerous studies conducted on the situation regarding SALW in different countries as well as on the effects of illicit SALW trafficking, more data and research is needed to ensure that policy responses and practical programmes are well planned and correctly address the problems/issues.