



AR/064

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ARMS EXPORTS REPORTING IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

EU WESTERN BALKANS SALW WEAPONS CONTROL SUPPORT PLAN

SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 5 - SALW Awareness and Communication Strategy
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	OA 1 - Capacity Building OA 3 - Information Management and Exchange Activities

Compliance with the relevant EU/EC legislation and agreements concerning Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) is highly desirable for the nations of the Western Balkans ¹ as they move towards further European integration. More specifically the nations of the Western Balkans should work towards full compliance with the following:

- The European Union (EU) Joint Action. ²
- The EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports. ³

As part of the European Commission (EC) Second Pilot Project ⁴ on SALW (SPP), this activity is designed to result in the production of a 'standard' arms exports annual report template for use by the countries within South Eastern Europe (SEE). This will improve the capability of national reporting, which is a requirement of the EU Code of Conduct, and will also act as a guideline format for the responsible Desk Officers in national ministries. The format will be CD based, allowing for ease of data entry, calculation and information transfer within the report.

There is currently no agreed format for annual reporting in this area anywhere, and therefore there is a possibility that this may result in an international 'best practice' and wider use. The advantages of adopting a 'standard' annual report template are:

- Improved accuracy, as calculation and data transfer mechanisms can be built into the CD system;
- Comparability between nations, and over time, is made easier;
- Efficiency is improved during the report production process;
- Transparency will be enhanced and this will in turn assist greater civil oversight of exports;
- It will encourage the production of timely reports as staff work is made easier;

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro and the UN Administered Territory of Kosovo.

² Council of the European Union, Joint Action on the European Union's Contribution to Combating the Destabilising Accumulation and Spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons, (2002/589/CFSP), 12 July 2002.

³ EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports, Council of the European Union, 08 June 1998.

⁴ The First Pilot Project was implemented by UNIDIR and was designed to support the development of an EU/EC Strategy on SALW, ERW and WMD.

- It will act as a Confidence and Security Building Measure (CSBM); and
- Arms exports research is made more accurate.

The first phase of this activity was a seminar held in Belgrade on 07/08 February 2006, where representatives from the appropriate Ministries of the countries in the Western Balkans discussed the format and content of a 'standard' arms export report. The Assistant Minister of International Economic Relations (MIER), Ljiljana Antonovic, the Austrian Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro representing the EU Presidency, H.E. Gerhard Jandl, and the Head of the EU Delegation, H.E. Josep Lloveras, opened the seminar. The seminar was co-sponsored by the US Department of State through the Export Control and Border Security programme, and valuable technical support was provided by the Stockholm based SIPRI.⁵



The major outcomes of the seminar included; 1) a commitment by the representatives of the countries in the Western Balkans to work on producing an annual national report on arms exports which is compliant with the EU Code of Conduct; 2) an agreement to use the agreed format for arms exports as a background for their national reports; 3) an agreement to inform SEESAC by the end of March 2006 about the results from the inter-institutional consultation process in their respective countries regarding the final format of a national report or the stage of the development of this format; 4) an offer by SEESAC to provide the countries in the Western Balkans with additional consultation on compliance of their draft national reports with the EU Code of Conduct; and 5) an offer by SEESAC to provide financial assistance for translation of the national arms exports reports in English language.

For more information about this initiative and other SALW Arms Export Control activities, please contact Diman Dimov, Deputy Head SEESAC (diman.dimov@undp.org).



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⁵ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.