



AR/068

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SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT – AR/068

REVISED (2006) STABILITY PACT REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - COMBATING THE PROLIFERATION OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 2 - Legislative and Regulatory Issues FA 3 - Management Information
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	OA 2 - Coordination Measures OA 3 - Information Management and Exchange Activities

The Stability Pact (SCSP) Regional Implementation Plan (RIP), ‘Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)’ was agreed by the South East European Stability Pact states in November 2001, with the broad aims of reducing the flow and availability of SALW in the region and thereby supporting the socio-economic conditions for peace and development in South Eastern Europe. In contrast to many other arms control agreements, the SCSP SALW Regional Implementation Plan provided concrete mechanisms for assisting countries’ implementation of commitments and involving those governments in priority setting and decision-making on region-wide efforts. These mechanisms have been implemented through SEESAC at the regional level, and through a range of internationally supported initiatives within the individual countries.¹ At the political level the SCSP SALW Regional Implementation Plan should be considered a success so far, and it has provided a valuable and effective mandate to drive an effective response at the operational level.

From a regional perspective, the most progress has been made in terms of revised arms control legislation. Virtually all countries within the region have developed improved legislation to cover arms exports, transfers and civilian possession. It is encouraging that a number of states have incorporated European Union (EU) standards into their domestic legislation, which will be of benefit during the accession processes towards the EU.

Implementation support however, remains the key challenge, particularly if the growing threats from organized crime and terrorism, which both require access to weapons, ammunition and explosives, are to be effectively countered.

The initial SCSP SALW Regional Implementation Plan formulated an overarching objective “to develop a strong regional framework by which donors can work closely with countries in the South East Europe on joint programmes to implement the UN Programme of Action, OSCE Document on Small Arms and other European and international commitments and standards in the fight against the proliferation of SALW”. The basic objectives and principles set out in the Regional Implementation Plan will continue to apply in the future, but a review was necessary in order to:

- Develop a comprehensive and coherent approach towards harmonization with the EU security policies in the field of SALW, thus preparing the South East Europe countries for EU membership;

¹ UNDP SALW Control projects (SACIM, SACISCG, SACBiH) and EU SALW Control projects (EUSAC Albania, EUSAC Croatia and EUSAC Kosovo).



- Develop capacity for adoption and implementation of the 'EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition';²
- Acknowledge the progress achieved by the South East Europe countries on SALW issues.
- Acknowledge cooperation with SALW Control initiatives within SEE countries developed by international organizations, and designed to provide support to governments at the national level;
- Reflect regional SALW control agreements and mechanisms that have been developed since November 2001; and

Reflect the development over the last four years of SEESAC capabilities and operational activities, from an 'information clearinghouse' into an organization capable of providing the full range of project development support, technical support and knowledge generation and management. SEESAC stakeholders are now aware of the wide-ranging capability of SEESAC, and are increasingly interested in making use of SEESAC's capabilities in neighbouring and other countries.

The initial Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan suggested that '*it should be possible to achieve tangible results with a lasting impact within a period of four years*'. There is little doubt that tangible results have been achieved, but with progressing knowledge and experience on SALW issues at both the academic and operational levels, there was a recognition that effective SALW control is not a short-term issue.

Therefore work has been taking place at both the diplomatic and policy levels to revise the SCSP SALW Regional Implementation Plan. After a full consultative process with all stakeholders the Revised (2006) version of the plan was formally adopted by the Member States' of the Stability Pact at the SCSP SALW Regional Steering Group meeting in Belgrade on Tuesday 16 May 2006. The Revised (2006) plan includes:

- Recognition of the impact of the EU Western Balkans SALW Control Support Plan (2006 - 2007);
- Recognition of the need for synergy and linkages between SALW Control interventions and Armed Violence Prevention Initiatives (AVPI);
- Reference to recent regional SALW control agreements and mechanisms;³
- Focus on compliance with the EU SALW Strategy (2005);
- A revised mandate for SEESAC to allow it to; 1) engage in a wider geographical area, (within resources and capability, and at the request of stakeholders), on project development and technical assistance issues. (SEESAC will shortly be re-titled the *South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for SALW Control*); and 2) provide technical advice and project development assistance on the destruction and disposal of heavy weapons in support of the Stability Pact Defence Conversion initiative.

For more information about the Revised (2006) SCSP SALW Regional Implementation Plan, please contact Ana Martinovic, the SEESAC Communications Officer (ana.martinovic@undp.org). It will shortly be posted onto the Stability Pact and SEESAC websites for reference.

² On 16 December 2005, the European Council adopted the 'EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition' (Doc. 13066/05). This Strategy supports the Joint Action on SALW of 2002 (2002/589/CFSP). It has been written in the framework of the European Security Strategy (2003), as a similar strategy on Weapons of Mass Destruction in 2003. The aim is to develop an "*integrated approach and a comprehensive plan of action to combat the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition*".

³ OSCE Document on Conventional Ammunition (2003); OSCE Decisions on MANPADS (2003), End User Certificates (2004) and Brokering (2004); Evolution of the NATO PFP Trust Fund to cover SALW (Weapons and Ammunition) Destruction; EU SALW Strategy (2005).



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