

2 Country assessments

This report presents progress towards the Regional Implementation Plan (RIP) by country. Each country sub-section includes two background sections: 'Small Arms Problem', which details the SALW-related problems in each country, and 'Small Arms Policy and Practice', which gives an overview of current policy and practice on SALW.

These two sections are followed by a third section, 'Small Arms Progress', which gives a detailed assessment of progress made to date. In order to facilitate analysis of the wide-ranging areas in which progress towards the RIP and combating SALW proliferation has been made, a number of sub-sections have been used to categorise and present information for each country (largely based on the functional areas defined by SEESAC). These sub-sections of SALW control activities are:

- Legislative and regulatory issues – this section details countries' current legislative and regulatory control measures and progress made in the context of other agreements on arms control, such as the 2000 OSCE Document on Small Arms, 2001 UN Programme of Action, etc. (For more detail, see Annex H). In order to ensure consistency, all analysis and referencing of legislation in the report is based on English language translations of laws obtained from SEESAC.
- SALW transfers – this section provides an overview of each country's current and recent SALW transfers (exports, imports, transit, transshipment and re-export), focusing on exports, in as far as public information is available, and also details available information on SALW trafficking.
- SALW collection programmes and capacities – this section provides an overview of SALW collection initiatives in each country.
- SALW destruction programmes and capacities – this section provides details of SALW and SALW ammunition destruction projects in each country.
- SALW stockpile management programmes and capacities – this section provides an overview of the stockpile security and management situation in each country.
- SALW awareness activities – this section presents the awareness-raising activities and public information campaigns implemented in each country. (Seminars, conferences and other meetings are not generally included in this section, which concentrates on direct SALW awareness-raising or information campaigns).
- SALW survey activities – this section presents the results of any SALW or related survey conducted in each country. (Research reports, policy reports, needs assessments, small-scale surveys, opinion polls, etc, have not been included in this section as they do not fully correspond with a 'SALW Survey' as defined by SEESAC's regional standards).
- Civil society involvement in SALW interventions – this section provides an overview of civil society and NGO activities on SALW in each country, including a brief note on overall capacity.
- Cross-border SALW control initiatives – this section provides an overview of the situation in terms of border control and cross-border co-operation on SALW trafficking in each country.

- SALW management information and exchange systems and protocols – this section provides an overview of SALW-relevant information systems, both public and confidential; it should be noted that it is not possible to make any assessment of the value and efficacy of confidential information exchange mechanisms.
- Additional SALW-related activities – this section presents any additional activities that may be relevant to a country's efforts to combat SALW, for example, community-based policing initiatives or the development of national SALW action plans.

Macedonia



Small Arms problem

Background

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRoM, hereafter 'Macedonia') became independent in 1991. It inherited relatively little of the Yugoslav state infrastructure in many areas, including the military and police, and 'local' governance mechanisms and existing institutions faced the challenge of becoming 'national'. Although economic performance continued to be poor, relations between FYRoM's ethnic Macedonian majority and substantial ethnic Albanian minority remained stable, and the country was lauded as a peaceful, multi-ethnic state in contrast to the turmoil elsewhere in the region.

This stability was compromised in early 2001. Possible causes are disputed, but the 'Kosovo catalyst' was clearly important, resulting in an influx of refugees and the spillover of armed resistance, as was the instability in southern Serbia in early 2001.⁵⁶⁰ Demanding greater minority rights, an Albanian armed group, the National Liberation Army (NLA) began an insurgency campaign against the Macedonian state. According to commentators, the Macedonian security forces, remnants of the former Yugoslav services, 'had little experience... their responses were both inappropriate and ineffective', and helped to galvanise support for the NLA among the ethnic Albanian population.⁵⁶¹ In the seven months of low-level fighting from January to August 2001 at least 70 people died and 170,000 were displaced; in December 2003, 2,600 were still to return.⁵⁶²

The Ohrid Peace Agreement brought an end to the conflict in August 2001. Signed by the four main political parties the Ohrid Agreement addressed most constitutional grievances of the Albanian minority, providing for a complex power-sharing arrangement, substantial local government autonomy, veto rights for minority parliamentary representatives and the right to use the Albanian language and national symbols in public. A key component of the Agreement was the surrender of a negotiated number of weapons by the NLA. Administered by NATO, 'Operation Essential Harvest' collected

560 'Macedonia: Guns, policing and ethnic division', Anna Matveeva with Duncan Hiscock, Wolf-Christian Paes and Hans Risser, *Saferworld* and BICC, October 2003 (hereafter 'Macedonia, Saferworld 2003'), p 14.

561 Ibid, p 14. See also Human Rights Watch for more details of the alleged 'abuses' committed by the Macedonian security forces in August 2001; 'Macedonia - Crimes Against Civilians: Abuses by Macedonian Forces in Ljuboten, August 10 - 12 2001', Human Rights Watch, 05 September 2001, www.hrw.org/reports/2001/macedonia.

562 Macedonia, *Saferworld* 2003, p 8; 'FYROM Appeal No. 01.74/2003 - Programme Update No 3', IFRC December 2003, www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/ByCountry/FYROM, referenced 02 February 2004.

and destroyed weapons from ethnic Albanian combatants in 2001. Designed as a confidence building measure, the collection was not intended to address the general problem of illegal weapons possession in the country.

The current situation

From a military perspective, Macedonia is now 'stable', and international security presence is now limited to the new EU police mission 'Proxima'.⁵⁶³ However, the potential for instability remains. Inter-ethnic tensions persist: frustrations with the slow implementation of the Ohrid Peace Agreement; the activities of paramilitary groups and sporadic acts of violence; corruption; crime; and, limited economic improvement all continue to hamper confidence-building between the two groups. Although small-scale compared to the fighting in 2002, violent incidents continue – according to some sources violence is 'sporadic',⁵⁶⁴ while others believe it occurs 'almost on a daily basis'.⁵⁶⁵ Thankfully, predictions that fighting might erupt again in Spring 2003 were not fulfilled, but concerns remain about the increased number of violent incidents in the summer of 2003, 'there is evidence that ethnic-Albanian paramilitary groups are still armed and active albeit on a very small scale in the border areas', and about the emergence of a new militant faction, the Albanian National Army (ANA).

A splinter group of the NLA, the ANA became active in 2003. Initially believed to be little more than a few armed smugglers, the organisation is now banned by the UN as a terrorist organisation and has been responsible for several attacks on state buildings and personnel in Macedonia, and also in Kosovo and Southern Serbia. In addition to limited police capacity, the political nature of the ANA's activities means that operations to combat the group are problematic and controversial. In a police crackdown near the remote village of Brest in August, security forces killed several gunmen, resulting in parliamentary criticism, renewed threats of reprisals from the ANA and accusations of brutality against civilians.⁵⁶⁶ In September 2003 grenades hit three government buildings in Skopje and a police officer was kidnapped. The police were forced to reduce a large-scale security operation 'because of concerns it might spark renewed ethnic violence'.⁵⁶⁷ At present the main challenge to the Macedonian Government appears to come not from the now inactive or dissolved NLA, but from the ANA, although many questions still exist as to the organisation's real capacity: 'it is difficult to assess its strength, though the number in Macedonia is likely to run into the low hundreds rather than thousands. It claims to be pursuing the pan-Albanian agenda apparently abandoned by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and NLA, though analysts suggest it is linked with organised criminals who exploit the poorly policed former crisis areas of Macedonia, where cross-border smuggling is rife'.⁵⁶⁸ Other sources also point to connections between armed militant activity organised crime and smuggling.⁵⁶⁹

563 'Concordia: Security Situation in Macedonia is Stable', Daily Media Report, 26 November 2003, www.seesac.org.

564 'Suspected separatists killed in Macedonia', Reuters, ISN Daily News, 09 August 2003.

565 'New Tensions in Macedonia', source article in Weekly Media Report 01 - 08 September 2003, www.seesac.org.

566 Op cit, 'Suspected separatists killed in Macedonia'.

567 'Macedonian Police Manhunt Provokes Ethnic Tensions', Weekly Media Report 01 - 08 September 2003, www.seesac.org.

568 'Armed to the Teeth', David Quin, Vladimir Jovanovski and Ana Petrusseva in Macedonia, Naser Miftari, Artan Mustafa and Jeta Xharra in Kosovo, and Ilir Aliaj in Albania, Balkan Crisis Report No 470, 27 November 2003 (hereafter 'Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003').

569 SEESAC Short Mission Report - Macedonia, 27 - 29 May 2002, www.seesac.org.

As the Saferworld/BICC report on Macedonia argues, 'the problem of SALW proliferation in Macedonia is a question of both politics and policing, resulting both from internal challenges and from the country's vulnerability to outside influence within its turbulent neighbourhood'.⁵⁷⁰ The fighting in 2001 clearly had a major impact on increasing the number of weapons in the country, as did the looting of stockpiles in Albania in 1997, but possession had risen significantly throughout the nineties, particularly following independence when police noted a 'dramatic increase' in illicit SALW trafficking, even before political violence erupted in Macedonia.⁵⁷¹ These high levels of proliferation and the 'easy availability of arms' contributed to instability, and, 'created a strong temptation to use violence to settle political scores'.⁵⁷²

SALW proliferation

Arms have entered the country from various sources. Smuggling from Albania and Kosovo was substantial, particularly given the links between armed groups operating in the area, but weapons entered the country through other routes as well – through Serbia following the end of wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and across the Bulgarian border. The Government was also active in seeking to better equip its new forces beyond the sparse armaments inherited from the SFRY and distribution from government stockpiles played a significant role in proliferation among communities.

It appears that before and during the conflict, weapons were handed out to party supporters, ethnic Macedonian reservists and community defence forces. Political parties (representing both ethnic groups) in power had authority to distribute firearms licences to their supporters, bypassing normal regulations, and many rumours and accusations surround the arming of groups of party loyalists, particularly those of the ethnic Macedonian VMRO-DPMNE party⁵⁷³ and the former prime minister.⁵⁷⁴ Weapons were also distributed more widely during the 2001 conflict by the previous VMRO government: 'many of these were handed out to reserve policemen and soldiers, and to civilian units pulled together in ethnic Macedonian villages',⁵⁷⁵ as well as to special forces established to combat insurgent groups, such as the controversial 'Lions', now disbanded.⁵⁷⁶ The actual number of weapons distributed to reservists is unclear; estimates range from 1,000, but other sources indicate the number may have been much higher.⁵⁷⁷ The Interior Minister, Mr Hari Kostov, has stated that only a handful of weapons distributed to reservists have not been returned, yet according

570 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 6.

571 Ibid, p 31.

572 Ibid, p 5.

573 'Members and supporters of the political parties believed to possess arms are generally either bodyguards... or activists who were supplied with weapons due to their contribution to their political party. It is important to note that many of these weapons are possessed legally, since when the political parties were in power they could provide licenses to their supporters, often without respecting licensing procedures. Among them are individuals with criminal background, or at least individuals who had been refused a license for legal reasons'; 'The VMRO-DPMNE and the DPA are believed to preserve armed groups of loyalists, as various incidents during the electoral campaign have indicated, and 'each will likely maintain the ability to carry out violence' in future'; the March 2002 attack on the NLA headquarters (between 10 and 35 people killed) indicated that 'there are political groups capable of serious violence': Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, pp 29-30. 'Emir Salah, an expert at the interior ministry, recently said that between 1999 and 2002, when VMRO was in power, 2,425 gun licences were issued to people who had been through the penal system, most of them ethnic Macedonians'; Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

574 'Gun Law haunts Boskovi', Weekly Media Review, 24 August - 01 September 2003, www.seesac.org.

575 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

576 An armed paramilitary police force, the controversial Lions were created from a core of professional police, supplemented by 'reservists who were often VMRO members, and issued them with firearms'; apparently, 'some of the reservists selected for the Lions had criminal records'. Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003. See also, 'Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - FYROM, 2002', the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 31 March 2003, www.state.gov.

577 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 33.

to research conducted by IWPR, 'at the time automatic weapons were handed over without the appropriate controls, and no strict records were kept on who was getting a Kalashnikov... Those arms which were recorded have been returned. But often the guns were handed out direct from the warehouses with no record at all'.⁵⁷⁸

In addition to reservists and political groups, and paramilitary forces such as the ANA noted above, other non-state groups possessing weapons include private security services,⁵⁷⁹ organised criminals and civilians. According to Government statistics at the end of March 2003, 155,992 weapons were registered in Macedonia, indicating a substantial increase in registered possession over the last decade.⁵⁸⁰ The majority of these are hunting rifles (70,574), followed by pistols and revolvers (48,128) and hunting carbines (10,982).⁵⁸¹ A further breakdown gives a total of 139,857 individual licences, the remainder having been issued to hunting associations and other organisations.⁵⁸² Recent research by the Small Arms Survey finds that of a total of between 380,000 and 750,000 SALW in Macedonia today, an estimated 100,000 to 450,000 weapons are illegally possessed by Macedonian citizens, and that possession levels are relatively even between the two ethnic groups.⁵⁸³

The prevailing opinion in Macedonia is that the ethnic Albanian communities are the main 'culprits' in terms of weapons possession. Reinforced by the presence of groups such as the ANA and armed criminals in the predominantly Albanian areas of the country, 'the widespread view is that the Albanian minority is much the greater offender when it comes to stockpiling and using illegal arms', and local ethnic Macedonian opinions are that Albanians are 'armed to the teeth' and that 'there isn't a house [in the former crisis region] which doesn't have a Kalashnikov'.⁵⁸⁴ The high levels of mistrust between the Albanian community and the state has reduced the incentives, and opportunities, for ethnic Albanians to acquire weapons legally,⁵⁸⁵ but it is clear from the Small Arms Survey research and other sources that both communities possess illegal weapons and that perceptions are not necessarily the reality.

Even in the south and east of Macedonia, far from the 'trouble spots' in the north west, majority Macedonian areas 'have not been immune to gun proliferation'.⁵⁸⁶ Government officials confirm that gun possession is prevalent among both ethnic groups and note that weapons accumulated across the country after the war.⁵⁸⁷ Traditions linked to firearms possession are evident in both ethnic Macedonian and Albanian communities; strong traditional affiliation with weapons in Albanian society is often discussed, but equally, 'weapons have always been present in Macedonian society, carried as a mark of manhood'.⁵⁸⁸ Whatever the role of such 'gun culture' in the increase in levels of

578 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

579 The number of armed private security companies in Macedonia has increased sharply; some companies seem to be legally registered and armed, others not, and it appears that some have a rather dubious status and links to organised crime. Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 30.

580 In 1989 there were 99,324 weapons registered to approximately 1.9 million inhabitants in Macedonia. Figure T3.1: Small Arms Ownership in the former Yugoslavia, 1989. BICC Conversion Survey 2002, p 127.

581 Report of the Republic of Macedonia on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, May 2003 (hereafter 'Macedonia UN PoA report 2003').

582 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 46.

583 'The SALW Problem in Macedonia', SAS/BICC survey, pre-publication draft released by SEESAC, January 2004 (hereafter 'SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004'), Introduction.

584 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

585 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 8.

586 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

587 Ibid

588 Ibid

possession in Macedonia, the insecurity resulting from the 2001 conflict and the lack of effective law enforcement are clearly dominant influences.

SALW-related crime

'There is a perception that the 2001 crisis broke a taboo on violence as a legitimate means to achieve political or personal goals. Guns are not only more widely available, but people are also more ready to use them'.⁵⁸⁹ Research by Saferworld, IWPR and SAS finds that the 'prevailing lawlessness' and 'fears for individual and collective security' are the primary reasons for continued civilian possession.⁵⁹⁰ Inter-ethnic tension and police performance have improved, but 'conflict has been replaced by an epidemic of gun crimes', with 71 people killed by firearms in the first nine months in 2003,⁵⁹¹ and 50 percent of recent firearms injuries affecting young people under 18.⁵⁹² SAS research finds that there has been no substantial increase in incidents of gun-related crime, but that the number of victims and incidents involving automatic weapons is rising, and that SALW are used significantly more against ethnic Albanians than ethnic Macedonians; in general, 'Macedonian citizens are concerned about their security and safety and perceive the general availability and distribution of SALW in society to be rather threatening'.⁵⁹³

Whatever the statistical truth of the matter, violent crime is a common occurrence and firearms are now more visible and more likely to be used in Macedonia today, reinforcing insecurity and the widespread perception that law enforcement does not provide adequate protection: 'the authorities have failed to restore law and order since the ethnic conflict ended two years ago'⁵⁹⁴ and civilians therefore feel a need to retain weapons for personal protection.⁵⁹⁵ The OSCE and the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) have made significant efforts to reform the Macedonian police, build their capacity and make them more acceptable to all communities (some Albanian areas had not seen police since independence). However, the overall capacity of the both multi-ethnic patrols in key areas and the standard police remains poor.⁵⁹⁶ Recent survey statistics support this, as a majority of the population, 57 percent, say they would acquire guns legally if given the opportunity.⁵⁹⁷

Although some victims and firearms incidents are the result of personal disputes, 'there is clearly a problem with gangland conflicts, especially in northern and western areas where smuggling is big business and policing is still poor'.⁵⁹⁸ Government statistics for 2002 note 153 criminal acts connected to the illegal trade in arms, 215 offenders and a total of 713 SALW pieces seized by the authorities (the vast majority military weapons), along with 9,520 rounds of ammunition and 174 grams of explosives.⁵⁹⁹

589 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 36.

590 Ibid, p 8.

591 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

592 Government statistics. Local Commission Training Package, Local Commissions training package page, National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, www.smallarms.org.mk.

593 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Introduction.

594 'Macedonia: Kidnappings Unnerve Albanian Leaders', Irfan Agushi, Balkan Crisis Report No 429, 12 May 2003, www.iwpr.net.

595 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 8.

596 'Attempts to introduce multi-ethnic, community-based police patrols were generally positively received', but 'Albanians themselves are conscious of the ineffectiveness of the multi-ethnic patrols, often urging the police to send better-equipped and trained units to tackle criminals.' Ibid, p 8.

597 'Preliminary SALW Survey Report for Macedonia', SEESAC Activity Report 14, 01 August 2003, www.seesac.org.

598 Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

599 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

Organised crime is a serious problem in Macedonia, and the line between political groups and crime has in many cases become blurred: efforts to combat such crime require substantial improvement, as the police 'lack the analytical, investigative and planning capability required to combat more serious crime'.⁶⁰⁰

As SEESAC notes, 'border security is clearly a key issue and one which must be addressed if illicit arms are to be controlled in Macedonia'. During the SEESAC mission to Macedonia in 2002, there was 'unanimous agreement that improved border security was required'.⁶⁰¹ Although low-level trafficking across the Bulgarian border seems to be increasing, the main problem clearly lies with the mountainous, difficult to control, and highly porous borders with Albania and Kosovo to the west and north west, where smuggling and other criminal activity, including arms trafficking, is rife.⁶⁰² Cross-border co-operation is problematic, though improving. Co-ordination between the various forces responsible for border internally is also a problem, with poor communication between the National Border Police, Customs, regular police and Army Border Brigades (ABB).⁶⁰³ Lack of capacity within government institutions is a key problem for border control.

Small Arms policy and practice

Government policy and the international community

With the return to power of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) and the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) coalition following the September 2002 elections, Macedonia's prospects for peace and favour in the eyes of the international community have greatly improved. International figures such as the NATO Secretary General have described the country as a Balkan success story, and praised the work of the Government in implementing the Ohrid Peace Agreement.⁶⁰⁴ The Government has said publicly that implementation of the Ohrid commitments will remain a key priority in 2004, a promising stance for the continued improvement of inter-ethnic relations.⁶⁰⁵ Beyond Ohrid, Macedonia is similar to other countries in the region: one of the main aims of foreign, and consequently domestic policy, has been accession to the EU and membership of NATO. Macedonia is the first country within the stabilisation and association process whose agreement has been ratified by all EU members, and, with the full support of all political parties, hopes to formally launch its membership bid in 2004.⁶⁰⁶

The international community has played a strong role in Macedonia since its independence. In terms of security, NATO has been present in the country for some time, implementing key activities such as Operation Essential Harvest, though its missions never assumed a large or formally 'peacekeeping' role. In December 2002, NATO's

600 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 8.

601 SEESAC Short Mission Report - Macedonia, 27 - 29 May 2002, www.seesac.org.

602 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 8.

603 'Inter-agency co-operation has also been problematic, particularly on the border. The National Border Police and Customs control the Border Check Points (BCP), and have authority within 250 metres of the checkpoints; the regular police have general authority, but do not patrol the border, and the Army border Brigade patrols between the BCPs. The poor communication between these bodies helps smugglers and hinders cross-border co-operation.' Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 9.

604 14 November 2003, Weekly Media Review, 10 - 16 November 2003, www.seesac.org.

605 'Government's Priority in 2004: Ohrid Peace Accord', Daily Media Review, 20 - 21 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

606 'Macedonia to launch EU bid at end of February 2004', Daily Media Review, 15 January 2004, www.seesac.org.

Task Force Fox was succeeded by 'Operation Allied Harmony', and in March 2003 the EU 'Concordia' force took over, with 350 personnel whose mandate was to provide support for international monitors (OSCE and EUMM) and advise the Government on security-related issues. Concordia has now been taken over by a new yearlong EU Police Mission, 'Proxima', which in December 2003 took up responsibilities for police support, particularly in the areas of combating organised crime, with a primary focus on establishing the rule of law and order throughout Macedonia.⁶⁰⁷

NATO is still involved in military reform and downsizing through the PfP process, and is working closely with the Macedonian Armed Forces to achieve this; Government officials predict Macedonia will join NATO in 2006.⁶⁰⁸ In January 2004, the Macedonian Defence Ministry presented an action plan for reforms to be carried out in the first half of the year. Main tasks include: the modernisation of equipment and weaponry; adequate multi-ethnic representation in army staff; implementation of an integrated border security strategy; introduction of a long-term budget planning system; and plans for downsizing of military facilities.⁶⁰⁹ Macedonia must speed up defence reforms, but with NATO assistance the armed forces are making progress: the work of Macedonia's contingent in Iraq has been praised, the army conducted its first logistics drill in line with NATO standards in November 2003, and Macedonian soldiers are to participate in the first international stabilisation and peacekeeping operation of the South Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG), possibly to be deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina next year.⁶¹⁰

The OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission in Skopje is also active, and works on four main areas: confidence-building, media development, police development and the rule of law. Particularly in the areas of police reform, the OSCE has supported and led the multi-ethnic police (MEP) project in the former crisis region, and is also working with EAR, the new EU police mission and ICITAP on police reform beyond the MEP initiative, to improve overall standards through training and technical assistance and introduce community-based policing across the country.⁶¹¹

The UNDP is a key international actor on SALW control in the country. Its Small Arms Control in Macedonia (SACIM) project developed from consultations with Government and other key actors in Spring 2002 and aims to support confidence-building through reducing weapons-related images of conflict, reducing the level of casualties from hostilities and accidents caused by small arms, and focusing attention on the common needs of communities for security and development.⁶¹² The UNDP was particularly active in advising the Government during the drafting of new weapons amnesty legislation, and supported the November – December 2003 amnesty in various ways, including awareness-raising, organising international monitors for collection points and funding the lottery incentive offered. Possible elements of a longer-term SACIM initiative include supporting the Government in developing and implementing a full multi-year programme on voluntary weapons surrender and licensing.⁶¹³

607 Alexis Brouhns, EU Special Representative in Skopje. 'EU plans Police Mission for Macedonia', REF/RL Newline, Vol 7, No 183, 25 September 2003.

608 An outstanding border issue with Kosovo remains to be resolved before full membership is possible. 'Buckovski: Macedonia will join NATO in 2006', Daily Media Review, 25 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

609 'Macedonian Defence Ministry Presents Reform Plan for First Half of 2004', Daily Media Review, 10 - 11 January 2004, www.seesac.org.

610 12 November 2003, Weekly Media Review 10 - 16 November 2003; 03 November 2003, Weekly Media Review 03 - 10 November 2003; 'Macedonian soldiers to participate in SEEBRIG Mission in BiH next year', Daily Media Review, 19 November 2003; www.seesac.org.

611 'Macedonia' and 'OSCE Spillover Mission in Skopje' pages, www.usdoj.gov/criminal/icitap and www.osce.org.

612 'Summary of Regional SALW Projects - FYROM', SEESAC Databases, www.seesac.org.

613 Ibid

Government SALW policy

The participation of the Macedonian Government in various international fora and arms control mechanisms, and its public statements indicate that SALW control is a high priority for the country. Various presentations refer to the 'serious threat to the security and stability of the Republic of Macedonia' posed by SALW proliferation,⁶¹⁴ the 'strong action' needed to combat illicit SALW flows,⁶¹⁵ and the place SALW control has 'on the top of [the Government's] priorities'.⁶¹⁶ Macedonia assured states in 2001 of its commitment to take 'an active part' in the implementation of the UN PoA, and expressed the view that there is 'a need for an enhanced follow up process'. Macedonia submitted a report to the 2003 Biennial Meeting of States; however, detail in various areas was sparse.⁶¹⁷

Official statements note that Macedonia supports, respects and implements all relevant UN resolutions, and has signed several UN conventions against international terrorism,⁶¹⁸ although not the Firearms Protocol. Macedonia has made commitments to the OSCE Document on SALW and has participated in the information exchange outlined in the Document. Within the Stability Pact, Macedonia has been active, advocating on several occasions for SALW control measures on a regional level, and hosting the first Regional Steering Group meeting in May 2002. The Government clearly sees regional co-operation and regional efforts as crucial to arms control, perceiving a large part of its problem as 'imported' from neighbouring states. The role played by the international community is also important to the Macedonian Government on SALW issues, both in terms of international legal instruments and co-operation mechanisms⁶¹⁹ and financial support.⁶²⁰

SALW issues are the responsibility of the MoI, which, in co-operation with the MoD and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has 'been given the principal responsibility in coordinating and developing a national policy on small arms, research and monitoring the efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects'. The MFA has 'the general task of liaising with other States on various matters related to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action, as well of participating in international negotiations for a on small arms instruments', and the national SALW focal point is situated within the MFA.⁶²¹ Currently no national SALW commission exists.

A co-ordinating body established to develop and oversee the 2003 amnesty initiative, the National Co-ordinating Body, seems to have functioned effectively. Despite this very promising initiative, capacity is in general poor: Macedonian ministries are still developing as independent state services, rather than branches of the former-Yugoslav federal ministries, and much assistance and further reform will be required for them to be able to combat illicit SALW and related problems effectively. As the military and police continue to undergo substantial reform, other branches of government also require improvement. It is, for example, uncertain whether an effective arms production and export control regime is in place and transparency is very limited.

614 Statement by HE Mrs Ilinka Mitreva, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Republic of Macedonia at the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, 13 July 2001 (hereafter 'Macedonia UN PoA statement, 2001').

615 Statement by HE Mr Slobodan Casule, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, 57th General Assembly of the United Nations, 17 September 2002 (hereafter 'Macedonia UN GA statement, 2002').

616 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

617 Macedonia UN PoA statement, 2001; Macedonia UN GA statement, 2002.

618 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

619 Macedonia UN PoA statement, 2001.

620 SEESAC Short Mission Report - Macedonia, 27 - 29 May 2002, www.seesac.org.

621 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

SALW production

According to Government statements, 'the Republic of Macedonia does not manufacture SALW. The only factory for ammunition production 'Suvenir' repairs and remodels a limited quantity of weapons'.⁶²² Other sources indicate that there is more current military production, and that a second firm, the 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit factory in Prilep, also produces SALW. According to its website, 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit employs 550 staff and produces equipment for civilian consumption, as well as for the military and law enforcement forces, including: rocket launchers (RBR-120mm M90, RBR-90mm M79, and the RBR-64mm M80); personal ballistic protection equipment (helmets, bullet-proof vests, riot shields); mortar shells; bayonets; and, magazines for automatic rifles.⁶²³ The Suvenir factory produces small arms ammunition and explosives for the Macedonian Armed Forces and ministries, and reportedly explosives and SALW products such as grenade launchers,⁶²⁴ and a limited number of sporting rifles.⁶²⁵

11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit and Suvenir produce some goods for private citizens, but mainly supply the Macedonian Government forces, army and police, though Small Arms Survey research notes that government officials suggest no orders are pending and that both companies are suffering financial problems and may be forced to close down.⁶²⁶ SAS notes that these limited domestic production capacities are insufficient for the state's equipment requirements, and that various products are available through foreign suppliers: both local Yugoslav and Bulgarian suppliers participated in the country's first defence exhibition in May 2001. The exhibition was sponsored by a Skopje-based company MICEI International, which holds the licence in Macedonia for major manufacturers (Browning, Remington, Smith & Weston, Beretta, Heckler & Koch and Glock) and supplies ammunition, artillery shells, bullet-proof vests, as well as sport utility vehicles and various survival and security products.⁶²⁷ SAS also notes another supplier, Arsenal, based in Struga,⁶²⁸ but it appears that the Suvenir and 11 Oktomvri factories are the two main domestic arms manufacturers, and that production capacities for SALW manufacture do exist in Macedonia,⁶²⁹ although this seems to be at a reduced level from previous years.⁶³⁰

622 Ibid

623 Home page, 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit, <http://www.eurokompozit.com.mk/kontakt/kontakt.htm>, referenced 15 February 2004.

624 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 24.

625 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 3.

626 Ibid

627 Ibid

628 Ibid

629 The NISAT databases give data on a Macedonian firm 'Euroinvest', which apparently produced rockets and projectiles in 2001 - it seems likely that this may be a reference to 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit, but this is not confirmed. For NISAT data, see www.nisat.org.

630 Jane's Defence Weekly reported in 2001 that the 11 Oktomvri and Suvenir plants between them produced a number of SALW products, including mortars, artillery and small arms ammunition, anti-tank rockets and landmines. 'Yugoslavia prepares to resume arms exports', Jane's Defence Weekly, 30 May 2001, www.clw.org/cat/newswire.

Table 24 – Macedonia's commitments to arms or SALW control agreements

ARMS OR SALW CONTROL AGREEMENT	MACEDONIA'S COMMITMENTS
Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan	November 2001
UN Programme of Action	July 2001
UN Firearms Protocol	-
OSCE Document on Small Arms	November 2000
OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition	December 2003
EU Code of Conduct	-
EU Joint Action on SALW	-
Wassenaar Arrangement	-

Small Arms progress

Legislative and regulatory issues

The legislative framework for SALW control in Macedonia involves several pieces of legislation: weapons possession legislation is mainly embodied in one law on purchasing and possession of arms, expected to undergo substantial revision shortly; production and trade in arms is regulated by two main Laws, recently updated or passed. It should be noted that analysis in this area was significantly constrained by lack of access to English translations of some relevant laws (although these are forthcoming), and certain comments are therefore limited to descriptions of the legislation given in secondary government sources.

Possession

The existing 1972 Law on Purchasing, Possession and Carrying of Weapons, and its amendments,⁶³¹ (also referred to in some translations as the 'Law on Procurement, etc.' and hereafter referred to as the Law on Purchasing), sets out legal conditions for procurement, possession, carrying and sale, repair and re-modelling of weapons, weapons parts and ammunition. The Law on Purchasing applies to all citizens, enterprises or other legal entities and state authorities, with the exception of military personnel, MoI staff, certain authorised security guards in correctional institutions, and, significantly, does not apply to arms or ammunition purchased or procured 'for the requirements of the territorial defense and civilian protection'.⁶³²

The Law on Purchasing allows the procurement and possession of various firearms, including military weapons, as well as hunting carbines, pistols, revolvers, etc, but forbids certain categories of weapon, including 'firearms with special accessories (silencer, blinding lights), disguised weapons' any 'powder gas'-propelled, explosives or 'gas arms made especially for assaults and side arms'.⁶³³ As in other former-SFRY states, possession is regulated by a dual-licence system: first citizens must obtain a licence for procurement, only issued if certain qualifications are met, and then after

631 Official Gazette of SRM 25/77, 18/76, 25/76, 15/83, 51/88 and Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 26/93, 49/03 (unfortunately an English translation of the 2003 amendment was not available for analysis at the time of writing).

632 Article 1, 1972 Law on Purchasing, and amendment to Article 1, 26 May 1976.

633 Article 6, 1972 Law on Purchasing.

having purchased a weapon, must register it with the police to obtain a firearms licence for possessing and carrying that weapon. Illegal possession under the Law on Purchasing results in fines based on salary multiples or imprisonment for one to three years (up to ten years if a large quantity of weapons is involved).⁶³⁴

The problems with the now rather out of date Law on Purchasing are recognised by the Macedonian Government, and referred to in official presentations: the Law's classification of weapons and control regime 'do not correspond with the international standards and experiences in this area', and the 'vague definitions' pose problems for state bodies responsible for implementation.⁶³⁵ Consequently, a new Law on Weapons (also translated or referred to as the 'Law on Arms') has been drafted and is currently undergoing parliamentary readings.⁶³⁶ Drafted with reference to arms possession laws in various EU countries, the new Law on Weapons will incorporate some EU standards and tighten up restrictions on civilian possession. According to informed UNDP staff in Skopje and earlier drafts available for analysis, the Law on Weapons will include more specific definitions of what constitutes a weapon, and more specific categorisation (it introduces, for example, a note on new categories of weapon, such as cross bows and catapults); licence renewal periods will change, with a 2-year licence for possession and a 5-year licence for possession and carrying; and new regulations on transporting weapons will permit transport of unloaded and dismantled weapons for sporting purposes (ie from home to club or shooting range) in a vehicle.⁶³⁷ Following the introduction of the new Law, Macedonian citizens will have a period of one year in which to renew their existing licences (approximately 135,000 issued under the old Law on Purchasing) in accordance with new provisions, after which 'old' licences will be invalidated.⁶³⁸ There also exist other pieces of legislation relevant to this area in Macedonia – it is to be hoped that legislation on shooting clubs and control of explosive materials (which includes mines and EOD) will also be reformed in line with the new Law on Arms, or superseded by its provisions, in order to achieve a harmonised and effective legislative framework for weapons possession.⁶³⁹

In order to provide for the 2003 firearms amnesty and legalisation process, on 4 June 2003, the Government passed in the Law on Voluntary Surrender of Weapons, Ammunition and Explosive Materials and Legalization of the Weapons.⁶⁴⁰

Production and transfers

The two main laws governing manufacture and import and export of arms and military equipment are the 1985 Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment⁶⁴¹ (hereafter referred to as the 'Law on Manufacture'), which covers manufacture and transport and was updated in 2002, and the 2002 Law on External

634 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

635 Ibid

636 No current draft of the 'Law on Weapons' was available for analysis and comments are therefore limited to public statements of the Macedonian Government and comments from informed SALW actors in the country.

637 Telephone interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM/UNDP, 27 January 2004.

638 Ibid

639 For example, the Law on Defence Against Explosive Materials (Official Gazette No 12/93), the 1999 Law on Security Companies (Official Gazette No 80/99), and the 1997 Law on Shooting Clubs and Hunting Associations and its amendments (Official Gazette Nos 25/96 and 34/97).

640 Official Gazette No 37/03. Unfortunately no English translation of the 2003 amendment was available for analysis at the time of writing.

641 Official Gazette Nos 30/85, 6/89, 53/91 and 54/2002.

Trade⁶⁴² which governs export/import licensing by the MoD or Mol. Unfortunately, English language translations of these laws were not available at the time of writing, so the analysis below has had to rely primarily on the report of the Macedonian Government to the UN PoA Biennial Meeting of States in 2003.

The low level of military production in the country has influenced the legislative framework, most clearly in the area of marking. In government statements, the little or no production is the reason behind the lack of any system for marking at point of production. However, Macedonia's 2003 UN PoA report does note that the activities at the Souvenir factory (which it notes as the only SALW manufacturer) involve the repair and remodelling of 'a limited quantity of weapons, which are correspondingly marked according to the marking criteria'.⁶⁴³

The primary legal instrument regulating arms production and trade appears to be the 2002 Law on Manufacture, which covers not only the manufacture and export/import of ostensibly 'military' arms and equipment, but also commercial explosive and hunting and sports weapons and ammunition exported abroad.⁶⁴⁴ It seems that manufacturing under licence, trading in patents or 'property rights on the basis of technology in areas of manufacture of arming and military equipment', renovation and overhaul, related activities abroad, foreign enterprises and brokering are covered by Macedonian legislation, presumably the Law on Manufacture, though it is unclear to what extent.⁶⁴⁵ Little information on production controls contained in Macedonian legislation was available.

In terms of export and import, it appears from government statements to the UN that the Mol has the primary responsibility for regulating export and import of arms and military equipment. Companies wishing to trade in arms must be officially approved by the Mol; however, the Ministry of Economy is also involved in the process, as Macedonia's 2003 UN PoA report states that companies wishing to trade in arms must also be approved and registered by the MoE.⁶⁴⁶ The full details of each import (no note on export was available) must be supplied for the Mol to issue a licence, and also for approval from the Mol for a weapons shipment to cross the state border, a decision made with input from the MoD and MFA. There also appears to be some alternative system of regulating export and import in addition to that detailed under the Law on Manufacture, as the 2003 UN PoA report notes that under the 2002 Law on External Trade, export and import licences are issued by the MoD or Mol.⁶⁴⁷ According to the Government's UN report, all imports are 'strictly controlled' by the Mol and Customs as the competent authorities, who ensure 'imported weapons shipments reach their final destination safely and are stored appropriately'.⁶⁴⁸ The importer or exporter has

642 Official Gazette 45/2002.

643 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

644 The Law on Manufacture covers: 'All issues related to manufacturing and transportation of weapons and military equipment, being in the interest of defence and security of the Republic of Macedonia, planning of security measures, planning of the manufacture and export, quality control and other issues which are of importance for the manufacture, export and transport of weapons and military equipment are determined by the Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment'. According to the Law on Manufacture, weapons and military equipment are defined as: 'functional, complete combat military systems to serve the needs of the defence and the security of the State which constitute a basic military mean (aircrafts, floating objects, tanks, cannon, mortars, grenade launchers, gun, rifle etc.); and material means which equip the basic military means as defined above, as well as other means which serve military and non-military purposes...., while armament and military equipment, by the terms of this Law, are defined to also include commercial explosive, the hunting and sports weapons and their ammunition if they are intended to be exported abroad.' Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

645 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

646 Ibid

647 Ibid

648 Ibid

a responsibility to keep a 'precise register for the imported weapons', and all relevant documentation and records are kept permanently in the Mol, 'although there is no centralised computerised registering system in place'.⁶⁴⁹

On a general note, there does appear to be relevant legislation and procedures governing arms production, import and export in Macedonia. However, the Government 2003 report to the UN DDA indicates that there may be a certain lack of coherence between different pieces of legislation, and it remains unclear what criteria licensing decision-making is based on (and if this reflects international standards such as the EU Code of Conduct or includes the need for end-user certificates or post-export verification), and whether and to what extent the legislation covers transit and transshipment. Recent research conducted by the Small Arms Survey concludes that, 'although a legal framework for the control of small arms exists, penalties for the violation of these laws are poorly enforced and verification of arms shipments is not consistently and routinely implemented. Overall, SALW control efforts exhibit significant variance between policy and practice'.⁶⁵⁰

649 Ibid

650 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Introduction.

Table 25 – Features of Macedonia’s legislative and regulatory framework

FEATURES OF LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK	MACEDONIA
National	
National co-ordinating agency	No, although a national co-ordinating body was established to oversee the 2003 amnesty and collection.
National point of contact	Yes ⁶⁵¹
Laws & Procedures on Production, Export, Import and Transit	
Legislation	Yes ⁶⁵²
Production	Yes, although little detail available. ⁶⁵³
Export	Yes ⁶⁵⁴
Import	Yes, see ‘Export’ above.
Transit	No information available.
National System of Export & Import Licensing or Authorisation	
System	To a certain extent – the exact process is unclear from the information available, see ‘Export’ above.
Diversion risk	No information available; the only reference stated that in deciding on the issue of import or export licences, the MoI takes advice from the MoD and MFA on ‘the political credibility of the country exporter’. ⁶⁵⁵
End-user certificate	No information available.
Retransfers	No information available.
Verification (pre/post)	No information available.
Brokering controls	Yes, though unclear to what extent. ⁶⁵⁶

651 According to SEESAC records, the nominated National SALW Focal point is Ms Ruzica Zanteva-Angelova, based within the MFA.

652 The 1985 Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment (Official Gazette Nos 30/85, 6/89, 53/91 and 54/2002) covers manufacture and transport and the 2002 Law on External Trade (Official Gazette 45/2002) governs export/import licensing by the MoD or MoI.

653 The information available on production regulations was limited to a description of the goods covered by the Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment given in the Government’s 2003 report to the UN DDA.

654 According to the Government’s 2003 report to the UN DDA, import or export companies must be authorised and licensed by the MoI and registered with the courts. Licences for trading companies are limited to six months, but are not limited in terms of quantity of trade; any violation of the regulations will result in the resident company in question being banned from dealing with weapons, either permanently or temporarily. The MoE also seems to have a role as ‘according to the Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment, trade with AME in the country and abroad can be performed by the manufacturers of arming and military equipment and other trade association registered for trade in, subject to previously obtained approval from the Ministry of Economy, provided that they fulfil specific conditions set out in the Law’. For each individual import (no note on export specifications was available) ‘brand, type, calibre, serial number, quantity, country of manufacture, manufacturer, broker for each case concerned, etc.’ must be specified in order for the MoI to issue a licence. In addition to this licence, the actual import or export of a weapons consignment across the state border needs ‘certification of approval’ from the MoI, following advice on ‘the political credibility of the country exporter’ from the MoD and MFA. However, it appears that alternative systems for regulating import and export may exist under another law, as ‘in accordance with the Law on External Trade (Official Gazette No 45/2002) the export/import licence of armament and military equipment is issued by the Ministry of Defence, or the Ministry of Interior’. Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

655 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

656 The Macedonian 2003 report on the UN PoA details the Laws governing production and trade, stating that trade in armament and military equipment is defined as ‘purchase or sale of AME in the Republic of Macedonia, and external trade and providing services, in particular: ... business technical cooperation, manufacture cooperation, supply and transfer of property rights on the basis of technology in areas of manufacture of arming and military equipment, design, construction and equipment of manufacturing capacities abroad; and representation of foreign enterprises, brokering, overhaul and other services in foreign trade’. Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

FEATURES OF LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK	MACEDONIA
Domestic Possession, Stockpiling & Trade	
Legislation	Yes; soon to be reformed. ⁶⁵⁷
Manufacture	See 'Production' above; repair and remodelling are covered, see 'Trade' below.
Marking and tracing	No marking system exists, but according to government reports state- and civilian-owned weapons must be marked in order to be 'legal', although there are no provisions for this in the legislation available. ⁶⁵⁸
Possession	Yes ⁶⁵⁹
Stockpiling	Only reference in available legislation covers Mol supervision of organisations conducting trade or repair, see 'Trade' below.
Trade	Yes ⁶⁶⁰

657 The Law on Purchasing, Possessing and Carrying Arms (also 'Law on Procurement, etc' in some translations) and its amendments, dated 12 July 1972 (Official Gazette of SRM 25/77, 18/76, 25/76, 15/83, 51/88 and Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 26/93, 49/03. English translation of Law on Purchasing referenced at www.seesac.org; unfortunately an English translation of the 2003 amendment was not available for analysis at the time of writing. Due to the deficiencies in this law, a new Law on Weapons is currently in the process of being approved by Parliament.

658 As noted above, there is no note of marking as a criteria for weapons licensing in the laws available for analysis - there may be provisions in the 2003 amendment which was not available in English translation at time of writing. However, the 2003 government report to the UN DDA states: 'Every weapons being imported is marked according to the marking criteria of the manufacturing country since only the registered weapons can be licensed under the law. A marked weapons has to contain following data: country of manufacture, manufacturer, serial number, and year of manufacture. An unmarked weapons is considered illegal and will be seized immediately. This equally applies to government agencies (authorised to carry arms) as well as for weapons for commercial purposes.' Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

659 Possession of a variety of firearms (including 'military rifles, hunting carbines, pistols, revolvers... hunting rifles and air guns', but not 'undetectable firearms produced specifically as a means for attack... high explosive and gas weapons whose elementary purpose is attack', Articles 6 and 7) is permitted and controlled through licences issued by the Mol. Licences for procurement (valid for 6 months) will not be issued to underage or mentally disabled persons, or to anyone 'sentenced for crime or punished for any kind of misdemeanour what makes such person unfit to possess or carry firearms', and licences for procurement of 'rifled arms' or hunting rifles will not be issued to persons, enterprises, legal entities or state authorities unless there is a 'justified' or valid need for the protection of property or hunting (Article 9). Once a licence for procurement has been obtained, and a weapon purchased, that weapon must be registered with the authorities within 8 days of purchase for the owner to obtain a 'firearms licence' for possession and carrying, valid for 'an indefinite period of time' (Article 10). Licences for procuring, and possessing and carrying, 'military rifles and pistols may be issued only to the authorities and organizations having an organised service for property protection' (Article 9), and for hunting weapons may only be issued to members of a hunting association (May 1976 amendment to Article 8). Licences for possessing are also required for 'trophy weapons', and will only be issued if the owner meets the specifications for a firearms procurement licence (amendment to Article 10, May 1976); 'old' or 'antique' weapons can be obtained without approval and possessed without a licence, although owners must register these weapons with the Mol; and 'trophy', 'old' or 'antique' weapons may not be carried or used and it is not permitted to obtain ammunition for such weapons (Articles 13 and 14). Owners of firearms have a duty of responsibility to keep them in good order and to keep them safely (Article 17) and military rifles and pistols may only be used by trained people for the purposes of protecting property (Article 18). It should be noted that the Law does not apply to 'firearms, ammunition and parts for firearms purchasing and possessing for the requirements of the territorial defense and civilian protection' (Article 1, 1972 Law and amendment to Article 1, 26 May 1976). Law on Purchasing, Possessing and Carrying Arms, 1972, and amendments.

660 'Arms and ammunition selling and arms repair and remodelling' is covered by the Law on Purchasing. Organisations wishing to undertake firearms and ammunition trade, repair and remodelling must notify the Mol, may only sell arms and ammunition to, or remodel/repair arms for, state organisations and other entities and citizens who have official approval for arms and ammunition purchase and ownership, and must keep records of all items sold and store arms and ammunition safely (Articles 23-28). The Mol municipal authorities have the responsibility for supervising all trade, repair and remodelling activities (Article 29). Law on Purchasing, Possessing and Carrying Arms, 1972, and amendments.

SALW transfers

Macedonia submitted a report on 2002 to the UN Register of Conventional Weapons in July 2003, which contained no registered exports.⁶⁶¹ The NISAT databases also have no records of registered SALW exports from Macedonia, although SALW imports from Germany, the US and the UK in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 are noted, including pistols and revolvers, rifles and non-military shotguns.⁶⁶² Minimal information is available on arms export by Macedonian companies or state agencies. There have, however, been reports concerning problems with one Macedonian firm, Mikrosam. The US Government imposed sanctions on the firm and its chief executive in December 2003 for violating the US Arms Export Control Act.⁶⁶³

According to Government statements, illicit trafficking in SALW is 'a particular concern for the Republic of Macedonia and the broader region. It jeopardises its stability and security, but also that of Europe as a whole'.⁶⁶⁴ 'One of the most grievous forms of crime' in the country, government sources state that the illegal arms trade is increasing rapidly, as indicated by the increased number of criminal acts discovered and increased quantities of SALW seized by the authorities. Macedonia's position, 'at the crossroad of the so-called Balkan route', presents a key challenge to law enforcement.⁶⁶⁵ The Director of the Organised Crime and Firearms Trafficking Unit within the MoI, notes that, 'weapons are migratory in the region consisting of Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania and Southern Serbia. They are regularly being relocated and moving from one place to another in the region according to demand. The weapons follow exactly the political unrest in the region and unfortunately at the moment they are still in Macedonia awaiting a new conflict here or in another place in the region'.⁶⁶⁶ Other government officials believe that movements of illegal arms into Macedonia have lessened in recent months, due to a lack of demand from an already saturated market, although small amounts of weapons continue to be moved in and out of the country.⁶⁶⁷

SALW collection programmes and capacities

There have been two main collection initiatives in Macedonia. The first, Operation Essential Harvest,⁶⁶⁸ was undertaken by NATO's Task Force Harvest in 2001, the second was implemented by the Macedonian government with the support of the international community in November and December 2003.



March 2001, British paratroopers inspect weapons collected during Operation Essential Harvest. Photo: Reuters.

661 Reports were also submitted for the years 2001, 2000, 1999, 1997 and 1996, none of which registered exports; however, imports were registered in 2001 of 31 battle tanks, 10 armoured combat vehicles, 6 large calibre artillery systems, 4 combat aircraft and 10 attack helicopters from the Ukraine, in 2000 of 105 armoured combat vehicles were imported from Germany and in 1999 of an assortment of arms from Bulgaria, Greece and France. http://disarmament.un.org:8080/UN_REGISTER.nsf, referenced 13 February 2004.

662 www.nisat.org, referenced 16 February 2004.

663 'In a notice published in the Federal Register, the US Government said that Blagoja Samakoski and his firm Mikrosam 'have engaged in missile technology proliferation activities'. The company also violated an executive order against trafficking in weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. The US Government did not specify the exact nature of the violation or the country to which the technology was exported. Samakoski and Mikrosam would be unable to export goods to the United States for two years and would be ineligible for any form of US assistance.' 'US Imposes Sanctions on Macedonian Firm on Arms Trafficking Allegations', Daily Media Review, 25 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

664 Macedonia UN PoA statement, 2001.

665 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

666 Mr Mire Markovski, interviewed in July 2002. Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 34.

667 Comments from General Zehedin Tushi, Deputy Chief of Staff, Macedonian Army. Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

668 Not to be confused with ongoing 'Operation Harvest', conducted by SFOR, and recently local authorities, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Task Force Harvest's mission was to collect the arms and ammunition voluntarily surrendered by the ethnic Albanian armed groups involved in the peace negotiations, and through this collection to assist confidence-building in the broader peace process. Key tasks undertaken from the end of June to late September 2001 were the establishment of collection sites, collection of weapons and ammunition brought to the sites by the insurgents, transportation and disposal of surrendered equipment. A total of 3,875 weapons were collected by Essential Harvest, a higher total than the 3,000 agreed upon during negotiations.⁶⁶⁹

The second SALW collection in Macedonia was implemented by the Government from 01 November to 15 December 2003. Originally scheduled to start in early October, many in the international community had doubts over the timing of the initiative, both in relation to the level of preparation possible within the time allowed and the recent increase in violent incidents and inter-ethnic tension.⁶⁷⁰ The UNDP in particular recommended the postponement of the amnesty period until Spring 2004, from the technical perspective of providing more time for the organisation of logistics and SALW awareness-raising.

However, following the adoption of the Law on Voluntarily Surrender of Weapons, Ammunition and Explosive Materials and Legalization of the Weapons in June 2003, which provided the legislative framework for the amnesty, the start date of 01 November was confirmed. A National Co-ordination Body had been established to oversee the process, including the drafting and adoption of the amnesty Law, and it continued to co-ordinate the collection process itself, although the logistics and practical implementation of the amnesty and 'legalisation', or licensing process were undertaken by an 'Operations Centre' established within the MoI, with the support of UNDP.⁶⁷¹

Concerns, valid given recent political incidents, that the process would be perceived as one-sided, and a tool to disarm the ethnic Albanian communities, were at least partially allayed by numerous Government public statements on the impartiality of the process, and it was stressed that 'equality and neutrality [are] guiding principles aiming to prevent distorted perceptions that one community could profit at another's account'.⁶⁷² The election of Col Gezim Ostreni, an ethnic Albanian and former KLA and NLA senior officer, as Chairman of the Co-ordination Body was a strategic move. Although political support across the spectrum was at first uncertain, and there were rumours of some parties encouraging their supporters to boycott the initiative, by the end of the amnesty, parties from all sides lent their support.⁶⁷³ Promisingly, strong support came from

669 The 3,875 total comprised: 483 machine guns, 3210 assault rifles, 161 support weapons systems (such as mortars and anti-tank weapons), 17 air-defence systems and 4 tanks; 397,625 mines, various ammunition and explosives were also collected. BICC notes that allegations at the time complained that most of the weapons turned in were unserviceable, the then PM calling the operation 'Museum Harvest'; however, 'western military sources insist that 50 to 70 percent of the weapons surrendered were serviceable'. BICC Conversion Survey 2002, p 138.

670 Sources believed the timing 'ill thought out and premature'; a senior source told IWPR, 'They [the Government] insisted they are ready but we have no information about how they are going to do it. What is not clear is why they do not want to assure success before they start such an action'. Armed to the Teeth, IWPR 2003.

671 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', Clearing Guns newsletter, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, www.seesac.org.

672 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

673 Some ethnic Albanian political parties, such as the Democratic Party of Albanians (PDSH), reportedly felt that it was inappropriate to participate as the Ohrid Agreement had not yet been fully implemented, and there were rumours that in some municipalities mayors asked citizens not to participate or boycott the collection and citizens demanded withdrawal of police checkpoints as preconditions for launch of disarmament campaign: 'Disarming Macedonia', Biljana Stavrova and Robert Alagjovovski, 26 November 2003, Transitions Online Balkan Reconstruction Report, <http://knowledge.net.tol.cz> (hereafter 'Disarming Macedonia, TOL 2003'). However, as the amnesty proceeded positively and weapons were collected from both communities, senior officials within the PDSH, publicly confirmed their support for the initiative as a positive move toward peace: PDSH Secretary General, Mr Rushdie Matoshi, during a roundtable discussion organised by IWPR/Saferworld on the investigative report 'Armed to the Teeth' and the amnesty initiative, Skopje 01 December 2003.

some ethnic Albanian parties, such as the opposition Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PPD): ‘we are truly for it, since we have been political victims of illegal weapons. We lost one of our activists during the local elections in 2001’.⁶⁷⁴ Public figures also led by example: ethnic Macedonian Interior Minister Hari Kostov turned in his Smith & Weston handgun and a hunting rifle and the ethnic Albanian Deputy Chief of the Counter Intelligence Service, Fatmir Dehari, turned in his first automatic rifle, a gift from a comrade during the conflict in Kosovo.⁶⁷⁵

Awareness-raising to support the amnesty began in early September, and the lottery incentive, funded by UNDP through a local firm, also helped a great deal to attract public interest and support. The lottery was organised with two draws, the first following the first main amnesty phase in November and the second at the end of the initiative: 35 prizes were allocated to each draw, including motorcycles, computers, sewing machines, cameras, and the grand prize of a Renault Clio.⁶⁷⁶ Collection points were established across the country, and with guarantees of immunity from prosecution and the added incentive of lottery prizes, citizens surrendered weapons in a largely peaceful and calm manner. Lottery tickets were handed out in return for weapons at all of the 123 collection points which operated in three phases: from 01 – 10 November; on the 15, 22 and 29 November; and from the 05 – 15 December 2003. Collection points also took receipt of weapons pending legalisation, and this process is now ongoing. Local municipal weapons collection commissions were established, and this approach seems to have greatly assisted voluntary surrender (See Civil Society Involvement in SALW Interventions below). The collection process was also relatively calm, and only minor political or violent incidents affected its implementation – a major achievement given the tensions of the preceding months.⁶⁷⁷

In total, the November–December initiative collected 7,571 pieces of weaponry, (including one T54 Main Battle Tank) and 100,219 pieces of ammunition over the 45-day period, and was praised by the international community for its efficiency and contribution to increased confidence between the ethnic communities in the country.⁶⁷⁸ A



A public information flyer explains the lottery mechanism.

substantial proportion of the collected weapons, approximately 3,500 to 4,500, may be returned to their owners after official licensing procedures have been completed.⁶⁷⁹ Although many weapons surrendered were older, less sophisticated models, ‘some 348 assault rifles, 55 rocket launchers and about 800 hand grenades were included in the collection statistics, suggesting that at least some contemporary military weapons were removed from society during the operation’.⁶⁸⁰ All the weapons not to be returned

674 PPD President, Mr Abdulmenaf Bedxeti. Disarming Macedonia, TOL 2003.

675 ‘Kostov said the two weapons were not the only ones in his possession, but that he was keeping the rest - which he says are all legally owned’; Dehari, a former fighter in the Kosovo Liberation Army, commented, ‘I felt obliged to do this. The delivery of weapons means respect for human rights and freedom’. Disarming Macedonia, TOL 2003.

676 The costs of the lottery were in total approximately US\$ 100,000, including logistics, implementation and awareness raising about the initiative - the cost of the prizes was approximately US\$ 60,000. UNDP had hoped to be able to put a ‘development spin’ on these prizes (eg offering the prize of a car with a licence for taxi operation), but the time limitations prevented this. Telephone Interview with Alain Lapon, UNDP SACIM project, 22 October 2003, and correspondence with Alain Lapon 12 March 2004.

677 Telephone Interview with Alain Lapon, UNDP SACIM project, 22 October 2003.

678 ‘International Community Satisfied With Results of Macedonia’s Weapons Collection Programme’. Daily Media Review, 17 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

679 Telephone interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM/UNDP, 27 January 2004.

following licensing, will be destroyed, and this process, started in late December 2003, is continuing.



The inventory of weapons surrendered during Macedonia's SALW collection in 2003 included a T54 main battle tank previously disabled during fighting between government and rebel forces.

Although the Government has made various public statements to the effect that the collection will not be extended and that continued illegal possession will now be prosecuted according to law,⁶⁸¹ it is not yet entirely clear what further activities may be developed in this area. Policy statements in the summer of 2003, referred to 'the creation of a long term strategy' for weapons reduction, including work with communities and the 'weapons for development' approach.⁶⁸² In addition, recent official statements within the Government seem to suggest that the possibility to surrender weapons by contacting the police remains an option, despite the expiry of the amnesty law. A working group under the auspices of the National Co-ordinating Body has the task of compiling the full and final results of the collection (including totals from the ongoing legalisation process) and will report to Parliament;⁶⁸³ policy and plans may then move forward.

UNDP is hopeful that further activities will be possible, and nascent plans include further activities on disarmament, with a greater focus on grass-roots 'community security', assessing in depth the particular security concerns of communities and building on the weapons commissions established during last collection. Project staff believe that such an approach would allow linkages to the police and EU mission, and measures relevant to 'safer community' development and possibly to development projects, while maintaining momentum through continued SALW awareness-raising in the meantime.⁶⁸⁴

680 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 3.

681 'In a speech to parliament at the close of the first phase, Kostov promised a sweeping police action against illegal weapons possession after 15 December, even if it makes the country resemble a "real police state"; Disarming Macedonia, TOL 2003. 'Arms Collection Campaign in Macedonia Will Not be Extended', Daily Media Review, 29 - 30 November 2003; 'Voluntary Disarmament Campaign Ends in Macedonia', Daily Media Review, 16 December 2003; www.seesac.org.

682 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

683 Telephone interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM/UNDP, 27 January 2004.

684 Ibid

Table 26 – Summary of SALW collection in Macedonia 1991 – 2003⁶⁸⁵

COLLECTION ACTIVITY	SALW	AMMUNITION (TONNES)	REMARKS
NATO-implemented	3,875	NA ⁶⁸⁶	29 June 2001 – 26 September 2001
Macedonian Mol-implemented	1,103		01 January 1996 – 31 December 1996
Macedonian Mol-implemented	1,725		01 January 1997 – 31 December 1997
Macedonian Mol-implemented	1,274		01 January 1998 – 31 December 1998
Macedonian Mol-implemented	2,610		01 January 1999 – 31 December 1999
Macedonian Mol-implemented	1,514		01 January 2000 – 31 December 2000
Macedonian Mol-implemented	3,278		01 January 2001 – 31 December 2001
<i>Macedonian-Mol implemented</i>	<i>7,571-TBC⁶⁸⁷</i>	<i>NA⁶⁸⁸</i>	<i>01 November – 15 December 2003 Amnesty and Legalisation campaign</i>
TOTAL (EXCLUDING UNCONFIRMED TOTAL FOR 2003 COLLECTION)	15,379		

SALW destruction programmes and capacities

Macedonia has undertaken limited destruction of SALW and ammunition. The two main destruction projects have involved the weapons collected by NATO's Operation Essential Harvest and those collected during the 45-day amnesty in late 2003.

Part of the mandate of the NATO Task Force Harvest was to destroy the weapons collected in 2001. Weapons were transported from collection sites to the Macedonian Army Krivolovak site, where they were cut with industrial shears and the remnants sent to Greece for smelting.⁶⁸⁹ Ammunition was destroyed at Krivolovak, 'taking into account the potential environmental impact', and weapons or ammunition that were unsafe to move were destroyed in situ.⁶⁹⁰

According to the 2003 Law on Voluntary Surrender, which regulated the 2003 amnesty and collection, the Mol has the responsibility for safely stockpiling all surrendered

685 Statistics taken from the SEESAC SALW Database, www.seesac.org, as referenced 15 January 2004, and additional data on the 01 November to 15 December 2003 amnesty from the National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, www.smallarms.org.mk.

686 397,625 units of ammunition were collected under Operation Essential Harvest, though no information on weight in tonnes was available. Small Arms Survey 2003, p 289.

687 The final total of collected weapons is not yet exactly clear, as many of these weapons will be legalized (ie returned to their owners following official registration procedure); estimates are between 3,500 and 4,500. 'International Community Satisfied With Results of Macedonia's Weapons Collection Programme', Daily Media Review, 17 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

688 No information on ammunition weight in tonnes was available, however, the amnesty and collection initiative gathered 100,219 rounds of ammunition of various calibres, 1,257 pieces of explosives, 165.35 kilos of explosive. '7,517 Pieces of Weapons Collected in Macedonia', Press Release 16 December 2003, National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, www.smallarms.org.mk.

689 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 3.

690 'Summary of Regional SALW Projects - FYROM', SEESAC Databases, www.seesac.org.

weapons, which must be destroyed no longer than 90 days after the end of the amnesty.⁶⁹¹ The amnesty ended on the 15 December 2003, and by the end of the month destruction of part of the collected weaponry and ammunition had begun. Explosives, mines, grenades and ammunition have been destroyed at the Krivolak military site, and most other weapons at the Makstil steel mill.⁶⁹²



December 2003, Macedonian soldiers feed small arms ammunition surrendered during the recent amnesty into a kiln at the Krivolak military site.

Table 27 – Summary of SALW destruction in Macedonia 2000 – 2004⁶⁹³

DESTRUCTION ACTIVITY	SALW	AMMUNITION (TONNES)	REMARKS
NATO	3,875		29 June 2001 – 26 September 2001.
Macedonian Government	2,643	NA ^{693a}	2,643 SALW collected during the 2003 amnesty were destroyed on 15 March 2004 (and 221 demilitarised weapons, have been handed over to the Ministry of Culture). As of 25 March 2004, applications to legalise approx. 500 weapons were still being processed - some of these weapons may also be scheduled for destruction. ^{693b}
TOTAL	6,518		

SALW stockpile management programmes and capacities

The only source of reliable information available on stockpiles in Macedonia is the SAS/BICC research, and very limited official transparency on stockpile levels and management practices. Stockpiles are maintained by both the MoI and MoD, and while ‘officials at the Ministry of Defense and Interior maintain that their stockpiles are well controlled and subject to strict stockpile management’, there are indications ‘that there is inadequate control and accountability for official Macedonian stockpiles’; ‘moreover, there are large numbers of SALW in the army that are obsolete and not well secured’. SAS believes that ‘insufficient security for these stockpiles leaves them vulnerable as a potential depot to be raided in any future flare-ups of hostilities’.⁶⁹⁴

SAS research estimates that the number of weapons in official stockpiles held by the MoI range from 23,000 to 36,000.⁶⁹⁵ The MoD, currently engaged in a reform process assisted by NATO, is apparently no longer procuring new weapons and will begin to modernise its weapons stockpiles only after further progress on reorganisation. Official statistics from mid-2003 on MoD stockpiles state they contain a total of 85,500

691 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 3.

692 ‘Macedonia Begins Destroying Illegal Weapons’, Daily Media Review, 27 - 28 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

693 Statistics taken from the SEESAC SALW Databases, www.seesac.org.

693a Various pieces of explosive, rounds of ammunition, hand grenades and mines - a total of 103, 681 items along with other materials were destroyed at Krivolak between 27-30 December 2003; unfortunately the weight in tonnes was not available. Correspondence with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM / UNDP, 25 March 2004.

693b Ibid

694 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 7.

695 Ibid, Section 3.

SALW, including automatic rifles, rifles, machine guns, heavy guns, hand-held rocket launchers, recoilless rifles, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, grenade launchers, shot guns and sniper rifles.⁶⁹⁶ According to SAS research, all weapons in the MoD stockpiles are held in accordance with 'strict stockpile management procedures while in storage or transport', with weapons stored in carefully selected sites at designated military sites. Safety and security measures include: 'guards, duty officers, dogs, reporting services, access control measures, inventory management, accounting procedures, metal fences, reinforced doors, alarms systems, electronic devices, fire prevention service, medical security measures, and disaster protection'.⁶⁹⁷

Aside from official stockpiles, the Small Arms Survey notes that it is likely that the NLA maintains stockpiles of arms gathered and used during the 2001 conflict. This is a highly political issue, and there is little information available; however, based on numbers of active members and the number of weapons surrendered Small Arms Survey estimate that the NLA may have retained a substantial SALW arsenal.⁶⁹⁸

SALW awareness activities

Although various low-level awareness-raising activities had been undertaken by local NGOs prior to the national amnesty in late 2003 (see Civil Society Involvement in SALW Interventions below), public information and awareness-raising activities in Macedonia have been primarily undertaken within the framework of the government collection.

Awareness-raising in support of the collection initiative was undertaken by local civil society and the government, with substantial support and advice from the UNDP SACIM project. SACIM drafted a strategy for the campaign, which was approved by the National Co-ordinating Body, and provided funds for its implementation. The official website for the amnesty states the awareness-raising campaign implemented to support the national amnesty and legalisation initiative included five main components according to the Government website: a media campaign, activities with local communities, dialogue, education, and dissemination of information on safety and security.⁶⁹⁹ Launched officially on 04 September 2003, the SALW awareness programme was approved by the National Co-ordinating Body and involved various actors in the effort to publicise the collection.⁷⁰⁰

The Macedonian Information Agency helped to implement the campaign through national television and radio channels; other TV, radio and printed media outlets and the Journalists Association were also involved, to support and promote the programme and disseminate information 'on the rationale, modalities and procedures of the programme and its contribution to addressing the negative impacts of small arms'.⁷⁰¹



One of several posters printed in both Macedonian and Albanian-languages during the 'For A Better Tomorrow' campaign. This one emphasises the limited time available for weapons surrender.

696 Ibid, Section 3.

697 'Legislation regulating the stockpile of armaments and ammunition include, Law for production and trade of armaments and military equipment, Army Rulebook and its regulations for storage and handling of ammunition and explosive devices, as well as in the Guide for protection against theft of weapons and ammunition.' Ibid, Section 3.

698 Ibid, Section 3.

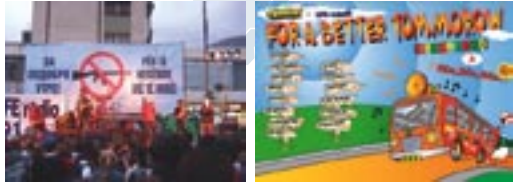
699 National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, Media Campaign page, www.smallarms.org.mk.

700 04 September 2003, Weekly Media Review, 01 - 08 September 2003, www.seesac.org.

701 National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, Media Campaign page, www.smallarms.org.mk.

In addition to televised debates and regular broadcasts of lottery draws, the media campaign included five television spots in six languages and eight radio jingles on local and national radio with the slogan 'Hand in Your Weapons, For a Better Tomorrow'.⁷⁰² A 'media timeline' is published on the Government website, listing press conferences, a 14-day promotional caravan of events across the country and media shows on UN day and the eve of the collection, when a march and a concert titled 'Tomorrow We Start!' were held.⁷⁰³ Press releases on the logistics for collection points and administrative instructions were issued,⁷⁰⁴ and 10,000 posters (2,500 in Albanian and 7,500 in Macedonian), and 100,000 badges and numerous flyers containing exact details of the amnesty and legalisation conditions were distributed.⁷⁰⁵

Local communities were involved through 'promoting the active participation and mobilisation of citizens and community leaders in local planning processes for the national weapons collection and licensing programme and beyond'.⁷⁰⁶ One hundred and twenty-three local and regional



The 'For A Better Tomorrow' campaign used public debates, concerts, and a travelling caravan all in support of disarmament.

commissions were formed to promote the programme together with seven NGOs who orchestrated activities and discussion groups. UNDP SACIM also worked with the Government to produce a 'No Casualties' handbook for these commissions,⁷⁰⁷ which also received training on SALW awareness and the collection procedures.⁷⁰⁸ Activities targeting children were undertaken, including a national drawing contest, which led to public exhibitions and further media coverage.⁷⁰⁹ Dialogue on common goals and the dangers of weapons in society was encouraged, and political, religious and other key opinion shapers were approached to encourage their public support for the initiative. As noted above, key political figures set public examples of weapons surrender.⁷¹⁰ Basic risk education on safety and security was addressed through the dissemination of firearms safety cards containing instructions for secure storage and handling of weapons.⁷¹¹ A UNDP-commissioned opinion poll confirmed that 63 percent of the population felt that the campaign 'changed public opinion in a positive sense', and there is general agreement that the awareness-raising which surrounded the amnesty has also made a very positive contribution to the public debate and process of changing of attitudes towards firearms possession in Macedonia.⁷¹²

702 Op cit, 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear'.

703 National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, Media Activities page, www.smallarms.org.mk.

704 Ibid, Press Releases page.

705 Ibid, Products page.

706 Ibid, Media Campaign page.

707 Op cit, 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', and correspondence with Alain Lapon, UNDP/SACIM Project Manager, 09 February 2004 and 12 March 2004.

708 Eight trainings were held to deliver educational packages on SALW AR and safety to local and regional commissions. The 'Local Commission Training Package' provides guideline for assisting in public awareness-raising in communities. The Training Package briefly outlines the problem and details the roles to be played by Government bodies and UNDP, then defines SALW awareness, advocacy and risk education activities, the overall structure of the SALW campaign in Macedonia, target audiences, the different impact categories of message, basic risk education messages, messages to encourage surrender (for weapons holders and other groups such as children, parents, teachers etc) and safety measures. Local Commission Training Package, Local Commissions training package page, National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, www.smallarms.org.mk.

709 Op cit, 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear'.

710 National Programme - Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, Media Campaign page, www.smallarms.org.mk.

711 Ibid, Safety Guide page.

712 'Weapons Amnesty and Legalisation Frequencies', BRIMA polling company report to UNDP, December 2003.

A recent assessment by SEESAC suggests that the UNDP SACIM SALW awareness campaign, conducted in co-operation with the national government, has been the most sophisticated campaign used to support a voluntary surrender initiative to date. It was in itself supported by a very effective media operations strategy, and the lessons learned from both will be incorporated into the SALW Awareness Support Pack (SASP 2004).⁷¹³

Table 28 – SALW awareness activities

CAMPAIGN AND IMPLEMENTER	DURATION	TARGET GROUP	METHODS	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	DONOR
Macedonian Government, supported by local NGOs and UNDP	September – December 2003	General public	Media announcements, debates and dialogue, promotion in communities, public events, and distribution of promotional material such as posters, flyers, badges and T-shirts.	In December 2003, 63 percent of the population felt that the campaign 'changed public opinion in a positive sense'. ⁷¹⁴	UNDP, and various funding sources for NGO activities, including international donors such as Pax Christi Netherlands.

SALW survey activities

Although various research projects and reports have been produced on SALW and related issues, only one main survey has been conducted on SALW in Macedonia. Conducted by the Small Arms Survey and BICC, with the assistance of the Skopje-based Institute for Democracy, Solidarity, and Civil Society (IDSCS), the survey will shortly be published under the title 'A Fragile Peace: Guns and Security in Macedonia'.⁷¹⁵ Partially funded by SEESAC, the survey provides a 'Small Arms Baseline Assessment' – an assessment of SALW availability, distribution, circulation, impact and control in Macedonia. The context and security environment in Macedonia and previous collection initiatives are reviewed, estimates are made of how many guns are held by which groups in the country and motivations for possession are suggested, and the problems of SALW trafficking and law enforcement responses are evaluated. The lessons learned from this SALW Survey have now been incorporated into the joint SAS/SEESAC SALW Survey Protocols, which will be used to develop SALW surveys in other countries in the region.

⁷¹³ Correspondence with Adrian Wilkinson, SEESAC Team Leader, 16 February 2004.

⁷¹⁴ Op cit, 'Weapons Amnesty and Legalisation Frequencies'.

⁷¹⁵ A pre-publication draft of 'A Fragile Peace: Guns and Security in Macedonia', under the title of 'The SALW Problem in Macedonia', Suzette Grillot, Shelly Stoneman, Hans Risser, and Wolf-Christian Paes, SAS/BICC, was released by SEESAC for the purposes of this report; publication is forthcoming. Please contact SEESAC for further information.

Civil Society involvement in SALW interventions_

Although in general the capacity of civil society in Macedonia is weak and in many cases politicised, there are several positive examples of NGOs working on SALW and related issues. In 2003, a few NGOs were already working on SALW issues, usually in the context of peace-building and educational projects, and support from international NGOs and networks, such as Pax Christi Netherlands, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Saferworld, provided for capacity-building and funding for awareness-raising and research projects. SALW and related projects have been undertaken by the NGOs: Journalists for Children and Women Rights and Protection of the Environment (JCWE), which has mainly focused on media and children's educational activities, such as painting competitions (with funding from IANSA); Civil (NGO for Human Rights and Development of Civil Society), which has organised large-scale events, such as the 'Peace Unlimited' Festivals, disseminated pro-disarmament campaign materials and organised community dialogue fora (with funding from Pax Christi Netherlands); and the Association for Democratic Initiatives (ADI), which undertook a survey on public attitudes towards SALW and possession (with funding from Saferworld). A training for Macedonian NGOs, 'Building Constituencies For Small Arms and Light Weapons Work in Macedonia Capacity Building for NGOs' was conducted by Saferworld and UNDP Macedonia in Skopje, 23 – 25 June 2003.

The capacity of the media in Macedonia also limited: media outlets are often 'deeply politicised', and coverage of SALW tends to be 'biased and inflammatory'.⁷¹⁶ Activities to improve media reporting of SALW in Macedonia have been undertaken by IWPR and Saferworld, who have conducted training events and funded investigative reports on SALW.⁷¹⁷



A joint media training seminar on SALW reporting run jointly by IWPR, Saferworld and SEESAC in Skopje in May 2003.

The start of the national amnesty in November 2003 provided the trigger for far greater and more positive civil society involvement in SALW control efforts. A civil society representative was included in the National Co-ordinating Body overseeing the government collection, allowing local NGOs to 'lobby' for more inclusive implementation to safeguard confidence-building,⁷¹⁸ and community collection teams were trained and active during the amnesty, encouraging local citizens to surrender weapons. The media played an enormously significant role in publicising the amnesty, through local and national radio and TV coverage and articles in the press, which also carried advertisements for the campaign.⁷¹⁹ Many NGOs supported the campaign in various ways including:⁷²⁰ training of local community teams and organisation of dialogue fora;⁷²¹ organising roundtables

716 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 10.

717 A sub-regional training seminar for media, 'Reporting small arms - opportunities and challenges', involving journalists from Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and Southern Serbia, was conducted by Saferworld and IWPR in Skopje, 15 - 16 May 2003; subsequently, a Saferworld-funded IWPR investigative report into SALW in the sub-region, 'Armed to the Teeth', was undertaken by IWPR journalists from Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo and launched in Skopje with a panel discussion on 01 December 2003.

718 A number of local NGOs submitted recommendations to the National Co-ordinating Body; the NGO CIVIL co-ordinated input and copies of the submission can be obtained from contact@civil.org.mk.

719 Op cit, 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear'.

720 An unofficial estimate from UNDP staff puts a figure of approximately 400 NGOs undertaking small activities such as meetings, or giving verbal support to the collection. Telephone interview with Alain Lapon, UNDP/SACIM Project Manager, 16 December 2003.

721 Op cit, 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear'.

and discussion groups,⁷²² designing and distributing flyers, badges and posters to promote the collection in public places, including through retail outlets, as, in a novel twist, local NGO staff convinced clothes shops to display and hand out pro-disarmament badges to shoppers in order to counteract the recent 'trend' in military-style clothing. The involvement of NGOs, media and community groups clearly contributed to the broad public support for the collection and the success of the initiative.⁷²³

Cross-border SALW control initiatives

There is consensus that border control in Macedonia is poor. Sources note that: 'arms can easily flow over the borders between Kosovo, Macedonia and Southern Serbia', the border with Albania 'remains de facto open' and the Bulgarian border has seen 'an increase in trafficking in recent years'.⁷²⁴ In general, 'a network of smuggling routes, especially through the mountainous and water covered areas continue to permit smugglers unauthorized entry to Macedonia'.⁷²⁵ Drugs, arms and human beings are regularly moved across Macedonia's borders, fuelling and supporting crime and instability in the region and in Western Europe, the destination for much of the trafficked goods;⁷²⁶ the border with Kosovo is of particular concern for arms trafficking and criminal activity.⁷²⁷ The Small Arms Survey believes that 'at the root of this problem is a disorganized system of border management', a finding confirmed by SEESAC missions.⁷²⁸

SAS reports that there are minimal checks on imports and exports of weapons, and other goods, due to the lack of resources and communication procedures between Customs and Border officials.⁷²⁹ Similarly, co-operation among the other forces responsible for border control, the Army Border Brigades, Border and regular police, is also very weak; five different ministries have responsibility for various aspects of border control.⁷³⁰ Efficient co-operation across the border with neighbouring states' agencies is therefore highly problematic.

However, there has been progress in this area, and plans are underway for the creation of a new National Border Police Service under the MoI, comprised of 3,000 to 3,200

722 For example, the roundtable for women organised by the NGO Journalists for Children and Women Rights and Protection of the Environment (JCWE) in collaboration with the Macedonian Union of Women's Organisations. Balkan Action Network on Small Arms page, www.iansa.org.

723 A disabled KLA/UCK tank was surrendered in Lipkovo, a town which suffered heavy fighting in 2001: Ibrahim Zimberi, a member of the local weapons collection commission commented, 'The villagers wanted to keep the tank as a souvenir, but we persuaded them to give it back... This is the best example of citizens' will to disarm. The damaged tank could have been repaired for only 500 euros'. Disarming Macedonia, TOL 2003.

724 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, pp 8, 20 and 35.

725 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Introduction.

726 'A range of illegal cross-border activities have been detected by the authorities charged with the management of the official Border Crossing Points. Significant levels of attempted illegal immigration (inbound traffic) have been reported at the Northern and Eastern borders, with information from apprehended persons indicating that most of this traffic is in transit to Member States of the European Union. The smuggling of drugs and weapons has been reported in the West and South (inbound and outbound). Numerous reports of illegal traffic in alcohol and tobacco products have also been reported.' 'Integrated border management strategy programme' page, www.ear.eu.int.

727 'The main concern is the border with Kosovo. KFOR troops have arrested Bosnian, Croat, and Bulgarian nationals attempting to smuggle weaponry into Macedonia from Kosovo, demonstrating how the illicit trade of weapons cuts across ethnic lines'. From June to September 2001 alone, KFOR Operation Eagle arrested 797 individuals and seized a wide variety of weapons, including light weapons, surface-to-air missiles and mines, machine guns and ammo mortars. Continuing illegal cross-border and weapons movements, sightings of armed groups, and low-level attacks on Macedonian border brigades including an RPG attack on a border patrol in March 2003, indicate the scale of the problem. Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, pp 49-50.

728 SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Introduction. SEESAC Short Mission Report - Macedonia, 27 - 29 May 2002, www.seesac.org.

729 'Indeed, as of June 2003, Customs officials were not mandated to inspect vehicles carrying cargo across the border, but only to verify the paperwork documenting the shipment...This may be remedied, however, as the Customs code on procedure is in the process of being re-drafted to conform to European standards. Accordingly, the operational role of the Customs Administration for verification and monitoring of goods will be strengthened under the new legislation.' SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Section 7.

730 'Integrated border management strategy programme' page, www.ear.eu.int.

armed staff drawn from the police and military to undergo additional training.⁷³¹ The new integrated police service will assume the current border control functions of the ABB and the border police by the end of 2005 and will provide the core for the implementation of a new, Integrated Border Management Strategy. Aimed at improving inter-agency co-operation and bringing border control up to international standards, the Strategy was developed with EAR and its implementation will be supported by EAR technical assistance and training, funded by the EU with almost half a million Euro; implementation of the will begin on 01 May 2004 on the south border.⁷³² The OSCE is also assisting with police reform and the new EU police mission will 'advise policemen on the local and regional level how to fight organised crime'.⁷³³

Macedonia hosted and committed to the Ohrid Border Security and Management Common Platform in May 2003 and has undertaken various activities within this framework. An interagency group has been established for the transformation of border security and management and the development of appropriate strategies and co-operation agreements 'in the sphere of internal affairs' have been signed with all neighbouring countries.⁷³⁴ In addition, improved relationships with neighbouring countries has facilitated cross-border co-operation. As official statements to the UN note, 'Macedonia, on its part, is making every effort to give its contribution to strengthening the cooperation within various regional organisations and initiatives. Further improvement of good-neighbourly relations remains one of the priorities of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia'; reference is also made to the 'development of programme[s] on issues related to cross-border crime and border control strengthening'.⁷³⁵ The new Government has worked hard to establish good relations with its neighbours, and has concluded a number of cross-border agreements and nominated liaison officers to improve operational linkages: an agreement on combating organised crime was signed with Serbia and Montenegro in January 2003, and bi-lateral discussions between the respective Ministries of Defence are underway on improving control of the Albanian-Macedonian border, including proposals for integrated border patrols.⁷³⁶ The November 2002 Interim Protocol on Police Cooperation signed with UNMIK has included, on the request of the Macedonian Government, cross-border crime and smuggling (including SALW), and co-operation and co-ordinated protection of the border between Macedonian Army Border Brigades and KFOR have improved.⁷³⁷

Various workshops, seminars and meetings have also been held with the aim of improving cross-border co-operation and control, including regional actors such as NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the Stability Pact, OSCE and SECI Regional Center. In March 2003, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia, Albania and Croatia agreed to 'intensify regional co-operation';⁷³⁸ in November 2003, the Defence Ministers of Macedonia, Greece and Albania pledged to 'step up military

731 'Macedonia to Implement Border Management Strategy by 2005', Daily Media Review, 25 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

732 'Integrated border management strategy programme' page, www.ear.eu.int.

733 Alexis Brouhns, EU Special Representative in Skopje. 'EU plans Police Mission for Macedonia', REF/RL Newslite, Vol 7, No 183, 25 September 2003.

734 'Way Forward Document', Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management, 22 - 23 May 2003.

735 Macedonia UN GA statement, 2002; Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

736 Two sets of joint Macedonian-Albanian military exercises were also carried out in 2003. Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, pp 9, 20, 50 and 51.

737 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 50.

738 'Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia', Dubrovnik, 07 March 2003, www.mvp.hr.

co-operation to address common threats more efficiently, including those posed by illegal immigration and cross-border organised crime',⁷³⁹ and dialogue on deepening co-operation with UNMIK on combating organised crime was held.⁷⁴⁰ Ways to improve regional co-operation to fight organised crime was also a main topic for discussion at a conference for SEE police chiefs in December 2003,⁷⁴¹ and the agreement resulting from the Macedonian-hosted regional Border Security and Management conference in Ohrid was 'hailed as a major step forward' for regional co-operation on border control.⁷⁴²

SALW management information and exchange systems and protocols

As with cross-border control and management, there are indications that the generally poor situation in Macedonia with regard to information exchange and transparency is improving, and more organised processes regulating the sharing and public dissemination of information.

Macedonia is a member of Interpol and negotiations on a co-operation agreement with Europol are ongoing.⁷⁴³ Macedonia participates in the SECI Regional Center for Combating Trans-Border Crime, and information exchange via its two law enforcement officer secondments to SECI has been of 'key importance' in regional police co-operation.⁷⁴⁴ Macedonia has also made progress in terms of information exchange co-operation with its neighbours – the November 2002 memorandum signed with UNMIK, also contained provisions on 'information-sharing on SALW related issues, in particular on illegal trafficking',⁷⁴⁵ and the Government and KFOR have gone on to agree the establishment of a hotline in order to exchange information on incidents.⁷⁴⁶ In addition, work is ongoing to strengthen the professional standards of police with regard to information and intelligence processing with the assistance of ICITAP and the OSCE as part of broader police reform processes.⁷⁴⁷ However, despite progress within these frameworks, research finds that 'inter-agency communication on arms transactions in Macedonia is minimal, and domestic information sharing practices of the Macedonian government about SALW practices has been consistently inadequate' and that internal transparency and public access to information is also poor.⁷⁴⁸

739 11 November, Weekly Media Review, 10 - 16 November 2003, www.seesac.org.

740 'Boost of Co-operation between Macedonia and Kosovo', Daily Media Review, 28 November 2003, www.seesac.org.

741 The heads of police from seven South Eastern European countries Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia-Montenegro met for a two-day conference of the Southeast Europe Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA) in Tirana. 'Regional Conferences on Co-operation in Interior, Judicial Sectors Held', Daily Media Review, 10 December 2003, www.seesac.org.

742 'Balkan Border Issues Tackled', Evridika Saskova, Balkan Crisis Report No 433, 30 May 2003, www.iwpr.net.

743 'Europol annual report and work programme for 2004', News article May 2003, www.statewatch.org, referenced 22 January 2004.

744 'More and more action is being taken by Balkan countries to stop criminals. In this recent case, fleeing over the border was of no help. Dilaver Boiku, nicknamed Leka, the Balkan king of prostitution, escaped from a Macedonian prison last July. Two weeks later he was arrested in Ulcinj by the Montenegrin police, and immediately extradited to Macedonia'; in making the arrest 'information exchanged via the SECI Center in Bucharest was of key importance.' 'Balkan countries step up the fight against organised crime', South East Europe TV Exchanges, 21 November 2003, www.seetv-exchanges.com.

745 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

746 Macedonia, Saferworld 2003, p 50.

747 'Macedonia' page, www.usdoj.gov/criminal/icitap.

748 SAS research found that there is 'little transparency regarding guns in the country' and that, 'currently, the country does not rank high in international transparency... Macedonia does not publish arms export reports or present data on SALW transfers to the UN Comtrade database.' SALW Problem, SAS/BICC 2004, Introduction and Section 7.

The recent national amnesty has indicated that this may improve: government programmes and policy on SALW collection have been published⁷⁴⁹ and substantial public debate on the collection and its achievements involving government officials and parliamentarians was held before, during and after the initiative. Externally, Macedonia submitted a report in 2003 to the UN DDA within the framework of the UN PoA,⁷⁵⁰ and submitted reports to the OSCE in 2001 and 2003 as part of the information exchange mechanism established by the OSCE Document on Small Arms.

Table 29 – Information and exchange progress

INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE SYSTEMS AND PROTOCOLS	MACEDONIA
International	
Reporting to the UN DDA on the Programme of Action	Yes ⁷⁵¹
Reporting to the UN Register of Conventional Arms	Yes
Reporting to other international regimes, if appropriate (eg Wassenaar Arrangement)	-
Interpol/Europol	Yes / a co-operation agreement with Europol is currently under negotiation. ⁷⁵²
Regional	
Information exchange with OSCE	Yes
Annual reporting to EU (if relevant)	-
SECI Regional Center intelligence exchange	Yes
National	
Transparency – on SALW imports, exports and decision-making	No
Publication of national reports on arms /SALW transfers	No
Publication of SALW national strategy	To a certain extent, with regard to 2003 amnesty and legalisation initiative. ⁷⁵³

749 See www.smallarms.org.mk.

750 Macedonia UN PoA report 2003.

751 Ibid

752 'Europol annual report and work programme for 2004', News article May 2003, www.statewatch.org, referenced 22 January 2004.

753 See official website, www.smallarms.org.mk.

