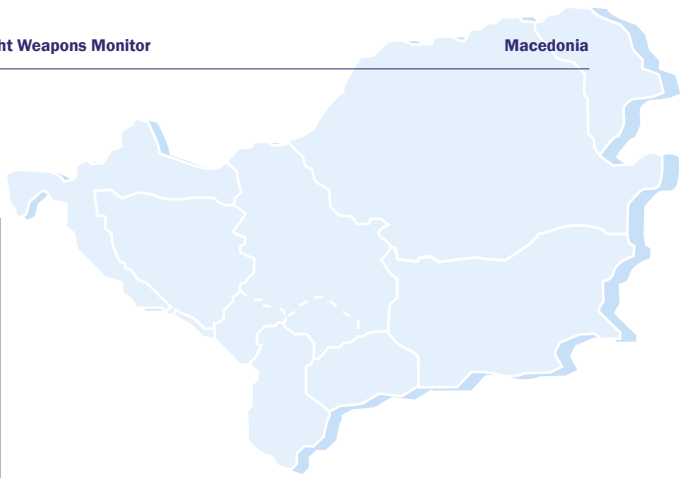


Macedonia



1 Small Arms problem

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM, hereafter Macedonia) is presently experiencing a level of security and stability which is in stark contrast to the armed violence of 2001/ 2002. Nevertheless, Macedonia still has a range of unresolved SALW control problems to combat. These include the presence of a large amount of unregistered SALW, serious incidents of armed violence and related criminal activity and a general acceptance by the Macedonian population of SALW possession (especially in rural areas).¹

According to the 2004 National SALW Survey of Macedonia, there are estimated to be between 380,000 - 750,000 SALW present in the country, of which 100,000 to 450,000 are illegal and about 156,000 are legally registered with the Ministry of the Interior (Mol).² The presence of large amounts of SALW is demonstrated by continued police seizures.³ Although the Mol has not released exact figures for the amount of SALW stockpiled for use by uniformed police, police reservists and Special Forces, it is estimated that between 23,000 and 36,000 pieces are available.⁴ The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has declared that its stockpiles contain a total of 85,446 SALW.⁵ In addition to reservists, it is estimated that significant numbers of SALW are in the hands of paramilitary forces such as the National Liberation Army (NLA), the splinter group Albanian National Army (ANA), private security services,⁶ organised criminals and civilians.

Several historical factors have had a impact on increasing the number of illegal and unregistered SALW in Macedonia including: the inter-ethnic conflict of 2001, the 1997 looting of stockpiles in neighbouring Albania, the arms that have entered the black market

¹ A *Fragile Peace: Guns and Security in post-conflict Macedonia*, BICC/Small Arms Survey, SEESAC, 2004 (Henceforth A *Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004).

² *Ibid.*

³ The number of confiscated weapons and ammunition during the first three months of 2005 was 35 per cent higher in comparison to the same period in 2004. Macedonian Statistics Show Rise in Illegal Weapons Trafficking, *Dnevnik*, Skopje, 09 May 2005. Another recent article cited Ministry of Interior (Mol) statistics of 214 cases of possession of illegal weapons in 2004. 'Kalashnikov Democracy', *Vest Daily Newspaper*, (As translated by Skopje Diem media monitoring), Skopje, 29 January 2005.

⁴ A *Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, p 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p 15.

⁶ 112 firearms have been registered with the Mol by Private Security Companies (PSCs). These include 103 pistols, 6 hunting rifles, and 3 semi-automatic rifles. Interview with Goran Pavlovski, Spokesperson, Mol, Skopje, 25 February 2005.

from the former NLA rebel group⁷ and the distribution of SALW from government stockpiles.⁸ A complex network of smuggling routes, still in operation across the mountainous and water borders, is a further potential source for illegal SALW.⁹

Although inter-ethnic relations have improved, the effects of SALW proliferation continue to be felt and past conflicts have been replaced by an 'epidemic of gun crimes', with 71 people killed by firearms in the first nine months in 2003;¹⁰ over 50 per cent of murders in Macedonia are committed with illegal weapons.¹¹ The 2004 National SALW Survey notes 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. In general, Macedonian citizens are said to be concerned about their security and safety and to perceive the general availability and distribution of SALW in society as threatening.¹² Despite this, other reports note that until trust in the police has been developed further, Macedonians are likely to own guns in an attempt to guarantee their own security.¹³

Border control has in the past been problematic, but with the adoption of a National Strategy on Integrated Border Management in December 2003 the situation is improving. Although seizures of trafficked SALW have decreased during the past year,¹⁴ well-organised trafficking networks that smuggle illicit weapons both into and out of Macedonia still exist.¹⁵

2 Small Arms policy and practice

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.¹⁶ Official statements claim that Macedonia supports, respects and implements all relevant UN resolutions and has signed several UN conventions against international terrorism.¹⁷ Macedonia has made commitments to implement the OSCE Document on

⁷ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, p 2. The Small Arms Survey estimate that the NLA may have been in the possession of between 8,000 and 20,000 weapons at the peak of its activities.

⁸ It appears that before and during the conflict, weapons were handed out to party supporters, ethnic Macedonian reservists and community defence forces. *Armed to the Teeth*, IWPR Balkan Crisis Report No 470, 27 November 2003 (Henceforth *Armed to the Teeth*, IWPR, 2003).

⁹ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004.

¹⁰ *Armed to the Teeth*, IWPR, 2003.

¹¹ Macedonian Statistics Show Rise in Illegal Weapons Trafficking, *Dnevnik*, Skopje, 09 May 2005.

¹² *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Introduction.

¹³ 'It is clear that fears for individual and collective security remain one of the main reasons why people continue to hold weapons. Police..., fail to bring a sense of law and order to much of the former crisis areas. Kidnappings, bombings, spates of murders and armed robberies are frequent occurrences, with the culprits often evading capture'; 'Currently, the prevailing lawlessness is a key reason why people continue to keep weapons... many people feel that official law-enforcement structures are not capable of providing adequate protection from crime and that they have to take the law into their own hands.' *Macedonia*, Saferworld 2003, p 8.

¹⁴ Answers to the Questionnaire for the preparation of the European Commission's Opinion on the application of the Republic of Macedonia for membership of the European Union, 2004 (Henceforth *EC Questionnaire*, 2004), Justice and Home Affairs, Chapter 24, p 202. <<http://www.sei.gov.mk/prasalnik/>>, accessed 18 May 2005.

¹⁵ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 24.

¹⁶ *Republic of Macedonia Report on Implementation of the UN PoA Report*, 2004 (Henceforth *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2004).

¹⁷ *Republic of Macedonia Report on Implementation of the UN PoA Report*, 2003 (Henceforth *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2003).

SALW and has participated in the information exchange outlined in the document. Within the Stability Pact, Macedonia has been active, advocating on several occasions SALW control measures on a regional level and hosting the first Regional Steering Group meeting in May 2002.

SALW issues are primarily the responsibility of the MoI, which, in cooperation with the MoD and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), has 'been given the principal responsibility in coordinating and developing a national policy on small arms, researching and monitoring the efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects'.¹⁸ During 2004 the national SALW focal point was transferred from the MFA to the MoI. The National Focal Point has responsibility for liaising with other states and the international community in Macedonia on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action (PoA) and other instruments concerning SALW. Activities include the exchange of information with other states on national practices regarding SALW control.¹⁹

On 1 November 2004 Macedonia adopted a decision on unilateral acceptance of the EU Code of Conduct.²⁰ Aside from this, Macedonia has not signed up to any other SALW control initiatives in the past year, although inter-ministerial consultations are presently underway for ratification of the UN Firearms Protocol.²¹ Adoption of the EU Joint Action on SALW is also planned for 2005.²²

On 22 October 2004, Macedonia's Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly introduced a draft resolution on the "Maintenance of international security – good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe", which was adopted by the General Assembly without a vote. Among other things, Resolution 59/59 "urges all States to take effective measures against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and to help programmes and projects aimed at the collection and safe destruction of surplus stocks of small arms and light weapons".²³

During September 2004 Macedonia adopted the National European Integration Strategy, which outlines a set of priorities and long-term goals for the country's European integration process.²⁴ Also adopted was a national programme for NATO membership for the period 2004 – 2005, a major component of which will be defence reforms but will also include judicial reforms and increased efforts to tackle organised crime.²⁵

¹⁸ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2003.

¹⁹ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2004.

²⁰ EC Questionnaire, 2004, Chapter 27.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² The Macedonian Government gave significant attention to SALW in its EC Questionnaire, 2004 (see footnote 14 above).

²³ UN General Assembly Resolution 59/59 (A/RES/59/59) adopted 3 December 2004. Available at: <<http://disarmament.un.org:8080/vote.nsf>> In the General Assembly, Macedonia also sponsored Res. 59/82 "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures" and Res. 59/88 "Conventional arms control at the regional and sub regional levels".

²⁴ Macedonia Defines National Strategy for EU Integration, *Southeast European Times*, 23 September 2004.

²⁵ Macedonia: Economic Growth Necessary for NATO Membership, <www.seeurope.net>, accessed 28 September 2004.

Table 1: 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	November 2004
EU Joint Action on SALW	-
Wassenaar Arrangement	N/A

2.1 SALW production

There are only two companies in Macedonia known to produce SALW or ammunition legally – Suvenir, based in Samokov (97 per cent state owned) and 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit, based in Prilep (wholly state owned). According to its website,²⁶ 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit employs 523 staff and produces equipment for civilian use, 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.²⁷ The Suvenir factory purports to produce small arms ammunition (7.62mm rounds for 'Kalashnikovs', 7.62mm NATO ball and 9mm PARA) and explosives for the Macedonian Armed Forces and ministries, and reportedly explosives and SALW products such as grenade launchers,²⁸ and a limited number of sporting rifles.²⁹ However, conflicting reports regarding the Suvenir factory's status were offered as the MoD claimed the facility had shut due to insolvency³⁰ and in September 2004 the government announced the liquidation of the company due to a lack of long-term prospects.³¹ Regarding 11 Oktomvri Eurokompozit, the MFA maintains that the firm in Prilep only produces to order and currently has no orders.³² A privatisation procedure is underway for the Prilep factory, and is due to be completed in the course of 2005.³³ These limited domestic production capacities are generally considered to be

²⁶ <www.eurokompozit.com.mk>, accessed 09 May 2005

²⁷ <<http://www.eurokompozit.com.mk/index.htm>>, accessed 09 May 2005. Previously the company in Prilep was called 'Euroinvest – 11 Oktomvri', which functioned as a holding company. This holding company was 'transformed into nine smaller enterprises', of which only one – 11 Oktomvri – Eurokompozit – is 'functioning successfully...as a stock company with 100% state capital. Its production programme includes defence industry (military equipment, ballistic protection equipment), as well as civilian production (for the needs of the automobile plants etc.)'. Correspondence between Hans Risser and Mr Blagoja Simonoski, Head of Department for Policy, Planning and International Cooperation, MOD, Skopje, 20 April 2004, for research on the Landmine Monitor 2004.

²⁸ *Macedonia: Guns, Policing and Ethnic Division*, Saferworld 2003 (henceforth Macedonia, Saferworld 2003).

²⁹ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

³⁰ Correspondence with Mr Blagoja Simonoski, Head of Department for Policy, Planning and International Cooperation, MOD, Skopje, 20 April 2004.

³¹ 'Macedonia to liquidate its only arms factory', *SeeNews*, 3 September 2004 <www.seenews.com>, accessed 3 September 2004.

³² Interview with Svetlana Geleva, MFA, Skopje, 04 February 2005.

³³ *EU Accession Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 27. It is anticipated that the privatisation would lead to an injection of foreign capital for modernization of the military technology and alignment with NATO production programmes. *Ibid*.

insufficient for the state's equipment requirements with procurement needs being met from abroad.³⁴ Local, former-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 license in Macedonia for major manufacturers (Browning, Remington, Smith & Weston, Beretta, Heckler & Koch and Glock) and supplies ammunition, bulletproof vests, as well as sport utility vehicles and various survival and security products.³⁵

3 Small Arms progress

3.1 Legislative and regulatory issues

Civilian possession of firearms and ammunition in Macedonia is primarily governed by sections II, III and IV of the January 2005 'Law on Arms,'³⁶ which replaced the 1972 'Law on Purchasing, Possession and Carrying of Weapons.'³⁷ These sections of the 'Law on Arms' set out the legal conditions for the acquisition and ownership of weapons and ammunition (Section II), the handling of weapons and ammunition (Section III)³⁸ and termination and deprivation of weapon licenses (Section IV). The law also covers the: production (Section V); import (Section VI); export (Section VI); transit (Section VII); brokering (Section VI); marking (Section VI); stockpiling (Section VI); and domestic retail (Section VI) of weapons for civilian and private use.³⁹ The Mol is the primary institution responsible for implementing and monitoring this new law.⁴⁰

The 'Law on Arms' applies to weapons and ammunition used by citizens, enterprises or other legal entities and state authorities, with the exception of those purchased for the needs of 'the Ministry of Defence, the Army of the Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of the Interior, penitentiaries and other state authorities and legal persons in specific regulations'.⁴¹ Under the terms of this law, SALW in Macedonia are regulated by a dual-licence system: citizens need separate licences for the procurement / possession and carrying of firearms, with the law prohibiting carrying firearms in public places. Under the terms of the new law, Macedonian citizens have a period of one year in which to renew their existing licenses in accordance with new provisions, after which 'old' licenses will

³⁴ Exports of an unknown quantity of SALW and defence equipment were made from Bosnia to Macedonia during 2004. 2004 Annual Report of Imports and Exports, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Sarajevo, February 2005. Imports of M21 Rifles from the Republic of Serbia have also been noted in 2004. *Living with the Legacy – SALW Survey of the Republic of Serbia*, Saferworld, UNDP, 2005.

³⁵ A Fragile Peace, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

³⁶ 'Law on Arms', Official Gazette 07/05. The Law was adopted on 25 January 2005.

³⁷ 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. This field was also regulated by the 'Rulebook on the Form of the License for Weapons, Records on Weapons and Ammunition and Keeping of Weapons' (Official Gazette of the SRM No. 41/72).

³⁸ The new 'Law on Arms' some standards on storage and safe handling of firearms. Article 34, for example, specifies that legal entities that have authorization for possessing weapons either for securing property and people or for sports and hunting 'shall keep the weapon separate from the ammunition in a technically secured premises, or in an iron cabinet, or a safe. According to the regulation, weapon and ammunition shall be kept in premises intended for storing of weapon, or in the headquarters of the legal entity'. Other standards, however, will be issued as part of the secondary legislation the government is in the process of writing. 'Law on Arms', Official Gazette 07/05.

³⁹ 'Law on Arms', Official Gazette 07/05.

⁴⁰ Article 78, 'Law on Arms', Official Gazette 07/05.

⁴¹ EC questionnaire, 2004, Chapter 27, p 33-34.

be invalid. This one-year period will not, however, begin until July or August 2005, as the licensing process has not yet been finalised.⁴²

The 'Law on Arms' has been drafted with reference to arms possession laws in various EU countries and has incorporated some EU standards. It introduces a National Catalogue of weapons and ammunition that can be manufactured or imported for acquisition and possession in Macedonia, and apparently records the registry number of imported weapons, as well as the type and calibre of the weapon or ammunition, the producer and the country of origin. The law⁴³ also provides a detailed system for classifying firearms according to the following categories: prohibited firearms (Category A), e.g. automatic firearms, firearms with silencers and firearms over 12.7mm calibre; firearms which may be purchased on the basis of authorisation (Category B); firearms which may be purchased for the needs of hunting and sports, again subject to authorisation (Category C); and firearms to be declared and for which authorisation is issued, e.g. relics and bladed weapons (Category D). This weapons classification system is an attempt to amend the criticism that the previous law's classification of weapons and control regime 'do not correspond with the international standards and experiences in this area', and that the 'vague definitions' pose problems for state bodies responsible for implementation.⁴⁴

As mentioned previously, the 2005 'Law on Arms' contains a section on production; however, the main law relevant to production is the 2002 'Law on the Production of, and Trade in Arms and Military Equipment'⁴⁵ (hereafter referred to as the 'Law on Production'). According to Macedonia's 2004 report on implementation of the UN PoA, there is no system in place for marking at the time of manufacture, however it also notes 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 standardised marking criteria'.⁴⁶ Article 53 of the Law on Arms states that only weapons, ammunition, and parts of weapons which are tested and marked according to the regulation for testing and marking can enter circulation. Furthermore, Article 82 of the "Law on Arms" stipulates that any legal entity possessing or trading unmarked weapons, ammunition or parts of weapons, will be fined 100,000 to 300,000 MKD (€17,000 - 51,000) and the weapon confiscated.

Exports and imports of SALW are regulated by three laws – the 2002 'Law on Foreign Trade',⁴⁷ the aforementioned 'Law on Production' and the 'Law on Arms'. Licenses are

⁴² Telephone interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM/UNDP, 06 May 2005.

⁴³ Pursuant to the Directive 91/477/EEC. This directive also classifies firearms in the following categories: short firearms; long firearms; automatic firearms; semi-automatic firearms; repeating firearms; and single-shot firearms.

⁴⁴ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2003.

⁴⁵ Official Gazette No.s 30/85, 6/89, 53/91 and 54/2002. 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.'

⁴⁶ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2003.

⁴⁷ 'Law on Foreign Trade', Official Gazette 45/02

granted by the MoD in the case of weapons for its own need and by the Mol if the firearms concerned are for commercial purposes.⁴⁸ The Law on Arms stipulates that 'a prototype of a new manufacture, or a new import, shall be inserted in the National Catalogue based on the technical documentation and the given characteristics in the producer's specification'.⁴⁹ The Mol is responsible for providing permits for transit of exports/imports over the state border, with advice from the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs as to the political expediency of the proposed import/export.⁵⁰ During 2004 the Ministry of Economy took the lead in preparing a 'Draft Law on Export Control of Dual-Use Goods and Technology'.⁵¹

According to the government's 2003 report on the implementation of the UN PoA, 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'.⁵² The importer or exporter has 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'.⁵³

Macedonia has appointed a National Focal Point for SALW as required by the UN PoA and the Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan. A National Co-ordinating Body was established to develop and oversee the 2003 weapons amnesty initiative but is no longer operational. At present there is no National Commission on small arms although a proposal regarding the establishment of a special body or committee for control of SALW has been placed within the Mol, which would cooperate with all other relevant ministries on this matter. According to the MFA, a National Strategy and Action Plan for Control of SALW is in 'ministerial procedures' and is expected at some point in 2005.⁵⁴ The National Strategy is intended to provide for the formation of a National SALW Commission.

Despite progress in developing a tighter regulatory framework for SALW control, significant problems remain with implementation and enforcement. As the 2004 National SALW Survey concludes, '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'.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 27, pg 32

⁴⁹ Article 6, 'Law on Arms', Official Gazette 07/05.

⁵⁰ *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2004

⁵¹ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 27.

⁵² *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2003.

⁵³ *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2003.

⁵⁴ Interview with Svetlana Geleva, MFA, Skopje, 04 February 2005.

⁵⁵ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Introduction.

Table 2: 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
LAWS & PROCEDURES ON PRODUCTION, EXPORT, IMPORT AND TRANSIT	
Legislation	Yes ⁵⁶
Production	Yes, although little detail available
Export	Yes
Import	Yes, see 'Export' above
Transit	Yes
NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EXPORT & IMPORT LICENSING OR AUTHORISATION	
Diversion risk	Yes. Through adoption of EU Code of Conduct
End User Certificate	Yes. Through adoption of EU Code of Conduct
Re-transfers	A company may freely import goods for the purpose of re-exporting them
Verification (pre/post)	No information available
Brokering Controls	Yes, though unclear to what extent ⁵⁷
DOMESTIC POSSESSION, STOCKPILING & TRADE	
Manufacture	Yes ⁵⁸
Marking and Tracing	Yes ⁵⁹
Possession	Yes ⁶⁰
Stockpiling	Yes ⁶¹
Trade	Yes ⁶²

⁵⁶ The 1985 'Law on Manufacture and Trade in Weapons and Military Equipment' (Official Gazette No.s 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 Mol. The 2005 'Law on Arms' (Official Gazette 07/05) also covers some aspects of production, export, import and transit.

⁵⁷ 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*.

⁵⁸ Section V of 'Law on Arms' – Manufacture and Repair of Weapons and Ammunition. The Mol is primarily responsible for authorisation of manufacturers, upon received advice of the MoD and previous authorisation from the Ministry of Economy.

⁵⁹ Section VI of 'Law on Arms' – Trade with Weapons, Ammunition and Parts of Weapons. Mol has primary responsibility.

⁶⁰ Section II of 'Law on Arms' – Acquisition and Ownership of Weapons and Ammunition. Also, Section III – Handling Weapons and Ammunition. Also, Section IV – Terminating and Deprivation of the Weapon Licence, Licence for possessing and licence for Carrying a Weapon.

⁶¹ Section III of 'Law on Arms' – Handling Weapons and Ammunition. Also Section VI, Article 54.

⁶² Section VI of 'Law on Arms' – Trade with Weapons, Ammunition and parts of Weapons.

3.2 SALW transfers

Minimal information is available on arms exports by Macedonian companies or state agencies, as no government report on imports or exports is published. While no information on exports or imports during 2004 is available on the NISAT database, during 2003 exports of sporting and hunting rifles to Austria and Lithuania were reported, and a shipment with a value of US\$ 480,102 was exported to the US consisting of military rifles and machine guns.⁶³ Also during 2003, US\$1,585,706 worth of military rifles, machine guns and other equipment was reported as being imported from Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, but primarily from the United States; sporting and hunting rifles were imported from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Russia, Turkey and the US and pistols and revolvers were imported from the Czech Republic and Germany.⁶⁴ In August 2004 an article from Makfax News Agency claimed that the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM) would procure rifles from the Serbian Zastava factory during 2004. The deal, reportedly worth €150,000, was for the sale of automatic M21 rifles with 5.56-calibre ammunition fully compatible with NATO standards.⁶⁵ Macedonian media has also reported on problems with one Macedonian firm, Mikrosam. The US government imposed sanctions on the firm and its chief executive in December 2003, for the sale of missile technology deemed illegal under the US Arms Export Control Act.⁶⁶

Incidents of seizures of SALW destined for Macedonia demonstrate that the illicit SALW trade is an ongoing problem,⁶⁷ although as other types of trafficking have become more profitable, the illegal arms trade appears to have declined.⁶⁸ This decline is evidenced in the number of registered offences for illicit arms trading, from 213 offences in 2003 to 151 in 2004.⁶⁹ The Macedonian Government primarily attributes the trafficking in arms to the 2001 crisis when large quantities of illegal weapons were accumulated in the country but also acknowledges that the current situation in the Balkans is a contributing factor.⁷⁰ In a report to the EC completed by the Macedonian Government in 2004, however, it was noted that international connections exist between criminal groups involved in the illegal weapons trade and that these operate using a well-developed channel organised by criminal structures from Macedonia, Albania and other Western Balkans countries.⁷¹ The

⁶³ In its answers to the 2004 EC Questionnaire the MoD acknowledged for the first time that they have been selling surplus rifles to the American civilian market for the past five years. *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 27.

⁶⁴ NISAT database. <www.nisat.org>, accessed 11 May 2005.

⁶⁵ 'Macedonian Army Buys Rifles from Serbia', *Makfax News Agency*, Skopje, 12 August 2004, <www.makfax.com.mk>, accessed 12 August 2004. This information is supported by the National SALW Survey of the Republic of Serbia, Living with the legacy – A SALW Survey of the Republic of Serbia, Saferworld, SEESAC, 2005.

⁶⁶ 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', *SEESAC Daily Media Review*, 25 December 2003, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 05 January 2004.

⁶⁷ During 2004, 1,134 weapons and 63,998 pieces of ammunition were confiscated. Macedonia UNPoA Report 2004. In one high profile incident, Macedonia was the reported destination for Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs) smuggled by a group arrested near Tirana, Albania. Barnett N, 'Missiles Seized in Albania', *IWPR Balkan Crisis Report No. 553*, 16 December 2004.

⁶⁸ Comments from General Zehedin Tushi, Deputy Chief of Staff, Macedonian Army. *Armed to the Teeth*, IWPR, 2003.

⁶⁹ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 24.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*.

⁷¹ *Ibid*

most common SALW found on the black market in Macedonia are said to be of Chinese and Bulgarian origin, as well as weapons produced in the 'Zastava' Factory in Serbia and Montenegro.⁷²

The routes along which SALW smuggling occurs have been a topic for discussion in the Macedonian media. One local newspaper, *Nova Makedonija*, published an article in June 2004 reporting a number of smuggling routes. The article claimed that the area north of Kumanovo along the Kosovo-Serbian border has been an area for the trafficking of arms, people, oil and cattle over the years.⁷³ Another report on trafficking routes appeared in a Belgrade daily. The article contained information on several organised crime 'clans' responsible for smuggling of contraband, either from or to Macedonia, through Kosovo. Other sources have noted that 'arms can easily flow over the borders between Kosovo, Macedonia and South Serbia,' the border with Albania 'remains de facto open' and that the Bulgarian border has seen 'an increase in trafficking in recent years.'⁷⁴ It has been noted that 'at the root of this problem is a disorganised system of border management'.⁷⁵ In the past co-ordination between the various forces responsible for internal border control - for example the Army, the Police and the Customs - was reportedly poor, thus assisting traffickers in smuggling goods undetected.⁷⁶ However, with the introduction of the Integrated Border Management System and the transfer of responsibility to the Border Police, it is hoped that this situation will improve.

3.3 SALW collection programmes and capacities

There have been two significant weapons collection initiatives in Macedonia. The first, 'Operation Essential Harvest', was undertaken by NATO's Task Force Harvest in 2001. The second and most recent collection programme was implemented by the Macedonian Government, with the support of the international community, in November and December 2003. There have been no voluntary weapons collection programmes in 2004.

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. A total of 3,875 weapons were collected by Essential Harvest, a higher total than the 3,000 agreed upon during negotiations.⁷⁷ The second SALW collection in Macedonia was implemented by the Government from 1 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

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ 'Macedonian Paper Lists Regional Routes for Weapons', *BBC Monitoring Service* (Originally published in *Nova Makedonija* Daily Newspaper, Skopje, 9 June 2004).

⁷⁴ *Macedonia*, Saferworld, 2003, p 8, 20 and 35.

⁷⁵ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, p 2.

⁷⁶ *Macedonia*, Saferworld 2003, p 9.

⁷⁷ 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 per cent of the weapons surrendered were serviceable'. *Global Disarmament, Demilitarization and Demobilization - BICC Conversion Survey 2002*, Bonn International Center for Conversion, 2002, p 138.

prior increase in violent incidents and inter-ethnic tension.⁷⁸ The UNDP in particular recommended the postponement of the amnesty period until Spring 2004 to provide more time for logistic preparations 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 1 November was confirmed. The now defunct National



UNDP Macedonia, 2003

Collected Weapons, Macedonia, 2003

Co-ordination Body was established to oversee the process which included 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.⁷⁹

Awareness-raising to support the amnesty began in early September, and a lottery incentive funded by UNDP also helped a great deal to attract public interest and support. Lottery tickets were handed out in return for weapons at 123 collection points established across the country and 35 prizes worth a total of US\$ 60,000 were each allocated to two draws. With guarantees of immunity from prosecution and the added incentive of lottery prizes, citizens surrendered weapons in a largely peaceful and calm manner, a major achievement given the tensions of the preceding months.⁸⁰ Voluntary surrender was also greatly assisted by local municipal weapons collection commissions established as part of this initiative (See *Civil Society Involvement in SALW Interventions* below).

In total, the November - December 2003 initiative collected 7,571 pieces of weaponry, 100,219 pieces of ammunition, 1,257 pieces of explosive devices, 165 kg of explosives and 1,001 pieces of additional weapons over the 45-day period⁸¹ and was praised by the international community for its efficiency and contribution to increased confidence between the ethnic communities in the country.⁸² Requests were made for the legalisation of 5,204 of the firearms collected. The MoI legalised circa 3,000 weapons, which were returned with licences to their owners. The remaining weapons were designated for destruction or were to be demilitarized for museum pieces.⁸³ Although many weapons surrendered were older, less sophisticated models, 'some 348 assault rifles, 55 rocket launchers and about 800

⁷⁸ 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.

⁷⁹ UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns Newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, www.seesac.org. Accessed 18 May 2005.

⁸⁰ Telephone Interview with Alain Lapon, UNDP SACIM project, 22 October 2003.

⁸¹ 'Arms, ammunition collected in 2003 action destroyed at Macedonian Plant', *MIA*, Skopje. 15 March 2004.

⁸² 'International Community Satisfied With Results of Macedonia's Weapons Collection Programme', *Daily Media Review*, 17 December 2003, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 17 December 2004.

⁸³ Interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM/UNDP, Skopje, 28 January 2005. Exact tally of VWCP results are available on the SACIM website, <<http://www.smallarms.org.mk/>>.

hand grenades were included in the collection statistics, suggesting that at least some contemporary military weapons were removed from society during the operation.⁸⁴

Since 2003 there have been no further amnesties, but collection continues through police seizures. Neither the MoI nor the MoD have provided information on the amount and type of SALW seized during 2004, but incidents of SALW seizures continue to be reported in the media. According to the *Vest Daily Newspaper*, the MoI seized a total of 1,314 weapons and 10,640 pieces of ammunition and reported 214 cases of possession of illegal weapons in 2004.⁸⁵ In January 2005, 16 weapons were reported to have been seized, while in February 2005, 37 weapons were seized (compared to 11 in February 2004).⁸⁶ Reported seizures range from those that are larger in scale, an example being the discovery in March 2004 of RPGs, 82mm mortars, anti-personnel landmines, grenades and miscellaneous weapons in an arms cache in Dolno Blace,⁸⁷ to seizures of single weapons from individuals.⁸⁸

3.4 SALW destruction programmes and capacities

The two main destruction projects in Macedonia 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 Krivolak site, where they were cut and the remnants sent to Greece for smelting.⁸⁹ Ammunition was destroyed at Krivolak and weapons or ammunition that were unsafe to move were destroyed in-situ.⁹⁰

According to the 2003 Law on Voluntary Surrender, which regulated the 2003 amnesty and collection, the MoI had the responsibility to safely stockpile all surrendered weapons, which were to be destroyed no longer than 90 days after the end of the amnesty.⁹¹ 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 were destroyed at the Krivolak military site, and most other weapons at the Maksteel steel mill.⁹²

Three large-scale weapon destruction programmes have taken place in Macedonia in 2004 and early 2005. 2,648 of the weapons seized during the 2003 amnesty were destroyed on 15 March 2004 in the Maksteel Company furnaces.⁹³ The destruction of about 400

⁸⁴ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

⁸⁵ 'Kalashnikov Democracy', *Vest Daily Newspaper* (translated by Skopje Diem media monitoring), Skopje, 29 January 2005.

⁸⁶ 'Number of Illegal Weapons Increased by Several Times', *Vecer Macedonia*, Skopje, 28 March 2005.

⁸⁷ 'Macedonian police discover weapons cache', *MIA*, Skopje, 12 March 2004.

⁸⁸ 'Citizen of Tetovo Arrested for Possession of a Gun without Licence', *Vreme*, Skopje, 22 April 2005.

⁸⁹ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

⁹⁰ *Summary of Regional SALW Projects - FYROM*, SEESAC Databases, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 19 February 2004.

⁹¹ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

⁹² 'Macedonia Begins Destroying Illegal Weapons', SEESAC Daily Media Review, 27 - 28 December 2003, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 05 January 2004.

⁹³ Interview with Alain Lapon, Project Manager, SACIM, UNDP, Skopje, 28 January 2005; 'Arms, ammunition collected in 2003 action destroyed at Macedonian Plant', *MIA*, Skopje, 15 March 2004.

firearms from the amnesty was conducted on 9 July 2004 at the Ilinden Military Barracks in Skopje. Further, 'several hundred explosive devices, collected by the MoI, were also destroyed at the Stenkovec Polygon'.⁹⁴ On 15 February 2005 the MoI, with the support of UNDP destroyed 2,262 confiscated firearms at the Maksteel Plant near Skopje.⁹⁵

Any future destruction of surplus military SALW stocks is still undecided. According to Macedonia's 2004 Report on the implementation of the UN PoA, the Army is still determining whether it has a weapons surplus based on the final form the army will take following defence reforms.⁹⁶ A November 2004 media report claimed that the MoD still needed to 'identify surplus weaponry by the end of 2004' and that the destruction of outdated army equipment was planned for 'mid 2005'.⁹⁷

3.5 SALW stockpile management programmes and capacities

Neither the MoI nor the MoD has provided information on the volume of ammunition and SALW currently stockpiled in Macedonia, the number of storage facilities in the country or who is responsible for guarding those facilities. Legislation regulating the stockpiling of armaments and ammunition include the 'Law for Production and Trade of Armaments and Military Equipment', the Army Rulebook and its regulations for storage and handling of ammunition and explosive devices, as well as the Guide for Protection Against Theft of Weapons and Ammunition.⁹⁸

The only source of reliable information available on stockpiles in Macedonia is the 2004 National SALW Survey.⁹⁹ Stockpiles are maintained by both the MoI and MoD, and while 'officials at the Ministry of Defence 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'. The 2004 National SALW Survey notes 'Insufficient security for these stockpiles leaves them vulnerable as a potential depot to be raided in any future flare-ups of hostilities'.¹⁰⁰

The report also estimates that the number of weapons in official stockpiles held by the MoI range from 23,000 to 36,000.¹⁰¹ Official statistics from mid-2003 on MoD stockpiles state they contain a total of 85,500 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.¹⁰² According to research, all weapons in the MoD stockpiles are held in accordance with 'strict stockpile management procedures

⁹⁴ 'About 400 light arms collected, destroyed in amnesty campaign', *MIA*, Skopje, 9 July 2004.

⁹⁵ 'Macedonian Interior Ministry destroys over 2,000 seized firearms', *Makfax News Agency*, Skopje, 16 February 2005.

⁹⁶ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2004.

⁹⁷ 'Macedonian Defence Sector Overstaffing, Surplus Arms to be addressed', *South East European Times*, <www.setimes.com>, accessed 30 November 2004.

⁹⁸ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 7.

¹⁰¹ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

while in storage or transport', with weapons stored in carefully selected sites at designated military bases. 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'.¹⁰³ Further, according to Macedonia's 2004 report on the implementation of the UN PoA, the MoI and the MoD check all their stock 'on a regular basis'.¹⁰⁴ Stockpiles have not, however, been independently verified so the accuracy of these reports cannot be confirmed.

Aside from official stockpiles, the 2004 National SALW Survey notes that it is likely that the NLA maintains stockpiles of arms gathered and used during the 2001 conflict. This is a sensitive issue, and there is little information available: Based on numbers of active members and the number of weapons surrendered in NATO's Operation Essential Harvest, the report estimates that remnants of the NLA may have retained a substantial SALW arsenal.¹⁰⁵

3.6 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-run weapons amnesty. Awareness-raising activities have also continued during the past year.

Awareness-raising in support of the 2003 Amnesty was undertaken by local civil society and the Government, with support from the UNDP Small Arms Control In Macedonia (SACIM) project. SACIM drafted a strategy for the campaign, which was approved by the amnesty's National Co-ordinating Body, and provided funds for its implementation. The official website for the amnesty states that the awareness-raising campaign implemented to support the national amnesty and legalisation initiative included five main components: a media campaign, activities with local communities, dialogue, education and dissemination of information on safety and security.¹⁰⁶ The SALW awareness programme was launched on 4 September 2003.¹⁰⁷

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 in supporting and promoting the programme. 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'.¹⁰⁸ A total of 10,000

¹⁰³ '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.' *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Macedonia UN PoA Report 2004*, Section 5A, question ii, p 16

¹⁰⁵ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Section 3

¹⁰⁶ Media Campaign page, National Programme – Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, <www.smallarms.org.mk>, accessed 12 February 2004.

¹⁰⁷ 04 September 2003, SEESAC *Weekly Media Review 01 - 08 September 2003*, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 11 September 2004.

¹⁰⁸ 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns Newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, <www.seesac.org>. Accessed 18 May 2005.

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.¹⁰⁹

One hundred and twenty-three local and regional commissions were also formed to promote the programme together with seven main NGOs who organised activities and discussion groups. The Macedonian Information Agency also worked on producing a 'No Casualties' handbook for these commissions,¹¹⁰ which also received



Ministry of Interior, Macedonia, 2003

SALW Awareness material. 2004

training on public awareness and the collection procedures.¹¹¹ An educational pamphlet for children was developed and distributed in primary and secondary schools, and a national drawing contest including exhibitions and media coverage was organised.¹¹² Basic risk education on safety and security was addressed through the dissemination of firearms safety cards containing instructions for the secure storage and handling of weapons.¹¹³ A UNDP-commissioned opinion poll found that 63 per cent of the population felt that the campaign 'changed public opinion in a positive sense.'¹¹⁴

The UNDP has been directly engaged in awareness-raising activities through the SACIM projects. The SACIM I Project officially began on the 19 May 2003 and ended on 31 March 2004. One of the goals of the project was to increase social awareness and public education of the risks of SALW proliferation, and the main activity regarding this goal was the awareness campaign conducted for the 2003 amnesty. A recent assessment by SEESAC suggests that this awareness campaign, conducted in cooperation 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 an effective media operations strategy, and the lessons learned from both have been incorporated into the SALW Awareness Support Pack (SASP 2003).¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ Products page, National Programme – Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, <www.smallarms.org.mk>, accessed 12 February 2004.

¹¹⁰ 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns Newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 18 May 2005; and correspondence with Alain Lapon, UNDP-SACIM Project Manager, 09 February 2003.

¹¹¹ Eight training events 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>, accessed 12 February 2005.

¹¹² 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, <www.seesac.org>. Accessed 18 May 2005.

¹¹³ Safety Guide page, National Programme – Weapons Amnesty and Legalization in Macedonia website, <www.smallarms.org.mk>, accessed 12 February 2004.

¹¹⁴ 'Weapons Amnesty and Legalisation Frequencies', BRIMA polling company report to UNDP, December 2003.

¹¹⁵ Correspondence with Adrian Wilkinson, SEESAC Team Leader, 16 February 2004.

SACIM II, the follow up to SACIM I, started in April 2004 and has focused primarily on Safer Community Development, but has also involved awareness activities. These have included the distribution of a newsletter circulated with newspapers (approximately 60,000 copies per month); a six-month media campaign on national and local TV and radio to increase the awareness of the risks of weapons proliferation and a newsletter distributed to encourage safer behaviour during the New Year's Eve celebrations.¹¹⁶

3.7 SALW survey activities

Two major research reports have been conducted on SALW in Macedonia. The first – 'Macedonia: Guns, Policing and Ethnic Division' – was jointly produced by Saferworld and the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) and published in 2003.¹¹⁷ The second report, a comprehensive national SALW Survey, entitled 'A Fragile Peace: Guns and Security in post-conflict Macedonia' conducted by the Small Arms Survey (SAS) and the Bonn International Conversion Centre (BICC) with the assistance of the Skopje-based Institute for Democracy, Solidarity and Civil Society (IDSCS), was published in January 2004.¹¹⁸

3.8 Civil Society involvement in SALW interventions

There are several positive examples of NGOs working on SALW and related issues in Macedonia. In 2003, a number of NGOs were working on SALW control, usually in the context of peace-building and educational projects.

Support from international NGOs and networks such as Pax Christi Netherlands, IANSA and Saferworld provided capacity-building and funding for awareness-raising and research projects. SALW and related work was undertaken by the following NGOs: Journalists for Children and Women Rights and Protection of the Environment (JCWE), which focussed 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 - that 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 event for Macedonian NGOs, 'Building Constituencies For SALW Work in Macedonia Capacity Building for NGOs' was conducted by UNDP Macedonia and Saferworld in Skopje from 23 - 25 June 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 Coordinating Body overseeing the government collection, allowing local NGOs to 'lobby' for more inclusive implementation to safeguard confidence building,¹¹⁹ and community collection teams were trained and active during the amnesty, encouraging local citizens to surrender weapons. Many NGOs¹²⁰ supported the campaign

¹¹⁷ Available from <<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/publications/MacedoniaReport.pdf>>.

¹¹⁸ Available from <<http://www.seesac.org/reports/surveys.htm>>.

¹¹⁹ 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.

¹²⁰ 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.

in various ways, including training of local community teams and organisation of dialogue fora;¹²¹ organising roundtables and discussion groups;¹²² designing and distributing flyers, badges and posters to promote the collection in public places, including at retail outlets. 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 and community groups clearly contributed to the broad public support for the collection and the success of the initiative.¹²³

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.¹²⁴ The capacity of the media in Macedonia, however, remains limited: media outlets are often 'deeply politicised', and coverage of SALW tends to be 'biased and inflammatory'.¹²⁵ Activities to improve media reporting of SALW in Macedonia have been undertaken by the Institute of War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) and Saferworld, who have conducted training events and funded investigative reports on SALW.¹²⁶

3.9 Cross-border SALW control initiatives

Macedonia's border management system is currently undergoing reform with the assistance of international organisations such as the EAR and the OSCE.¹²⁷ A National Strategy on Integrated Border Management (IBM) was adopted in December 2003, and during 2004 a draft Action Plan was developed. A key element of the new IBM strategy is the establishment of a dedicated Border Police Service that is taking over responsibility for border control from the Army. The deployment of the Border Police Service started in May 2004 and thus far control for the state borders with Republic of Greece, Republic of Bulgaria and a part of the border with the Republic of Serbia have been transferred to the Mol.¹²⁸ The transfer of control of the remaining borders is due to be completed by November 2005.¹²⁹

¹²¹ 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, <www.seesac.org>.

¹²² 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>.

¹²³ 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*, Transitions Online 2003.

¹²⁴ 'UNDP Macedonia SACIM Project Changes Gear', *Clearing Guns Newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, October 2003, <www.seesac.org>.

¹²⁵ *Macedonia*, Saferworld 2003, p 10.

¹²⁶ 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 the Institute for War & Peace Reporting (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.

¹²⁷ *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, p 2

¹²⁸ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 24.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

Macedonia is also increasingly cooperating with neighbouring states on border control issues. Cross border cooperation has been significantly strengthened by the Ohrid Border Process, initiated in 2003 by the EU, NATO, OSCE and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.¹³⁰ Macedonia 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 cooperation agreements 'in the sphere of internal affairs' have been signed with all neighbouring countries.¹³¹ Macedonia is also active in the Regional Migration, Asylum and Refugee Return Initiative (MARRI), established in 2003 to develop closer cooperation, particularly in regard to border crossing. In November 2004 the MARRI Regional Centre was set up in Skopje.¹³²

The Government has concluded a number of cross-border agreements and nominated liaison officers to improve operational linkages. In November 2002 the Interim Protocol on Police Cooperation was signed with UNMIK;¹³³ an agreement on combating organised crime was signed with Serbia and Montenegro in January 2003 and an agreement on cooperation on crime prevention was signed with Albania in June 2004.¹³⁴ Joint patrols between the Macedonian and Albanian Police are also a sign of increased cooperation between these two countries.¹³⁵ During the March 2004 violence in Kosovo, the Defence Minister announced that the Macedonian authorities were cooperating with KFOR to prevent armed groups from Macedonia from crossing into Kosovo.¹³⁶

Various workshops, seminars and meetings have also been held with the aim of improving cross-border cooperation and control, including regional actors such as NATO/EAPC, the Stability Pact, OSCE and SECI Regional Centre. In March 2003 the Macedonian MFA, Albania and Croatia agreed to 'intensify regional cooperation.'¹³⁷ In November 2003, the Defence Ministers of Macedonia, Greece and Albania pledged to 'step up military cooperation to address common threats more efficiently, including those posed by illegal immigration and cross-border organised crime,'¹³⁸ and dialogue on deepening cooperation with UNMIK on combating organised crime was held.¹³⁹ Ways to improve regional cooperation to fight

¹³⁰ Correspondence with Mr Blagoja Simonoski, Head of Department for Policy, Planning and International Cooperation, MOD, Skopje, 20 April 2004.

¹³¹ 'Way Forward Document', Ohrid Regional Conference on Border Security and Management, 22 - 23 May 2003. < <http://www.stabilitypact.org/specials/030522-ohrid/wayforwarddocfinal.doc>>, accessed 18 May 2005.

¹³² Stability Pact website, <<http://www.stabilitypact.org/marri/default.asp>>, accessed 13 May 2005.

¹³³ Available on: <http://www.unmikonline.org/justice/documents/PolCoopFYROM_Eng.pdf>, accessed 17 May 2005.

¹³⁴ 'Macedonia, Albania sign crime prevention agreement', *BBC Monitoring Service*, 18 June 2004.

¹³⁵ 'Joint Macedonian-Albanian Police to Patrol Border', *Utrinski Vesnik, Fakti and Macedonian Information Agency (MIA)*, Skopje, 28-29 January 2005.

¹³⁶ 'Macedonia, KFOR Work to Keep Armed Groups from Crossing Kosovo Border,' *Sitel TV*, as reported in *South East European Times*, 21 March 2004, <www.setimes.com> According to the recent response of the Macedonian Government to the EU Accession Questionnaire, the cooperation between Macedonia and Albania is based on '7 signed agreements regulating the maintenance and demarcation of the border line, measures for prevention and resolution of border incidents, the visa regime and the transport of civilians in the border zone, legal assistance in civil and criminal law matters, mutual execution of court decisions and extradition. The Agreement for Regulation of Borderline Communication and Transport of Civilians in the Border Zone is officially applied as of 15.06.2000. This Agreement has alleviated the problems of illegal border crossings, thefts and similar.

¹³⁷ '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>, accessed 19 February 2004.

¹³⁸ 11 November, *SEESAC Weekly Media Review 10 - 16 November 2003*, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 20 November 2003.

¹³⁹ 'Boost of Cooperation between Macedonia and Kosovo', *Daily Media Review 28 November 2003*, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 28 November 2003.

organised crime was also a main topic for discussion at a conference for SEE police chiefs in December 2003.¹⁴⁰

Further seminars have been held since 2003. In April 2004 the Macedonian and Turkish armies participated in a four-day seminar on Border Security which included new measures to fight drug and weapons trafficking;¹⁴¹ in June 2004 representatives from a number of South Eastern European countries, as well as experts from the EU and NATO, participated in a two-day seminar in Skopje on border management cooperation;¹⁴² on 25 February 2005, the Interior Ministers of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia-Montenegro and Croatia signed a declaration on border cooperation at a seminar entitled, 'Border Security Systems' held in Skopje.¹⁴³ The border units of Albania and Macedonia have also received joint training under a project sponsored by the Danish Government.¹⁴⁴

3.10 SALW management information and exchange systems and protocols

Previous research found that 'inter-agency communication on arms transactions in Macedonia is minimal, and domestic information sharing practices of the Macedonian government about SALW practices have been consistently inadequate.'¹⁴⁵ Information exchange and transparency is, however, improving in Macedonia with more organised processes regulating the sharing and public dissemination of information at both the national and international level. Government programmes and policy on SALW collection were published following the 2003 amnesty¹⁴⁶ and substantial public debate on the collection and its achievements, including those between government officials and parliamentarians, was held before, during and after the initiative. All relevant laws on arms are published in the Official Gazette and are available to the public.

Externally, Macedonia submitted a report in both 2003 and 2004 to the UNDDA on the implementation of the UN PoA,¹⁴⁷ and submits an annual report to the OSCE as part of the information-exchange mechanism established by the OSCE Document on Small Arms. Although the Macedonian Government has not produced a public report specifically on arms exports and imports, it provided some information on arms control and trade in the 'Common Foreign and Security Policy' Section of its response to the EU Accession Questionnaire.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ The heads of police from seven Southeastern 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 Cooperation in Interior, Judicial Sectors Held', Daily Media Review 10 December 2003, <www.seesac.org>, accessed 10 December 2003.

¹⁴¹ 'Seminar on Border Security,' *Makfax News Agency*, Skopje, 28 April 2004.

¹⁴² 'Skopje seminar on regional border management cooperation closes', *Makfax News Agency*, Skopje, 15 June 2004.

¹⁴³ 'Regional interior ministers sign border cooperation declaration in Macedonia,' *MIA*, Skopje, 25 Feb 2005.

¹⁴⁴ *EC Questionnaire*, 2004, Chapter 27.

¹⁴⁵ Small Arms Survey 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.' *A Fragile Peace*, SEESAC, 2004, Introduction and Section 7.

¹⁴⁶ <www.smallarms.org.mk>

¹⁴⁷ Macedonia UN PoA Report, 2003.

¹⁴⁸ <www.sei.gov.mk/prasalnik/>

In terms of information exchange, Macedonia is a member of INTERPOL and negotiations on a cooperation agreement with EUROPOL have been initiated.¹⁴⁹ Macedonia is also an active participant in the SECI Regional Centre for Combating Transborder Crime. Macedonia has made progress in terms of information exchange cooperation through bi-lateral agreements with its neighbours. The November 2002 memorandum signed with UNMIK contained provisions on 'information-sharing on SALW related issues, in particular on illegal trafficking',¹⁵⁰ and the Government and KFOR have gone on to agree the establishment of a hotline in order to exchange information on incidents.¹⁵¹ In addition, work is continuing to strengthen the professional standards of police with regard to information and intelligence processing with the assistance of the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) and the OSCE as part of broader police reform processes.¹⁵²

Table 3: Information and exchange progress

INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE SYSTEMS AND PROTOCOLS	MACEDONIA
INTERNATIONAL	
Reporting to the UN DDA on the Programme of Action (PoA)	Yes ¹⁵³
Reporting to the UN Register of Conventional Arms	Yes
Reporting to other international regimes, if appropriate (e.g. Wassenaar)	-
INTERPOL/ EUROPOL	Yes
REGIONAL	
Information exchange with OSCE	Yes
Annual reporting to EU (if relevant)	-
SECI Regional Centre 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 ¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ 'Europol annual report and work programme for 2004', news article May 2003, <www.statewatch.org>, accessed 22 January 2004.

¹⁵⁰ *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2003.

¹⁵¹ *Macedonia*, Saferworld 2003, p 50.

¹⁵² 'Macedonia' page, <www.usdoj.gov/criminal/icitap>, Accessed April 2005.

¹⁵³ *Macedonia UN PoA Report*, 2003.

¹⁵⁴ See official website, <www.smallarms.org.mk>