

## THE SECOND FORMAL REGIONAL MEETING OF SALW COMMISSIONS

Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
24 – 25 June 2014

**Day 1,  
Tuesday, 24 June 2014**

### OPENING REMARKS

The Second Formal Regional Meeting of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Commissions took place on 24 – 25 June 2014 in Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina. This initiative is implemented under the **EU Support of SEESAC Disarmament and Arms Control Activities in South East Europe (EUSAC)** project's component dedicated to Improved Regional Cooperation on Awareness-Raising, Information Sharing, and Knowledge Transfer.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the SALW Commissions or the relevant responsible bodies for SALW from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo\*, Moldova, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (See ANNEX – List of Participants).

The purpose of the meeting was for participants to present the achievements that the Commissions and institutions they represent have made, share the difficulties they are facing, and learn from each other's experiences. Six meetings are planned to be held over the three-year period covered by the EUSAC project.

**Dr. Zveržhanovski**, UNDP/SEESAC Coordinator, opened the meeting by welcoming participants and explaining the purpose of the initiative, which is to foster regional cooperation, knowledge transfer, and exchange of good practices across South Eastern Europe (SEE) in the area of SALW Control.

### SESSION I: UPDATES FROM SALW COMMISSIONS

Following his introductory remarks, Dr. Zveržhanovski opened the floor for the Commissions' representatives to present their respective developments and achievements in the area of SALW Control, as well as to identify their points of interest or problematic areas which should be further discussed at future meetings.

**Ms. Gentiana Milkani**, from the Albanian State Export Control Authority, congratulated this important initiative on behalf of the Ministry of Defence of Albania and informed that the MoD is currently working with the juridical departments of the main ministries in the country advocating for establishing a SALW Commission in Albania and discussing its level of representation. In addition, she informed that the Government of Albania has recently revised its Arms Law which is soon to be approved by the Council of Ministers. The revisions made are in compliance with the amended Directive 91/477/EEC, and also aim to

---

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

regulate the possession of arms by private companies. Another important issue that Ms. Milkani stressed upon is the control of unregistered arms that exists among the population.

Ms. Milkani informed those present that, the Albanian State Police has initiated since 2012 the establishment of an electronic registry for weapons management at national level, and in this regard thanked SEESAC and the EU for their financial support in providing the required hardware. Lastly, Ms. Milkani emphasized that the Government of Albania is strongly committed to the regional initiatives – the goal of which is the exchange of information, knowledge, and expertise in this area – and welcomed cooperation with other colleagues in the region.

**Capt. Veton Elshani**, Director of the Directorate for International Cooperation (ILECU) at the **Kosovo\*** Police, provided an overview of the functional areas of the Police in regards to SALW control, including an overview of the relevant legislation, SALW awareness-raising mechanisms, and SALW collection activities. Capt. Elshani also presented the activities of the Steering Committee and the Parliamentary Committee – bodies specifically formed to work on the issues of SALW Control.

A new electronic Tracing Database has been established based on Croatia's system – the so-called BERT Database – and it has proved to be highly efficient despite few technical issues such as:

1. It is not clear yet how the Database will be tracking ammunition;
2. Two CartWinPro licenses per region have arrived and now need to be installed;
3. Kosovo\* is seeking opportunities to implement an ammunition study in the Pristina region.

Lastly, Mr. Elshani informed that Kosovo\* is planning several capacity-building trainings on: diminishing the illegal trade of SALW, on tracing, and on investigative techniques. Furthermore, as part of the awareness-raising activities, Kosovo\* will take part in the planned simultaneous regional event marking **International Gun Destruction Day** on **9 July**. As of the meeting date, 522 weapons had been collected, and a list of 1,301 weapons to be destroyed had been compiled.

**Mr. Sergiu Luca**, First Secretary of the International Security Division, at the General Directorate for Multilateral Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the **Republic of Moldova**, presented recent developments in Moldova and reiterated the fact that Moldova is fully committed to, and engaged in, the regional and international efforts related to SALW control. Mr. Luca outlined the following as the main related issues that Moldova is focusing on at the moment:

1. A regulatory framework has been designed; however, responsibilities among bodies and agencies remain to be clearly defined;
2. There is a need for strategic expertise within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
3. There is a need to secure funding for capacity-building trainings on stockpile management;
4. Currently there is no data on SALW ownership or the number of illicit weapons among the population;
5. The capacities for building storages in Chişinău are limited.

**Mr. Alexei Belous**, Main Inspector for the Weapon Movement Surveillance Unit, Public Security Department of the General Police Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, continued Moldova's presentation by providing information on the latest adopted legislation: Law 130 on Weapons (2013), which is in line with the European Union (EU) standards and in compliance with Moldova's international commitments. Moldova is also using a centralized database for keeping record of all operations relating to SALW and ammunition, including a lost and found section. What is more, weapons are regularly destroyed every two years and this effort will continue in the future.

Following, **Mr. Mladen Marković**, President of the National SALW Commission from the Ministry of Interior of **Montenegro**, presented Montenegro's efforts and achievements on SALW control, starting with

Montenegro's plan to organize the symbolic destruction of more than 1,000 guns and 400-500 rifles on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July.

Another commission has been established and tasked to list all surplus weapons owned by the police. The aim is to sell the old weapons, and use the revenue to purchase new ones, by decreasing as well the amount of weapons altogether. Three warehouses have been in the process of reconstruction, with Taraš being completed. However, the level of security at other locations is sub-par, so further efforts to improve it are needed. Mr. Marković also mentioned that Montenegro has yet to destroy several tonnes of UXOs (unexploded ordnances) and remnants of war, but the facilities in Montenegro are not fit to perform the destruction.

**Mr. Miljko Simović**, President of the SALW National Commission and Assistant Head of Department for Administration at the Ministry of Interior of **the Republic of Serbia**, started his presentation with an overview of Serbia's National Strategy and Action Plan which encompasses the appointment of members of the Council and the engagement of ten ministries. In 2013, Serbia adopted new laws and by-laws – on dual-use goods, on private security, and on marking and tracing, and drafted the Law on Import/Export of SALW and military equipment, which is up for adoption by the Parliament. These laws are all aligned with EU standards. It is also expected that the Arms Trade Treaty will be ratified soon.

Serbia has developed a uniform database for keeping track of over a million legally owned weapons that has proved to be extremely useful. Furthermore, Serbia has collected more than 100, 000 units of SALW which have been destroyed in the past 10 years with the support of UNDP/SEESAC.

Regarding the participation in the 9 July destruction activities, Mr. Simović regretted to inform that the Republic of Serbia is not prepared for this activity at this time, however it does have some confiscated weapons that could be destroyed at a later date.

Mr. Simović then defined the main aims and priorities for the Serbian SALW Commission:

1. Harmonization of domestic law with EU legislation, including the by-laws;
2. Preparing of a questionnaire for a survey on the ownership of firearms;
3. Capacity building and training of personnel working on arms control;
4. Improving infrastructure;
5. Securing funding for the collection and stockpiling of SALW and ammunition, for which Serbia would be requesting support from UNDP/SEESAC;
6. Awareness-raising by informing the general public and media on the danger posed by SALW and ammunition .

**Dr. Duško Ivanov**, State Counsellor for Legal Affairs and National Focal Point for SALW from the Ministry of Interior of **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, reconfirmed the willingness of the SALW Commission to be involved in the process and share information with the rest of the participants. In addition, Dr. Ivanov presented the strategy, the composition, the objectives, and the action plan of the Commission.

Among the priorities of the SALW Commission mentioned are:

1. Initiating the signing of the United Nations Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol);
2. Practical implementation of the ratified Arms Trade Treaty;
3. Preparing for membership to the Wassenaar Arrangement;
4. Practical implementation of the new Amendments to the Law on Weapons and the Law on Production and Trade of Arms and Military Equipment.

Other tasks of the Commission include:

1. Developing a plan to control the illicit spread of SALW across borders, and improve coordination and cooperation between border police and customs in the region;
2. Developing and implementing a SALW-awareness campaign and media activities to tackle the so-called "gun culture";
3. Developing and implementing a weapons collection plan, which includes developing a policy on found and confiscated weapons;
4. Improving stockpile management capacities;
5. Designing and performing a new SALW survey.

Finally, Mr. Ivanov noted that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will be participating in the 9 July destruction activities. This year, as was the case in previous years, destructions are planned to take place in Tetovo.

Dr. Zveržhanovski stressed the need to use the 9 July destructions as an opportunity to present to the wider community and to the EU, the good work done by the region on stifling SALW proliferation.

Finally, **Ms. Danijela ŽunecBrandt**, National Focal Point for SALW and representative of the Directorate for International Security at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of **the Republic of Croatia**, presented the activities of the Croatian SALW Commission and particularly stressed the need to update the Commission's Strategy and Action Plan so that it reflects Croatia's EU membership. This update is expected to be completed by end of this year.

Ms. Žunec-Brandt turned to UNDP/SEESAC and to the rest of the participants for sharing best practices in developing the most efficient Rules of Procedure for the SALW Commission, to be established parallel with the Strategy and Action Plan update. In addition, Ms Žunec Brandt informed about the latest survey on the illegal possession of SALW developed in Croatia by two independent researchers and funded by the UNDP, presented to the Commission in February 2014. Even though it was decided not to conduct the survey in Croatia this year, it is available and ready to be used by any other state.

Last but not least, Ms. Žunec-Brandt informed the participants about the established EU pool of experts on the ATT, to which Croatia has contributed with three members of the Commission.

**NEXT STEPS: As a response to the interests expressed during the presentations, the following activities will be considered:**

- Continue the discussion on countering the illicit flows of firearms, and the identification of new trends and tendencies in the smuggling of firearms and ammunition in the region;
- Together with those participants who are willing to share their experience, assist Croatia's SALW Commission in developing Rules of Procedure through facilitating discussions and extracting best practices from the region. Examples of the Rules of Procedure will be shared by participants on the SALW Commission Secure Area on the SEESAC website;
- Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will take part in International Gun Destruction Day activities. SEESAC will coordinate with them regarding logistics, and will work to ensure proper visibility;
- As a part of the process of increasing regional cooperation among SALW Commissions and other related bodies, UNDP/SEESAC will secure one exchange visit of their choice per Commission in order to share knowledge and experience.

## **SESSION II: IMPROVING REGIONAL COOPERATION, AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

**Ms. Žunec-Brandt** chaired the second session during which **Mr. Alain Lapon** presented the emerging **International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)** as an important international tool that would be useful to the relevant bodies in the region in their everyday work. Mr. Lapon gave an overview of the process of the development of the ISACS as well as of their framework and purpose. The ISACS are based on a range of key international documents, such as the United Nations Firearms Protocol, the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Programme of Action, and the International Tracing Instrument. At the same time, the ISACS-Assessment Tool is very useful in supporting governments in their work regarding international transfers of SALW – an issue of particular concern to the EU.

Dr. Zveržhanovski announced the intention of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to launch a Train-the-Trainers course. The first session of this course will take place in Belgrade at the end of July. During the session UNDP/SEESAC staff will be trained on the use of the ISACS-Assessment Tool and will afterwards be able to transfer the knowledge to other specialists in the region.

Mr. Ivanov suggested translating the ISACS into local languages in order to facilitate its user experience. The Moldovan delegation seconded this request and requested that the ISACS be translated into Romanian as well. Mr. Zveržhanovski explained that SEESAC is already translating the Standards into BCMS and will look into expanding the list of languages.

A concern was expressed by the representatives of Kosovo\* related to parallel processes organized by different international bodies that tackle the same issues. In response, Dr. Zveržhanovski informed the participants that based on agreement with the EU Commission, there will be only one process in support of the Firearms Experts Network funded by the EU and SEESAC will serve as the Secretariat.

**Mr. Jasmin Porobić**, Project Manager at the Armed Violence Prevention Programme of **UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina**, provided positive examples from Bosnia and Herzegovina where the ISACS Assessment tool was used for two separate activities: one for a SALW collection campaign, and one for designing the National Action Plan.

**Ms. Žunec-Brandt** and **Ms. Jasmina Roskić**, Head of Division of Bilateral Investment Treaties, Concessions and Foreign Trade and Controlled Goods, at the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of **the Republic of Serbia**, both informed the participants of the operating centres of excellence in their respective countries that have wide expertise on the issues discussed, and could provide trainings and share knowledge with the interested parties.

The Serbian delegation requested assistance in harmonizing its domestic legislation with the EU acquis. Furthermore, the two non-unified laws on marking of weapons cause discrepancies and this issue needs to be addressed. Most of the participants agreed that future SALW Commissions meetings should concentrate on the topic of drafting new legislation, especially on marking and tracing, as well as on categorization and definitions.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Consider including a wider discussion on drafting and adopting domestic legislation related to marking and tracing at the next meetings;
- SEESAC will transfer the knowledge received from the Train-the-Trainer course on the ISACS, once it is delivered to SEESAC by UNIDIR;
- SEESAC will look into translating the ISACS Assessment Tool into regional languages, including Romanian and will inform participants of the outcome by the end of the year.

### **SESSION III: IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS - WAY FORWARD**

Session III focused on improving the legislative and institutional framework in the region. **Mr. Lapon** opened

this session, after which **Mr. Nils Duquet**, Researcher at **the Flemish Peace Institute**, provided a comprehensive presentation with a focus on SALW control regimes in the EU. Mr. Duquet explained key definitions used by the EU in this area, as well as the difference between EU Directives and legislation relating to transfers of weapons within and outside of the EU. Of particular interest to the participants was the so-called 'confident denial' among EU member states, where information for denied licenses by one country is shared with the rest.<sup>†</sup>

Mr. Duquet also pointed out that the EU's attention is now shifting from that on threats from illegal transfers outside of the EU, to the threat of illegal arms within the EU. The regional bodies provide important data to the EU on the developments in the region which could be used not only for reporting purposes but also for policy making.

A second presentation was delivered by **Ms. Verica Trbić**, Expert Advisor at the Ministry of Security of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and member of the SALW Commission, and **Mr. Mladen Marković**, President of the SALW Commission of **Montenegro**.

Ms. Trbić explained that currently in Bosnia and Herzegovina, each canton has their own law on SALW and their own system of categorization. She further presented the developments in legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and outlined specific recommendations for the future:

1. There is a need to harmonize all legislation and classification of weapons;
2. There is a need to improve cooperation on tracing on both international and regional levels;
3. There is a need to improve internal tracing cooperation between different bodies and ministries.

Mr. Marković expressed similar concerns, proposing that participants consider adopting common SALW definitions within the region so that there are no discrepancies in the categorizations of SALW. These should be compared with the definitions of the EU and the Wassenaar Arrangement, even though Mr. Duquet explained there is no unification of procedures among member states of the EU and each country is reporting according to national legislation and procedures. In Montenegro, the discrepancies in categorization are present even among the various ministries.

## **Day 2** **Wednesday, 25 June 2014**

### **SESSION IV: DISCUSSING GOOD PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS, WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON SALW COLLECTION CAMPAIGNS AND DISCUSSION ON THE METHODOLOGY FOR THE NEW REGIONAL SALW SURVEY**

The second day of the meeting of SALW Commissions started with a presentation by **Mr. Jasmin Porobić** who outlined a number of practical guidelines for conducting a collection campaign, such as choosing the right timing for its implementation,, coordination with all relevant ministries, as well as consideration of domestic legislation.

Mr. Porobić provided a list of discussion points to be taken into consideration by the representatives:

1. How to incorporate and use the ISACS into the collection campaigns;
2. Define target groups;

---

<sup>†</sup> However, in practice, this process only works on a voluntary basis within the EU. Furthermore, there are currently no sanctions in place within the EU if a country was to break embargoes or refuse to exchange information with other EU members.

3. Compare SALW surveys results with campaign results;
4. Understand the difference between disarmament, collection campaign, and surrender of weapons as three separate processes;
5. Define a public relations approach (sequencing);
6. Prepare for monitoring and evaluation.

During the Q&A part of the session, the possibility and benefits of organizing a regional SALW survey and a regional campaign, as opposed to individual campaigns at different times, was raised. Mr. Porobić noted that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the fact that the campaign was organized throughout the country strengthened its impact. It is possible that a regional collection campaign would also result in a higher level of trust and sense of security.

**Ms. Žunec-Brandt** proceeded with a presentation on the SALW survey developed in Croatia, which was however not endorsed by the National Commission, mainly due to financial constraints. Nonetheless, the methodology of the survey could be used by other interested states of the region or may prove to be helpful in designing their own surveys. It is based on the ISACS and contains questions covering an array of relevant topics with multiple-choice answers so as to better grasp the complex realities on the ground. Gender is taken into account in the survey, as well as groups, which are often excluded from such assessments. As for awareness-raising and collection campaigns, Ms. Žunec-Brandt informed the participants that Croatia intends to focus on educating children on the threats posed by SALW during the coming year based on the development of the successful campaign “Less Arms Less Tragedies”, developed and conducted jointly by the MoI and UNDP since 2008.

The session ended with the presentation of **Capt. Elshani** on the planned campaign in Kosovo\*, set to start in 2015. In Kosovo\*’s case, a previously conducted collection campaign resulted in only 177 pieces of SALW removed from the civilian population, while the legalization campaign had a much better effect with over 26,000 pieces legalized and recorded. The aim of these activities in Kosovo\* is to bring all possible illegal weapons to the surface, and the strategy is to issue immediate licenses and thus build trust among the population.

**NEXT STEPS:** SEESAC will upload the SALW survey methodology designed by Croatia onto its database, so that all participants have access to the document.

## **SESSION V: DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

At the end of the event, **Mr. Krunoslav Katić, UNDP/SEESAC; Ms. Iva Savić**, Communications and Programme Officer at **UNDP/SEESAC**, and **Ms. Juliana Buzi**, Liaison Officer for Albania from **UNDP/SEESAC**, updated the participants on SEESAC’s initiatives and planned activities.

**Mr. Katić** gave a comprehensive presentation on lessons learnt from previous SALW collection and awareness-raising campaigns. Mr. Katić suggested stronger use of social marketing techniques in SALW campaigns. He identified as specific issues to focus on when planning a campaign the following:

1. Focus on the numbers of legal and illegal weapons in household possession;
2. Amnesties do not necessarily have to be established by law, they could also be sanctioned by a decree, depending on context;
3. There is a need of a more “human approach” according to the ISACS;
4. There is a need to identify the short-term and the long-term results;
5. All relevant groups of society should be targeted and every step of the campaign should be made public;
6. Social media should be used as much as possible.



Following, **Ms. Buzi** presented one of SEESAC's initiatives– the update of the South Eastern Europe Regional Arms Law Compendium. Ms. Buzi explained the importance of such a document as a reference guide for SALW legislation in the region, which will be accessible to all participants. Given that the quality of the Compendium depends on the parties' contributions, Ms. Buzi kindly requested the cooperation of the participants in sending all relevant laws and bylaws to SEESAC by **30 September 2014** and commended Montenegro for sending a full update of their legislation.

Ms. Buzi's presentation was followed by the presentation of **Ms. Savić** who showed the latest developments on the SEESAC Database – designed to facilitate better and easier communication between the participants regionally or bilaterally, as well as for sharing useful information and documents. The newly developed [Knowledge Exchange Database](#) is a secure area, password protected, and accessible only to the registered and approved participants of SEESAC's initiatives. Each of the SALW Commission participants can access the Knowledge Exchange Database by registering on the SEESAC website (instructions attached to these Minutes) after which they will receive a unique password. The Database will be regularly updated and it will contain all documents from meetings, as well as other relevant and useful information. Ms. Savić also offered that the Database be further developed to include a closed group forum through which participants could directly exchange questions or documents amongst each other. It was concluded that such a platform would be useful, and SEESAC committed to developing such a feature on the Knowledge Exchange Database.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Participants are asked to send the latest legislation on SALW to SEESAC **by 30 September 2014**, in English or local languages, after which SEESAC will compile those into one document and upload onto the Database accessible to everyone;
- Participants are encouraged to register to and begin using the [Knowledge Exchange Database](#). Should participants encounter any problems with the registration or the use of the Database, they should inform Ms. Savić;
- Participants are encouraged to look at the content of the Database, and provide comments and suggestions so that SEESAC can design it in a way which is most useful to the parties.
- SEESAC will develop a closed group forum for the exchange of questions/comments and documents about the Knowledge Exchange Database.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The Second Regional Meeting of SALW Commissions was officially closed by Dr. Zveržhanovski who thanked the participants for their attendance and contributions. In addition, Dr. Zveržhanovski proposed the following:

- Participants are encouraged to send proposals to SEESAC for topics of interest for the next meeting;
- Participants are encouraged to send proposals for the date and place of the next meeting so that it fits their schedules and does not coincide with other commitments, while keeping in mind that the meetings should be organized on a rotational basis.