

5th Regional Roadmap Coordination Meeting

Online meeting, 6-7 July 2021

Meeting notes

BACKGROUND

The 5th Regional Roadmap Coordination Meeting was held in a Hybrid Setup on 6-7 July 2021. The meeting was organized as part of implementation of the [European Union Council Decision 2018/1788/CFSP in support of the implementation of the Regional Roadmap on Combating Illicit Arms Trafficking in the Western Balkans in close cooperation with the EU, Germany, France.](#)

The 5th Regional Roadmap Coordination meeting gathered representatives of the SALW Commissions in the Western Balkans, which are beneficiaries of the Roadmap, representatives of international and regional organizations engaged in arms control in the region, as well as the key donors in the area. (List of Participants attached).

This meeting provided the opportunity to inform on and coordinate activities under implementation as per the specific goals of the Roadmap, present the data as collected by the authorities, on the Roadmap Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), discuss contributions from the international and regional organizations engaged in arms control in the region and donor support in countering the proliferation and illicit trafficking of firearms.

TUESDAY, 6 JULY 2021

Opening Session

Chaired by Ms. Bojana Balon, Head of SEESAC

H.E. Marjolijn van Deelen, EU Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, European External Action Service, commended the Western Balkans' SALW Commissions for their continuous contributions to the implementation of the Roadmap. She noted that important progress in non-proliferation and arms control was achieved despite the challenges and limitations brought by both COVID-19 pandemic and the post-elections uncertainties in several jurisdictions in the region. She stressed the importance of the security of the Western Balkans for the security and stability of whole of Europe and reiterated EU's readiness to continue its comprehensive support to SALW control in the Western Balkans. She underscored that the EU Council Decisions adopted at the end of 2018 and 2019, have provided accumulative financial assistance of approximately 16 million EUR to the region, putting the Western Balkans on the top of the list of recipients of EU's financial assistance in this area. Ambassador van Deelen

concluded that the efforts of the EU potential candidates and candidate countries to fight the organized crime and trafficking of illicit weapons including building a robust track record of investigations, prosecutions and convictions in this field are being carefully assessed in the enlargement package that will be published this autumn.

H.E. Jean-Claude Brunet, Ambassador-at-large on transitional criminal threats and the fight against the illicit trafficking of SALW, France, expressed gratitude for the dedication and involvement of Western Balkans' jurisdictions to the implementation of the Roadmap and noted that six jurisdictions have made great progress during the reporting period. Ambassador Brunet added that France will continue to promote innovations and achievements by the Western Balkans partners in this area, in particular, at the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms (BMS7). He also noted that the Roadmap process and its achievements inspire the work within the EU, which is reflected in the EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking 2020-2025. Mr. Brunet reiterated France's commitment to the Roadmap implementation and announced its further financial support through MPTF with additional 1 Million EUR in 2021 and 300,000 EUR to the OSCE.

Mr. Albrecht von Wittke, Director of Division, Conventional Arms Control, Federal Foreign Office, Germany, noted the dedication and commitment of all jurisdictions to the Roadmap and commended them on the energy that has been put into the Roadmap implementation, despite the very difficult circumstances of the pandemic. He also stressed that the success of the Roadmap is demonstrated by its integration into the European Commission's Firearms Action Plan 2020-2025. Mr. Wittke mentioned that the Roadmap has become a best practice for an integrated, holistic, comprehensive and regionally focused small arms control that inspires also other regions worldwide, such as countries in the Caribbean or West Africa. He emphasized that the Regional Roadmap was highlighted as an example of good practice also in the recently held Western Balkans Berlin Summit. The key to success has been and will remain local ownership and commitment and concluded by underlining Germany's unwavering commitment, together with France and the European Union, to support the full implementation of the Roadmap.

Mr. Gerd Trogemann, Manager, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, highlighted the jurisdictions' dedication and strong commitment towards the implementation of the Roadmap, despite the ongoing challenges and limitations imposed by the COVID-19. He expressed gratitude to the authorities for the excellent cooperation and noted that UNDP continues to pay special attention to ensuring local ownership and developing and implementing projects in close cooperation with the national authorities, primarily the SALW Commissions. He concluded by thanking the donors – in particular, the EU, Germany and France, as well as the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Norway for their ongoing funding support to region's arms control efforts, as well as all the UNDP's international partners for their outstanding support and coordination on the ground.

Mr. Amer Kapetanovic, Head of Political Department, Regional Cooperation Centre, congratulated the authorities in the region for their strong commitment on a comprehensive implementation of the Roadmap. He informed the participants on the results of the recently launched first-ever regional Security Barometer Survey focused on the most important contemporary regional security issues facing the Western Balkans and public perceptions towards them. He also expressed RCC's enthusiasm to continue supporting the authorities in the region with the efficient implementation of the SALW priority agenda. Mr. Kapetanovic concluded by thanking governments of Germany and France for their strong support to this process and the region's EU integration, as well as to all the other donors that are supporting the implementation of the Roadmap.

SESSION I – 5th REGIONAL ROADMAP PROGRESS REPORT – KEY FINDINGS

Ms. Juliana Buzi, Regional Cooperation Specialist, SEESAC presented the [5th Regional Roadmap Progress Report](#)/Key findings on Roadmap implementation based on KPIs and Roadmap Goals (Presentation attached).

SESSION II – IMPLEMENTATION OF GOAL 1&2 OF THE ROADMAP – PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, PLANS

This session allowed the SALW Commissions of the six jurisdictions of the Western Balkans to present the progress made under Roadmap goals 1&2, as well as the key challenges in implementation, including those brought by the COVID-19 crisis, in addition to priorities, plans and the identified needs for support. The updates were based on the inputs to the Regional Narrative Progress Report on the implementation of the Roadmap.

Chaired by Mr. Alain Lapon, Chief Technical Adviser, SEESAC

Belgrade

Mr. Milosav Miličković, State Secretary, Ministry of Interior presented the status of the implementation of the Roadmap and the Action Plan, as per Goals 1&2. On Goal 1, he stressed that the draft amendments to the Law on Weapons and Ammunition were prepared during the reporting period with an aim to further harmonize it with the relevant EU directives. Additionally, the Law on Explosive Substances, which will regulate the production and trade in explosive substances for civil use, is prepared and will soon be adopted. It was also noted that the OSCE will support the authorities in the establishment of the deactivation legislative framework. Further support was requested in developing the legal framework which would regulate the area of explosive precursors. Mr. Miličković noted that Serbia has signed and ratified the Arms Trade Treaty in 2014 while reports on arms exports and imports are transparent and regularly published. Serbia has also submitted its application for the membership in the Permanent International Commission for Firearms Testing (C.I.P.). In conclusion, he expressed Serbia's full dedication to prevent proliferation of weapons. Regarding Goal 2, it was indicated that Serbia has adopted the Strategy on SALW Control for the period of 2019-2024, while the biannual action plan is currently being reviewed.

Podgorica

Mr. Mladen Marković, President of SALW Commission, presented the status of the implementation of the Roadmap and the Action Plan as per Goals 1&2, highlighting the efforts of the authorities to further amend four SALW control related laws. Following the assessment and related suggestions provided by UNDOC on the Criminal Code and Law on Criminal Procedure in the field of illicit arms trade, the relevant national authorities held a meeting with an aim to accelerate the introduction of the necessary amendments. Regarding the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Weapons, it was noted that the draft was finalized and following the receipt of the opinion by the Ministry of Justice, it will be sent to the parliament for adoption. Further work with support from BAFA is expected on the Draft National Law on

Manufacturing, Modernization and Overhaul of Weapons and Military Equipment. Similarly, Mr. Marković noted that work on the amendments on the Draft Law on Explosives will be conducted with assistance from Croatia.

Pristina

Mr. Burim Kadriu, Senior Officer, Department for Public Safety, Ministry of Internal Affairs, stressed that Kosovo* has six laws and over 30 bylaws that regulate area of SALW control. He noted that the SALW Control Strategy for the period of 2017–2021 and the related Action Plan are currently being evaluated. Following the evaluation, new Strategy and the accompanied Action Plan with integrated gender perspective will be developed. He also noted the amendments to the Law on Weapons are being prepared. In conclusion, Mr. Kadriu requested further international support regarding the implementation of activities within Goal 1 and 2 of the Roadmap.

Sarajevo

Mr. Ermin Pešto, Assistant Minister/Head of SALW Coordination Board, Ministry of Security announced the adoption of the new SALW Control Strategy for 2021-2024 that is completely in line with the Roadmap Goals. He also stressed that the harmonization of the laws with the EU legal framework is currently in process and highlighted the adoption of the new Law on Weapons by Una-Sana Canton which is harmonized with all the EU directives. Mr. Pešto expressed expectation that this law will be a model for the development of the laws on weapons for other ministries of internal affairs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He highlighted the initiation of the development of the draft Law on Trade of Explosives, Flammable liquids and Gases in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and gender analysis of the legal and regulatory framework that is being conducted in Brčko District. In conclusion, Mr. Pešto kindly requested from all international stakeholders that are implementing SALW control related projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina to provide monthly updates, so the SALW Coordination Board can be kept informed on the implementation status of various activities.

Comments:

Mr. Andrei Sarban, Arms Control Project Officer, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina informed that OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently implementing three SALW control related projects with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He thanked the authorities for the excellent cooperation with the OSCE and congratulated for the achieved results in the implementation of the Roadmap.

Skopje

Ms. Marija Topalovska, Independent Advisor for Legal and Normative Affairs, Ministry of Interior noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the implementation of activities related to SALW control. Regarding Goal 1 of the Roadmap, an analysis of the harmonization of the national legislation with the EU Acquis was conducted during the reporting period. As the result of the analysis, the Law on Weapons will be further amended in 2021. Final draft version of the Law on Explosives for Civil Use is also expected by the end of 2021. Moreover, the Draft Law on Manufacture and Trade in Armament and Military Equipment has been prepared. Additionally, the working group for development of amendments to the Criminal Code was established. Ms. Topalovska also noted that evaluation of the current SALW

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Control Strategy is ongoing and confirmed that the new SALW Control Strategy and accompanying Action Plan will integrate the gender perspective. She expressed a need for further expert support regarding the implementation of activities within Goals 1 and 2, in particular with the training on firearm deactivation.

Comments:

Mr. Kiro Cvetkov, National Program Officer (North Macedonia), UNODC/Global Firearms Programme informed on the possibility of an introduction of a new offense in the Criminal Code in North Macedonia related to the incrimination of an act of the blueprint upload for 3D printing of weapons.

Tirana

Mr. Besfort Lamallari, Head of National Commission of SALW, confirmed that the harmonization of legislation with the EU Acquis is ongoing. He noted that a new Law on Weapons was adopted in December 2020, followed by revision of 7 related bylaws that further harmonize Albania's arms control legislation with the EU Acquis. Additionally, relevant laws on civil use of explosives and pyrotechnics were adopted. Mr. Lamallari further stated that the revision of the Criminal Code is ongoing with the aim to harmonize it with the UN Firearms Protocol. He also noted that the Strategy for SALW Control is valid from 2019 until 2024 and fully harmonized with the Roadmap while the new Action Plan for 2022-2024 will be developed.

SESSION III – IMPLEMENTATION OF GOAL 2 (Cont.) & 3 OF THE ROADMAP – PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, PLANS

This session allowed the SALW Commissions of the six jurisdictions of the Western Balkans to present the progress made under Roadmap goals 2 (Cont.) and 3, as well as the key challenges in implementation, including those brought by the COVID-19 crisis, priorities, plans and the identified needs for support. The updates were based on the inputs to the Regional Narrative Progress Report on the implementation of the Roadmap.

Chaired by: Ms. Simonetta Grassi, Head of the Programme/Senior Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer, UNODC Global Firearms Programme

Belgrade

Mr. Stefan Miljanović, Assistant Head of Criminal Police Directorate, Ministry of Interior, emphasized that the FFP has been formally established, while the process of operationalization is ongoing. He added that the authorities are currently focused on the merging of all firearms-related databases – process that is being implemented with the support from SEESAC. Mr. Miljanović also noted that exchange of firearm-related information is reported through SIENA, iARMS and the SELEC Center, while the Joint Action Day Coordinator was appointed. He concluded by expressing interest for additional information on FFP models established in the European Union member states.

Mr. Miloš Jovanović, Criminal Inspector, Sector for the Fight Against Organized Crime, Criminal Police Directorate, presented Serbia's operational activities in the fight against illicit trade of SALW and cooperation with international partners including in the preparations for and execution of JAD. He highlighted that the cross-border control was strengthened and intensified during the reporting period.

Mr. Milan Tkalac, Public Prosecutor, Appellate Public Prosecutor's Office, reported on the prosecution and adjudication data for illegal possession and trafficking of firearms and ammunition.

Comments:

In reply to **Mr. Pešto's** question to visit the Ministry of the Republic of Serbia in order to exchange good practices regarding the establishment of the Firearms Focal Point, **Mr. Miljanović** said that Serbia is available for support and that this can be organized through SEESAC.

Podgorica

Mr. Mladen Marković stressed that the FFP was established in 2020 and consists of several units of the Police Department. He reported FFP's challenges to establish direct contact with the ballistic laboratory and noted that Evofinder system donated by the French Government will provide substantive support in resolving this issue. Additionally, Mr. Markovic noted that iArms system is used. He also briefly presented SALW-related projects that national authorities are implementing together with international partners.

Mr. Duško Milanović, Prosecutor, Prosecutor's Office presented data on the misuse and trafficking of SALW. He noted a decrease in number of criminal offenses during COVID-19 pandemic compared to earlier periods.

Pristina

Mr. Sali Berisha, Directorate for International Cooperation in the Rule of Law, Ministry of Internal Affairs stressed that the FFP has been established in 2016, and that it is fully operational. He also added that the weapons tracing is in place and that all seized or confiscated firearms are sent to the forensic laboratory, while FFP receives relevant results in real time. He noted that the ballistic laboratory is accredited. Mr. Berisha also highlighted international support provided to the border police through projects implemented by UNDP. He noted that Kosovo does not have direct access to iARMS, but expressed expectations that this will change by the end of 2021. He concluded by stressing the need for further international and expert support to strengthen the capacities of FFP, in particular through the new equipment and training.

Comments:

Maurizio Mitrano, Project Manager, OSCE Mission in Kosovo praised the dedication of Kosovo police in their implementation of Goals 2 and 3 of the Roadmap and highlighted OSCE's project to support the strengthening of the Canine (K-9) capacity of the police services to detect and confiscate SALW, ammunition and explosives.

Sarajevo

Mr. Ermin Pešto reiterated the challenges in establishing the FFP in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He noted that the decision to establish a working group for the establishment of a FFP has been adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers. This working group is tasked to define the role and the location of the FFP, as well as its managerial structure. Mr. Pešto stressed the need for expert assistance regarding the possible models of FFP that would be suitable for Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighting the potential similarities with the FFP established in Switzerland. Additionally, Mr. Pešto noted that the Directorate for the Coordination of Police Bodies (Department for Cooperation with EUROPOL), uses SIENA for the exchange of information

related to firearms, while the NCB INTERPOL Sarajevo Department has access to the iARMS database. Access to this database is provided to all the police agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the reporting period, the Directorate has processed several requests related to firearms. Mr. Pešto highlighted that Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a developed track records system nor does collect the data related to firearms and related offences in a systematized manner.

Comments:

Ms. Paula Parker, Head of International Development, NABIS offered NABIS' support to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the establishment of the FFP and noted that there could be several parts of the FFP in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based in different parts of the country, as long as the information and intelligence is shared across all of the constituent parts of the FFP.

Ms. Dubravka Piotrovski, National Program Officer (Bosnia and Herzegovina), UNODC/Global Firearms Programme thanked the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina for their strong cooperation with UNODC and highlighted UNODC's cooperation with the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of awareness raising on arms trafficking in parcels.

Mr. Lapon noted that SEESAC has been in contact already with relevant authorities in Switzerland regarding the information on the establishment of the FFP and will be in contact with the authorities on the efforts and planning of organizing such visit.

Mr. Stefan Feller, Senior Adviser on SALW Roadmap Implementation, German Federal Foreign Office, thanked the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina for their commitment to the implementation of the Roadmap and added that the FFP is a collection of processes and functions that need to be maintained regardless of the organizational setup. He noted that Germany will remain focused on supporting the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and contributing with German experience.

Skopje

Ms. Marija Topalovska stressed that the FFP has been established but not yet fully operational. She noted that an ongoing project implemented with the support from UNDP aims to improve the national SALW-related data collection practices and harmonize the information management systems. She stressed that there is a need for a unified system for exchange of information between the law enforcement agencies, prosecutor's office and courts. She also briefed on projects implemented with international partners that support strengthening of institutional capacities and expansion of the knowledge and understanding of police officers to successfully combat the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of SALW. Ms. Petrova informed that North Macedonia participated in the regional operation "Bosphorus", organized within EMPACT in fighting trafficking of firearms. She added that a coordinator for Joint Action Days was appointed and took part in JAD.

Comments:

Mr. Gabor Kemeny, Project Coordinator, OSCE Mission to North Macedonia informed on support to the establishment of the secure information exchange platform to ensure direct access to the SIENA system.

Mr. Kiro Cvetkov announced initiation of an assessment by UNODC that will further support development of SOPs for detecting of illicit firearms their parts and components in postal services, as well training on risk assessment of firearms trafficking through postal shipments and procurement of detection equipment.

Tirana

Ms. Lindita Nushi, Chief Commissioner, Anti-Trafficking Sector, State Police noted that the FFP is established and comprised of six members. She described the operational activities of the FFP and emphasized that all seized and confiscated weapons have been registered and entered in the iARMS system. Ms. Nushi noted that Albania has direct access to INTERPOL and exchanges information with Europol through SIENA. She further stressed that Albania has participated in all international operations that focus on combating firearms trafficking. She also provided an extensive update on the key results of the operational work conducted by criminal police and FFP in fighting firearms related crimes during the reporting period.

Mr. Kujtim Luli, Chief of Sector/Prosecutor, General Prosecution Office noted that there was a decrease in the number of cases of criminal offenses related to illicit trade and possession of firearms, i.e. 30% for the criminal offence of “Firearms and ammunition trafficking” and 13.3% for the criminal offence of “Illegal possession and manufacture of weapons, explosives and ammunitions”, as well as a decrease by 11.0% in the number of cases which fall under these criminal offences, sent for adjudication.

Comments:

Mr. Dimitrije Ristić, National Program Officer (Serbia), UNODC/Global Firearms Programme presented the UNODC-INTERPOL joint project that has started in beginning 2021 on support for increased international corporation in criminal matters in the Western Balkans.

Mr. David Xie, Project Manager, BAFA informed on the firearms related projects that BAFA implements in the Western Balkans and presented possibilities for tailored-made assistance to countries with the specific needs regarding arms export control.

WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021

SESSION IV - IMPLEMENTATION OF GOAL 4&5 OF THE ROADMAP– PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, PLANS

This session allowed the SALW Commissions of the six jurisdictions of the Western Balkans to present updates on the status of implementation of Goal 4&5 of the Roadmap including, progress, key challenges and plans.

Chaired by: Mr. Slobodan Boskovic, Project Officer, Conflict Prevention Centre/FSC Support Section, OSCE

Belgrade

Ms. Mirjana Čubrović, Head of SALW Registry Department, Department for Common Affairs, Ministry of Interior, emphasized that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was visible in part to the implementation of goals 4 and 5.

For the first time, during the reporting period, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no seminars held for legal entities licensed for export and import of arms and military equipment. Furthermore, she stressed that through the project "Reduce Risk - Increase Safety – Towards ending SALW misuse in domestic violence context", implemented by UNDP, an analysis of the legislative framework regulating the carrying/possession of firearms and domestic violence was conducted. Moreover, the activities of the OSCE project "Support to designing and implementing awareness raising campaigns on SALW control in Serbia" were postponed, but in June 2020, the ToR for the working group were prepared. She added that in the context of domestic and intimate relations, 5 people were killed using firearms and that all victims were female.

With regards to legalisation and voluntary surrender of firearms, Ms. Čubrović noted that 5,770 pieces of firearms were seized from legal owners during the reporting period. Furthermore, she stressed that the owners surrendered 17,755 pieces of registered weapons. 6,105 weapons were re-registered while 51 pieces of firearms surrendered within the reporting period. 115 pieces of registered weapons were also deactivated.

In addition, Ms. Čubrović presented consolidated data in relation to the Order on Legalization of Weapons passed by the Minister. During the legalization campaign, which covered the period from 16 March until 17 August 2020, a total of 541 weapons were transferred from illegal to legal flows: 147 weapons were surrendered and 394 requests for the issuance of weapon documents were filed. Also, 11 hand grenades, 1 explosive device and 2,977 pieces of ammunition of different calibers were surrendered.

Comments:

Ms. Ana Petrović Jovanović, National Legal Adviser, OSCE, emphasized that despite the COVID-19 pandemic and summer holiday season, the OSCE will be able to organize the 1st Workshop, while the working group that will be in charge of developing and implementing the awareness-raising campaigns will be constituted soon.

While commending the presentation from Belgrade delegation, **Mr. Ermin Pešto** pointed out that the gender analysis of relevant legal and policy frameworks in the field of SALW control was conducted also

in Bosnia and Herzegovina and similar problems were identified. He added that they will strive to improve the legal framework in this field.

Podgorica

Mr. Kadrija Kurpejović, Directorate for Policy and Regime of Foreign Trade in Controlled Goods, Ministry of the Economy, reported that COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the slowdown of activities on awareness raising of the legal entities licensed for export and import of arms and military equipment. Furthermore, Mr. Kurpejović emphasized the low level of awareness of institutions on trafficking through express, regular mail and web portals as well as the low level of awareness of transport companies and courier services on the same risk.

Ms. Mira Radović, representative of Ministry of Interior, informed that awareness raising campaign "Respect life, return weapons" continued in 2020. Some activities were implemented through the media, including statements on seizures of illegal weapons, as well as publishing on the website of the Ministry of Interior. Ms. Radović noted that the OSCE will provide support in this area.

Ms. Radović informed weapons voluntarily surrendered during this period while regarding deactivation of firearms, she noted that very few citizens use the possibility, underlying that only one firearm was deactivated. In conclusion, work is ongoing on the inventory of firearms in order to organise a destruction event by the end of the year.

Pristina

Mr. Burim Kadriu, Senior Officer, Department of Public Safety noted that during the reporting period, meetings to raise awareness on the misuse of SALW were organised with private and legal entities (retail shops, security companies, shooting ranges, etc.), but these meetings were performed in an individual way, based also on request. He further stressed that due to COVID-19 pandemic no activities were organized on raising the awareness of general population on the threats related to the use of firearms.

Mr. Kadriu also informed that no activities to decrease the number of firearms through legalisation or voluntary surrender were conducted in 2020. The possibility of legalisation of firearms for deactivation purposes is covered by the law on weapons, however, they still need to draft the instruction related to the technical aspects of conducting a deactivation.

Sarajevo

Mr. Ermin Pešto pointed out that special awareness-raising campaigns were not implemented in the reporting period due to COVID-19 pandemic. He added that it does not mean that some police directorates did not carry out these activities as part of their regular activities. Mr. Pešto informed that awareness-raising campaigns are planned through two projects, to be implemented by UNDP and OSCE. Mr. Pešto informed that 770 firearms and 2,580 pieces of ammunition have been voluntarily surrendered, while 81 firearms were legalised, and 123 firearms deactivated during the reporting period.

Mr. Damir Karahodžić, Head of the Department for Regulation of Weapons Production at the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations and Member of the SALW Coordination Board informed the participants that this year's awareness and outreach activities were conducted through the relevant inspectorates, because they were unable to organize meetings, seminars and workshops, primarily due to

the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that the Internal Compliance Program (ISP) has continued and that a training of trainers is currently ongoing, as well as the development of bylaws regulating this area. He added that the authorities' focus in the upcoming period will remain on the harmonization of the firearms marking regulations in particular related to firearms intended for deactivation.

Comments:

Ms. Jasmina Roskić asked if the BiH law stipulates the obligation to introduce ICP. **Mr. Damir Karahodžić** replied that there is a law for dual-use goods that prescribes the conditions for obtaining global licenses. However, the legal entities that are not interested in obtaining the global license will not be obliged to conduct this obligation.

Skopje

Ms. Marija Topalovska informed that extensive work has been conducted in particular in the area of Kumanovo in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and religious leaders to inform and instruct citizens to refrain from unauthorized use of firearms or pyrotechnics at family and other celebrations. Detailed information on these activities has been provided within the Narrative report, including on awareness-raising activities in Bitola.

Ms. Topalovska noted that there is currently no legal basis for voluntary surrender or legalization of firearms and that there were no requests for permanent deactivation of weapons in the reporting period. She also stated that the working group for amending the Law on Weapons has been established and the amendments that will involve the legalization and voluntary surrender should be included in the new law. This would also create the legal ground for the future campaign on the deactivation of firearms. Ms. Topalovska concluded that the Ministry of Interior signed an MoU with OSCE, which among other, envisages support in public awareness activities.

Comments:

Mr. Gabor Kemeny, Project Coordinator, OSCE Mission to North Macedonia, noted that together with UNDP, OSCE will work on the raising-awareness activities in North Macedonia. He added that the plan is to initiate these activities next year based on the analysis and strategy for the awareness-raising received from the authorities and SALW Commission. Mr. Kemeny emphasized that OSCE is also working on capacity building of SALW Commission for awareness-raising.

Tirana

Ms. Fatma Kalemi, Albanian State Police noted that they have not conducted any campaign on legalization and voluntary surrender of firearms during the reporting period and added that difficulties have been encountered in planning or replanning activities due to the pandemic dynamics.

Ms. Kalemi added that regular inspections of legal entities have been conducted. She emphasized that 31 inspections have been realized in the reporting period, and one case of violation was recorded, due to which the license was revoked.

Comments:

Mr. Bošković concluded the session by emphasizing that all delegations reported a very limited scope of maneuver when it comes to awareness-raising and outreach activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, he noted that all delegations emphasized the areas where further support will be needed, such as industry outreach, support to the legalization and deactivation of firearms, the awareness-raising towards the general population on the misuse of firearms and prevention of trafficking, the awareness-raising on voluntary surrender, and support in prevention on gender-based violence.

SESSION V – IMPLEMENTATION OF GOAL 6&7 OF THE ROADMAP - PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, PLANS

This session allowed the SALW Commissions of the six jurisdictions of the Western Balkans to present updates on the status of implementation of Goal 6&7 of the Roadmap including, progress, key challenges and plans.

Chaired by **Mr. Ermin Pesto**, Assistant Minister of Security, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Belgrade

Mr. Miodrag Lazić, Head of Department for European Affairs and Planning, Ministry of Interior noted that Ministry of Interior did not organize destruction of firearms during the reported period due to COVID-19 pandemic. Two commissions were established for the destruction of firearms: the first one is in charge of firearms collection, while the second one is in charge of their classification. He further added that the Ministry of Defense demilitarised 14.6 tons of ammunition, fuses and explosives, as well as dismantling of 23,911 rifle grenades, hand grenades and different fuses. These activities were implemented through NATO's support. Mr. Lazić informed also on the activities regarding the upgrade of Mol's weapons and ammunition storage in "Duvaniste". He emphasized that the project initially envisaged the works to be completed in June 2021, but the deadline for the completion of works will be extended for six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also stressed that a priority in the upcoming period will be on the reconstruction of the three evidence rooms that would store firearms from criminal proceedings. Furthermore, Mr. Lazić noted that a number of activities have been conducted with regards to the inspection.

Podgorica

Mr. Mladen Marković noted that the works on further adaptation of Rogame storage continued, as well as the works on the reconstruction of three evidence rooms – Bijelo Polje, Nikšić and Bar. He also explained that the Ministry of the Interior and the General Police Directorate have no surplus weapons and ammunition.

Ms. Neda Kadović, from the Ministry of Defence stressed that approximately 165.87 tons of explosive ordnances of big caliber were destroyed through the support of ITF and NATO. She added that the detailed information has been provided through the Roadmap Narrative Report.

Pristina

Mr. Burim Kadriu, Senior Officer, Department for Public Safety, noted that there are no surpluses of SALW from state institutions or legal entities in Kosovo. He also stated that no destruction activities were organised during the reporting period. Mr. Kadriu mentioned that 45 inspections of storage facilities were conducted during the reporting period, out of which 50 percent related to storage facilities.

Mr. Kadriu emphasized that 107 firearms have been reported as stolen by legal persons, while nine weapons have been reported stolen by natural persons. He added that no firearms were reported stolen from state entities.

Mr. Kadriu said that the authorities gave priority to the health issues in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic, which explains the small number of activities in this area.

Sarajevo

Mr. Ermin Pešto noted that 1,076 firearms and 763 parts of weapons have been destroyed in cooperation with all police agencies in BiH and announced that they will organise the next destruction event in September 2021. He added that with SEESAC's support, they are planning to improve the infrastructure of three evidence rooms while with OSCE support to improve the storage infrastructure at 10 locations. He underlined that for these 10 locations the concrete reports were developed, and evaluation was conducted.

Mr. Denis Selimović, Senior Expert for Information Exchange, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Defence, emphasized that a total of 244.5 tons were destroyed, while 102, 18 tons of different types of ammunition, mines and explosive were handed over. He added that the Armed Forces continued to implement the concrete measures to improve the security and safety of their storage facilities by strengthening technical security measures.

Skopje

Ms. Marija Topalovska noted that during the reporting period no destruction of surpluses of firearms was organised due the impediments caused by COVID-19 pandemic. She also stressed that 21 cases of stolen weapons occurred during the reporting period. She added that 21 inspections were performed on legal entities engaged in trade in weapons and ammunition, shooting ranges or trade in explosives.

Ms. Topalovska informed that the OSCE project on an upgrade of 16 storage facilities has been finalised. In conclusion, she expressed the need and requested support in the preparation of the SOPs on handling lost and stolen weapons.

Tirana

Mr. Blerim Caka, representative of the Ministry of Defence, noted that no activities with regards to the destruction of surpluses have been conducted during the reporting period. However, he noted that relevant authorities have continued implementing a demilitarisation project on clearing hotspots contaminated with explosives in cooperation with ITF. Furthermore, he said that additional upgrades have been completed on the three underground storage facilities through the support from the United States and SEESAC.

Mr. Caka also stressed that the Ministry of Defence and UNDP signed the reviewed version of the Memorandum of Understanding to procure about 700 metal cabinets for SALW, for all the units and departments of Armed Forces. He also added that in July 2020, works in Zall Her were completed and handed over.

Ms. Margarita Vogli, representative of the Ministry of Interior, pointed out that 44 of 93 storage sites are in a good condition and added that four storage sites were upgraded by SEESAC. She underlined that the new project to be implemented by UNDP includes the reconstruction of evidence rooms 10 locations is in the evaluation stage. Moreover, Ms. Vogli emphasized that with SEESAC support, they have continued working on the fencing, lighting and installation of cameras at the State Police Supply Centre Mullet.

Ms. Vogli added that at the end of December 2020, a request for additional support was submitted to SEESAC for the construction of a SALW laser marking machine room at Mullet, improvement of infrastructure of evidence rooms at the local Police Directorates of Tirana and Korca, as well as supply of 150 weapons cabinets.

Comments:

Ms. Adriana Toston Diez, EMPACT firearms driver, EMPACT firearms for the Western Balkans, pointed out two main messages. She emphasized that the next operation under the Joint Action Days (JAD) will be conducted from 15 to 18 September 2021. In addition, since EMPACT is currently in the process of developing proposals of different actions for the new cycle in 2022, Ms. Toston Diez invited the Western Balkans jurisdictions to send any concrete proposals in leading specific actions or proposing concrete operational actions from their side within the EMPACT firearms.

Mr. Pešto concluded that all jurisdictions reported on the progress under the goals 6 and 7 and added that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced on the activities in this area during the reporting period.

SESSION VI – FUNDING SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROADMAP

This session allowed the international organisations and partners to update on the funding mechanisms and tools established or available in support of the implementation of the Roadmap, while the donors informed on the current or new planned funding support.

Chaired by: Ms. Jorida Shytaj, Political Department, Regional Cooperation Council

Ms. Bojana Balon, Head of UNDP SEESAC/Secretariat of the Western Balkans Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) presented an update on the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund established in support of the implementation of the Roadmap. UNDP and UNODC are MPTF participating organizations that can apply and receive funding for projects' implementation. Projects need to be developed in close cooperation with the SALW commissions and in line with the needs and existing gaps, complementing the already ongoing efforts. The Steering Committee is composed of top three donors to the Fund, the EU as ex officio member and participating organizations: UNDP and UNODC. The Secretariat functions are ensured by SEESAC, who is not part of the Steering Committee and does not have the right to vote.

Ms. Balon noted that cumulative Trust Fund portfolio reached almost USD 16 million with the last contribution from Germany of USD 3.6 million received at the end of 2020. She added that there is a legal commitment signed with France for new contribution of EUR 1 million, as well as from Sweden expected in the second part of 2021.

Ms. Balon noted that six new projects have been approved during the second call for project proposals and they have been initiated either at the end of 2020 or 2021. She also added that there are 10 projects under the implementation with a total budget of USD 12 million; eight projects at the jurisdiction level, two regional projects and one joint project that is implemented by UNDP COs in both Kosovo and North Macedonia.

Mr. Slobodan Boskovic, noted that OSCE is implementing seven projects that are contributing to the Roadmap. He added that the OSCE is additionally providing a project that coordinates and provides advisory support to the OSCE missions in the region in developing these projects and their implementation. OSCE portfolio for the Western Balkans is currently valued at over EUR 14.2 million, with a funding gap of EUR 4 million. Mr. Boskovic expressed the hope that two assistance projects in Serbia and Albania will be accepted soon.

He added that the OSCE organized the donor meeting on strengthening the OSCE action against the illicit proliferation of SALW in South East Europe on 26 March 2021 and resulted in the announcement of contribution in the amount of EUR 4 million from the United States and EUR 300,000 from France. He also stressed that OSCE is preparing a project proposal that will be submitted to the EU Council.

H.E. Jean-Claude Brunet, Ambassador-at-large on transitional criminal threats and the fight against the illicit trafficking of SALW, France noted the importance of the MPTF as a tool and underlined continuation of financial contributions to the MPTF. Ambassador Brunet also informed the participants that France will contribute to the MPTF in 2021 with the additional EUR 1 million and to the OSCE program in support of the Roadmap implementation. He also announced that the Republic of France will aim to further raise the contribution to OSCE and contribute to the NATO in the future. Mr. Brunet expressed the French government readiness to continue with bilateral cooperation with the Western Balkans authorities.

Ms. Jane Felber, Division OR 10 – Conventional Arms Control, Small Arms and Light Weapons, Federal Foreign Office, Germany recalled that Western Balkans could count on Germany's commitment together with France and EU and other donors to support full implementation of the Roadmap. She added that at the end of 2020, Germany contributed additional EUR 3 million to MPTF and EUR 1 million to the OSCE's repository program for comprehensive SALW and conventional ammunition control. Ms. Felber also mentioned that Germany already contributed EUR 5.5 million to the Funding Windows that is still running. Moreover, Germany supported SALW control projects through NATO's Trust Fund.

Ms. Olivia Debaveye, Programme Manager, DG Near stressed that for the first time SEESAC will receive funding from DG Near, from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. She added that the Project in the total amount of EUR 5 million should start with the implementation in September 2021 and will last three years. Ms. Debaveye noted that the project will include support to the FFPs, support to the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) units, awareness-raising activities and mainstreaming gender in the SALW control.

Conclusions of the Meeting

Mr. Emmanuel Vallens, Policy Coordinator “firearms” Unit HOME D5 Organized Crime, European Commission, DG HOME in his concluding remarks, confirmed that the progress in the implementation of the Roadmap was recognized in particular towards harmonization of the legal framework with EU Acquis and the UN Firearms Protocol. Mr. Vallens added that progress was reported in other areas of Roadmap implementation, including activities related to the operationalization of FFP, exchange of operational cooperation and information with EU, strengthening the investigation of firearm-related crimes capacities, and intelligence-led policing, awareness-raising at the national level, destruction of weapons and ammunition and security of the stockpiles.

Furthermore, Mr. Vallens noted that coordination at the jurisdiction level needs to be ensured, particularly when it comes to Bosnia and Herzegovina, considering its complex institutional set-up and the multitude of implementing partners operating. He added that the SALW Coordination Board requests the international organizations implementing projects in BiH to regularly report (monthly) to the SALW Coordination Board so that the Board has a clear overview of the activities under implementation and those planned. Regarding the establishment of the FFP in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Vallens noted that a specific request came from the SALW Coordination Board for a study visit to be organized with SEESAC’s support at the FFP unit of an EU Member State and an FFP from the region even though a virtual one.

Mr. Vallens pointed out the important announcements from EMPACT regarding the dates of upcoming Joint Action Days on 15-18 September and the development of proposals from EMPACT for 2022, inviting jurisdictions of the Western Balkans to send concrete proposals in leading specific actions or proposing concrete actions from their side.

Mr. Vallens added that continued commitment and support by key donors to the Roadmap implementation including the EU, Germany and France was confirmed. In conclusion, Mr. Vallens thanked all the international organizations and donors for supporting the Roadmap implementation and contributing to the coordination efforts and informed participants that the invitations for the Ministerial meeting planned to be organized on 7th September 2021 will be sent out in the upcoming period.