

Sarajevo – 15th Roadmap Local Coordination Meeting on SALW

23 June 2026

Opening remarks

The Head of the SALW Coordination Board opened the fifteenth local coordination meeting as a review of the preceding six-month period within the second phase of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap. He recalled that Bosnia and Herzegovina's strategic documents and action plan continue to be implemented by the competent bodies with the support of international partners.

Legal framework and harmonization

Legislative harmonization remained the most developed strand of work. The Council of Ministers had adopted the annual report for 2025, and the working group's recommendations were broadly integrated across jurisdictions, each of which has either adopted new laws on weapons and ammunition or substantially amended existing ones, with only minor changes. Progress nonetheless varies. Canton 10 adopted a new weapons and ammunition law, in force from 19 May 2026 and aligned with Directive (EU) 2021/555, and is now developing the accompanying bylaws. The Sarajevo Canton, the Bosnian-Podrinje (Goražde) Canton and Zenica-Doboj Canton laws remained under parliamentary procedure or in draft. Republika Srpska reported that amendments, rather than an entirely new law, would be pursued, with attention to terminology for category C weapons and to legalization deadlines, while Tuzla Canton highlighted an initiative to reclassify signaling weapons to category C in line with the directive. The discussion noted that debates in certain cantonal assemblies, subject to lobbying pressures, had at times produced solutions diverging from the working group's recommendations, and the Coordination Board confirmed its readiness to provide explanations at the point of adoption. The discussion also identified the regulation of explosives precursors as an emerging issue, with SEESAC proposing a joint workshop to share regional experience. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations reported adoption of the joint EU list of military goods and preparation of a further list of non-military goods, including certain drones, pending the opinion of the aviation authorities.

Firearms Focal Point and data management

The process for establishing Firearms Focal Points (FFP) remained unresolved. Under the agreed model, each jurisdiction would maintain its own focal point, with a memorandum of understanding governing communication between them, and a working group had prepared a draft memorandum. Consensus on the final text was not reached, and the working group, having exhausted its capacity, intends to refer the matter to the Council of Ministers. The absence of consensus over how the focal points would operate is to be recorded in the annual progress report. Work on the digitalization of firearms records advanced in parallel. An application has been developed allowing each jurisdiction to keep records in a harmonized manner while retaining the option to exchange data in line with a long-standing agreement. Several jurisdictions have opted to install it within their own administrations and others at the level of the Federal Police Administration, with Republika Srpska already operating electronic records. The Coordination Board noted that the legal basis for electronic record-keeping had been integrated into the relevant laws and identified data-protection safeguards and long-term sustainability as questions still requiring attention. A presentation of the completed application is expected in September.

Operational cooperation and firearms trafficking

The State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) reported results under the Trigger operation, including the prevention of illegal transfers of small and long-barrelled firearms bound for Germany through the Western Balkans, the interdiction of firearms and explosive ordnance some days earlier, and the impounding of weapons by its regional office in Mostar. These cases were linked to investigations into criminal groups using encrypted applications, notably "Sky", and transport companies as fronts for illegal export to the Netherlands and Germany. The weapons were reported to be predominantly of local origin, remnants of the wartime period, with serial numbers erased or rendered poorly visible to impede tracing. The Federal Police Administration described a

comprehensive operation against trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosive ordnance conducted with the support of Frontex across Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and partners, and reported the adoption of a rulebook and terms of reference for a uniform statistical database under the Federal Ministry of the Interior, as well as the completion of a project marking all official weapons.

Investigation and criminal justice response

Across jurisdictions the criminal justice response was described as advancing unevenly. SIPA confirmed that indictments arising from its trafficking investigations had been transferred to the competent prosecutors' offices, while the Federal Police Administration reported that disposals of weapons had been constrained by the absence of court orders, with a limited number of firearms and associated components awaiting disposal. Judicial capacity building featured prominently. Firearms-related offences have been incorporated into the annual curricula of the judicial training centres, and of four trainings planned for 2026 two had been delivered, in March and April, covering the legal framework, trafficking and forensic and ballistic expertise, with further modules and additional trainings planned for 2027. The discussion also examined the status of the standard operating procedures (SOPs) endorsed by the police agencies, and the extent to which, as instruments distinct from laws and bylaws, they can be applied consistently across the several jurisdictions.

Awareness raising, gender and engagement with local communities

The most prominent development in this area was the award to the Ministry of Security of the Silver Gender Equality Seal for state-level police agencies, following an eighteen-month monitoring process conducted under United Nations methodology. The certificate is valid for three years. The authorities situated this within a longer effort to mainstream gender into SALW control, reflected also in a recent study visit to Sweden. Awareness raising continued through school-based activities across several jurisdictions, including more than forty workshops with children and young people in Central Bosnia Canton, lectures to pupils in Canton 10, and screenings of the film "The Game", which reached some 2,800 pupils in Una-Sana Canton and the Brčko District and continued to attract views online. The stage play "Echo of Silence", performed for and by young people, was staged in Una-Sana Canton in April 2026 in cooperation with UNDP and the education authorities. Several police administrations highlighted the risks of firearm misuse, domestic violence and possession among young men, and the Coordination Board reported constructive meetings with local communities involving health and education representatives. A recurring issue raised across the interventions was that the relevance of particular campaigns varies between jurisdictions, and that awareness resources should be allocated according to differing local needs and capacities.

Voluntary surrender, collection and destruction

A new UNDP-supported process was introduced under which jurisdictions are to nominate quantities of weapons and components for destruction and to conduct destruction using their own resources. Several jurisdictions had responded, Canton 10 having submitted its full inventory and Una-Sana Canton preparing to proceed. Completed destruction was reported, including weapons destroyed in Banja Luka in the presence of UNDP and the destruction in October 2025 of firearms seized in Una-Sana Canton. The authorities distinguished voluntary surrender, available with impunity in all jurisdictions except Sarajevo Canton, from disposals arising from administrative procedures, and expressed concern that citizens may be insufficiently aware of the surrender provisions while UNDP offered to redistribute campaign materials. A central question raised by the Coordination Board concerned sustainability as donors expect UNDP progressively to step back from conducting destruction, the jurisdictions will need to demonstrate the capacity to act independently, and UNDP confirmed that guidelines and bylaws on destruction are at the adoption stage and that a consultant is being engaged to support this transition.

Storage security and K9 capacities

The OSCE Mission outlined its continuing support under the SALW project, including the establishment and equipping of a second centre for the verification of deactivated weapons in Banja Luka, with officials trained in France and BiH, and continued cooperation on the harmonization of weapons regulations. On canine capacities, OSCE reported that a master plan is being finalized, that instructor courses in North Macedonia have completed a first cycle with a second under way, and that infrastructural works at six locations are complete, with the project possibly extended beyond its scheduled conclusion in September. The proposal by the OSCE office in Vienna to establish a regional canine centre in Skopje was not supported by the Federal Police Administration, which favored locating such a centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina. NATO described its Defense Capacity Building project, comprising a manual on the lifecycle management of small arms, light weapons and ammunition drawn from the experience of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the modernization of security and safety arrangements at forty-seven storage premises, including at Banja Luka and Čapljina.

Key findings from the 15th Progress Reports

Following the interventions by the relevant institutions, UNDP SEESAC presented the key findings of the data reported through the 15th Roadmap Progress Reports, covering both the Narrative Progress Report and the Key Performance Indicators Report.

Plans and activities of international organizations

UNDP confirmed its role in weapons destruction, the handover of specialised detection, crime-scene and case-archiving equipment for prosecutors' offices, and a forthcoming tender for a ballistic laboratory, alongside continued work on digitalisation, judicial and police training and the development of SOPs and destruction guidelines.

UNODC outlined its Hermes project on preventing trafficking through postal and courier services, involving customs, police and private operators from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and its Justitia project supporting judicial training.

Norwegian People's Aid reported that its weapons marking and registration project had reached its final stage, with completion expected by 31 July, following its management's decision in Oslo to withdraw globally, arrangements for continuing these activities under the national master plan were being confirmed.

UNDP SEESAC presented an overview of its current activities and plans for further work in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The presentation covered support to the harmonization of the firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) legislative framework, evidence-based SALW control policies, Gender and SALW, as well as support provided to the criminal police, border police and customs authorities. Furthermore, support to the CSI Unit was highlighted, together with plans for further support in these areas. Finally, support to physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) and awareness-raising activities was also highlighted.

Donor interventions

An overview was provided of the **Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)** supporting the implementation of the SALW Control Roadmap in the Western Balkans. It was noted that the Trust Fund received new contributions from the Netherlands and France in 2025, bringing total contributions since its establishment to USD 30.4 million. The recent decision of the MPTF Steering Committee to allocate an additional USD 1 million for immediate priorities across the region in 2026 was also highlighted. Looking ahead, the Trust Fund is awaiting proposals for new activities from implementing organizations, to be developed in close coordination with and endorsed by the relevant SALW Commissions. In this context, in-kind and direct financial contributions from national authorities were encouraged as an important element in informing and guiding future support and priorities.