



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 715 Vienna, 24 April 2013

EU Statement on OSCE SALW commitments

The European Union (EU) warmly welcomes Mr. Eric Berman, Managing Director, and Dr. Glenn McDonald, Senior Researcher, from Small Arms Survey to the Forum of Security Cooperation and thanks them for their comprehensive presentations.

Small Arms Survey, which is supported financially by many EU Member States, serves as a principal international source of impartial and public information on all aspects of small arms. It indeed acts as a valuable resource for governments and policy makers.

Ever since the adoption of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in 2000 and the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of SALW in all its aspects (UN PoA) in 2001, the EU has been actively promoting the effective and full implementation of these documents by political and financial means, notably by the EU Strategy on SALW adopted in 2005, the implementation of which is regularly reviewed.

The EU has also actively contributed to the preparation and debates in the framework of the Second Review Conference of the UN PoA last summer and has welcomed the outcome document, which was adopted by consensus. It is now our common obligation to ensure that the undertakings made with this outcome document are fully respected and put into practice.

We listened carefully to your views on the regional organisations, specifically the OSCE, their role and the challenges they face when implementing the commitments on SALW. In our view the OSCE is at the forefront of regional cooperation on SALW especially in regard to raising awareness, implementation and assisting participating States in the development of relevant legislation. Nevertheless, a number of actions remain to be taken. We encourage all participating States to continually review the relevant OSCE documents and decisions and actively implement them. The engagement of all 57 participating States is vital.

The OSCE should continue to focus on the objectives and tools where it can bring added value. Taking into account its comprehensive approach to security, including the work of the field presences, the OSCE can make a real difference.

In line with UNSCR 1325, we support the elaboration of measures that strengthen gender aspects in connection with SALW in the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW. This should concretely include, inter alia, increased representation of women at decision-making levels in security sector institutions dealing with SALW related issues.

Finally, at last week's FSC the EU welcomed the recent adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). In this regard we believe that the FSC should take account of the ATT in its activities on SALW. The EU will actively support the swift entry into force and effective implementation of the ATT and encourages all OSCE participating States to sign this treaty when it opens for signature on 3 June 2013 and to ratify as soon as possible.

The EU continues to support the efforts of the OSCE and the OSCE Secretariat on SALW. In the framework of the EU's support for SALW activities in the OSCE region, the EU is, for instance, funding the Training Seminar on the Enforcement of SALW Brokering Controls that has started today in Vienna and is running until Friday. The EU is actively discussing further measures to reduce the risk of the illicit trade in and excessive accumulation of SALW in the OSCE region.

The acceding country CROATIA^{*}, the candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND^{**} and SERBIA, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, the European Free Trade Association countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

^{*} Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{**} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.