



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

# **SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ARMS TRADE TREATY (Geneva/Online, 30 August – 3 September 2021)**

## **Thematic discussion on Small Arms & Light Weapons, and Stockpile Management**

– *Statement of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)  
Ms. Simonetta Grassi, Chief, Head of the UNODC Global Firearms Programme –*

30 August 2021

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), would like to thank the President of the Seventh Conference of States Parties, Ambassador Lansana GBERIE, and the Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty for having invited us to join this important meeting.

The presidency's thematic focus is at the core of the UNODC mandate as custodian of the United Nations Firearms Protocol. While the Arms Trade Treaty establishes legally binding prohibitions and risk-assessment criteria to regulate **IF** arms, including small arms and light weapons, may be exported; the Firearms Protocol, on the other hand, requires States Parties to apply preventive measures that determine **HOW** these transfers of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition are carried out in practice. As the President of the CSP7 in his Working Paper rightly mentioned, "*the ATT provisions that seek to tackle illicit trafficking and mitigate diversion risks must be implemented alongside and in connection with other relevant international and regional instruments.*" We understand this as a call for a joint implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Firearms Protocol.

---

**Making the world safer from drugs, crime and terrorism**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime | Vienna International Centre | PO Box 500 | 1400 Vienna | Austria  
Tel.: (+43-1) 26060-0 | Fax: (+43-1) 26060-5866 | Email: [unodc@unodc.org](mailto:unodc@unodc.org) | [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)

The mitigation of diversion requires accountability of all those involved in transfers of small arms. To that end, the Firearms Protocol creates legally binding marking and record-keeping requirements for small arms that allow for their tracing. The Protocol further establishes a system of reciprocity in the authorization of small arms transfers, which complements the export criteria in the Arms Trade Treaty: No firearm or single bullet shall pass through or enter the territory of another State party to the Firearms Protocol without its consent.

But this is only one side of the coin: Diversion is not only an arms control problem; it also has a criminal dimension. Therefore, preventive measures must be combined with effective criminal justice responses to go after those that divert small arms to unauthorized recipients. The criminal offences established under the Firearms Protocol help to enforce the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty and to eradicate illicit trade: Circumventing the strict export assessment established under the Arms Trade Treaty, often constitutes the criminal offence of illicit firearms trafficking in accordance with the Firearms Protocol and can be investigated and prosecuted by the countries along the transfer chain.

In short: Both instruments establish a complementary and legally binding global framework on small arms transfers. In the decade of action, a joint implementation of both instruments should be at the heart of any national and regional effort to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms.

UNODC once again reiterates its continued support and commitment to assist states in strengthening their national legislation in accordance with both instruments, fostering international cooperation and criminal justice responses, implementing preventive measures, such as marking procedures and comprehensive record-keeping systems and monitoring illicit arms flows worldwide. I thank you.