

# SMALL ARMS AND GLOBAL VIOLENCE

## STOPPING THE FLOW OF GUNS



*A report of the conference organized by the Small Arms  
Working Group with assistance from the Johns Hopkins School  
of  
Advanced International Studies*

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## ABOUT SAWG

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The Small Arms Working Group (SAWG) is an alliance of U.S.-based non-governmental organizations working together to promote change in U.S. policies on small arms. SAWG members believe that small arms proliferation must be countered by more responsible policies on legal sales and international cooperation to reduce illicit trafficking.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

Over the past several years, the destructive nature of small arms and light weapons<sup>1</sup> has entered the international community's consciousness and has prompted a global response. Around the world, national, regional, and international governmental bodies have launched initiatives to stop the deadly effects of these weapons on all aspects of society. Yet ordinary citizens, those most likely to be negatively impacted by these weapons, often remain outside the policy debate. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from countries worldwide have therefore begun to work together to develop policy and action initiatives against the proliferation and abuse of small arms. Through the newly-created International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), over 200 like-minded NGOs are now collaborating on cooperative efforts at the local, regional, and global level. In the United States, the Small Arms Working Group (SAWG) was created in December 1997 to coordinate the work of NGOs seeking to affect U.S. policy on small arms sales.

There is an urgent need for coordinated international action against the small arms trade. Studies by the United Nations (UN) and the International Red Cross show that small arms and light weapons are responsible for 50-90% of the casualties in today's civil wars. Of those casualties, the vast majority are civilians. Small arms are the favored tools of insurgents, paramilitaries, and the governments fighting them because they are cheap, portable, and readily available. A considerable amount of devastation can be wrought by a weapon that may cost one or two hundred dollars or can simply be traded for food and supplies.

Small arms often leave a devastating legacy long after conflicts officially end. They become instruments for other forms of violence such the disruption of development assistance, interference with efforts to deliver food, medicine, and supplies to people in dire need of relief, and organized or petty crime. Refugees are often afraid to return to their homes because of the large number of weapons retained by demobilized fighters who have not forfeited their weapons. Ex-combatants and others who experience difficulty finding employment in the peacetime environment often use the recycled weapons in criminal activities.

The unregulated flow of weapons can affect not only a country in crisis but also neighboring countries and entire regions. The ample supply of weapons that streams across porous borders can quickly and severely destabilize fragile states, creating a virtual culture of violence which traps all elements of society in an endless cycle of war.

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<sup>1</sup> Small arms and light weapons include any weapon that can be carried by one or two people, mounted on a vehicle, or carried by a pack animal. Examples of small arms and light weapons include machetes, axes, swords, military-style guns, grenade launchers, mortars, mobile anti-tank guns, rocket launchers, and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile launchers. Ammunition, grenades, missiles, landmines, and explosives are also included in the term.

The sheer number of small arms and light weapons in circulation around the world is staggering. The UN estimates that there are ten million small arms and light weapons in Afghanistan, seven million in West Africa, and another two million in Central America. Overall estimates range from 500 million to as many as one billion military small arms in circulation. Although small arms and light weapons continue to be produced every year, the old ones are not removed from circulation. The long life-span of small arms means they can be just as lethal 50 years after manufacture as when new.

## OPENING PLENARY

The Small Arms Working Group (SAWG) conference "Small Arms and Global Violence: Stopping the Flow of Guns" was organized in order to expand the dialogue on small arms in the United States. By bringing together policy makers, the media, academics, and NGOs, SAWG hoped to raise the quantity and quality of that debate. The conference was intended to develop links between these constituencies and to encourage groups to set their own agendas on small arms. Working together, those parties committed to the small arms issue can make a difference in limiting the negative impact of small arms around the world. The conference was opened by SAWG representative Loretta Bondi, formerly of Human Rights Watch and now with the Fund for Peace. Ms. Bondi introduced the priorities, goals, and structure of SAWG. She also discussed SAWG's relationship to the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and briefly outlined the major issues related to small arms proliferation. The opening plenary session featured four speakers: William Zartman, Professor of International Organizations and Conflict Resolution at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; John Holum, Senior Adviser to the President and Secretary of State for Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament; Ed Laurance, Director of the Program on Security and Development at the Monterey Institute of International Studies; and Clarissa Kayosa, Campaign Coordinator for Demilitarization for Democracy at the Center for International Policy.

### **William Zartman**

*Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Policy*

Dr. Zartman addressed the concept of "regime building," the creation of international norms and legal principles to counter the proliferation of small arms. Dr. Zartman discussed the importance of norms, "soft law," in helping build consensus for a regime based on "hard law." Regime-building first requires the development of principles, which are tightened into rules, and then moves into implementation of those rules. Dr. Zartman explained that after the initial advocacy process for a new regime, negotiations over the ultimate form the regime will take involves much negotiating and re-negotiating.

Dr. Zartman described the regime-building process as a matrix, with incentives on the vertical axis and supply and demand on the horizontal axis. By providing constraints (negative incentives) and rewards (positive incentives), one can impact small arms supply and demand most effectively. Dr. Zartman noted that too often the incentives are left out of the equation.

Comparing the process of building an international regime to the formation of a river, Dr. Zartman said that individuals, non-governmental groups, and governments are like a riverbed. Not only do they form the basis for action on small arms, but just as rocks and turns in the river help the current move faster, they also help create

pressure for faster movement. Encouraging all participants to be involved in the search for a solution, Dr. Zartman noted that an accumulation of even small efforts can make a great impact on the rate of progress.

**John Holum**

*U.S. Department of State*

Mr. Holum focused his remarks on the plethora of small arms initiatives in recent years and outlined another active year for the U.S. government on small arms issues. He decried the devastating effect small arms have on entire societies, comparing the impact to weapons of mass destruction, killing “the equivalent of whole cities, a few people at a time.” He called efforts to curtail the trade of small arms an “urgent issue.”

Mr. Holum outlined a number of initiatives and actions being undertaken at the regional and global level, including at the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe. He also described the European Union's range of initiatives on small arms, noting that the U.S. and EU had signed a Joint Statement of Principles in December 1999 that included a statement of U.S. support for the EU Arms Transfers Code of Conduct and the establishment of a bilateral working group. Mr. Holum emphasized the need to restrain the illicit trade of small arms, lauding the OAS' efforts to develop and implement the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms. Finally, he noted the important work of the United Nations in building awareness of small arms.

Mr. Holum said the United States government seeks to be a leader in the battle against small arms proliferation, noting that Secretary of State Madeline Albright has made several speeches on the subject. He emphasized that the U.S. government is trying to encourage other states to adopt its own best practices, including criminalizing UN embargo violations, adopting strict end-use and brokering controls, preventing unauthorized re-transfers of small arms, and increasing transparency on small arms sales. Mr. Holum said the United States is focusing on strategies that balance demand and supply-side solutions. He stressed the need for multi-dimensional approaches to the small arms problem that are complementary, not competitive.

Mr. Holum finished by outlining U.S. priorities on small arms for 2000. The U.S. government aims to: finish negotiating the UN Firearms Protocol; broker an international agreement restricting the sale of MANPADS (shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles) through the Wassenaar Arrangement; and increase transparency on small arms sales by expanding the arms categories currently covered under the Wassenaar Arrangement. The State Department will also work closely with other states to prevent the sale of weapons to conflict zones, secure military stockpiles, and destroy surplus weapons in post conflict areas.

**Ed Laurance**

*Monterey Institute of International Studies*

Dr. Laurance's remarks were a call for action to stop the flow of small arms. He noted that so many small arms were already in circulation that even if the supply of new arms were cut off or the movement of arms from state to state were stopped, the diffusion of guns within each country would still be destructive. Dr. Laurance called upon the international community to develop non-traditional, non-arms control initiatives to counter the small arms scourge.

Dr. Laurance called attention to the many segments of society that feel the effects of small arms. These weapons terrorize and intimidate civilians, stifle economic development, and prevent the delivery of humanitarian relief in societies recovering from conflict. Dr. Laurance noted that while it is important to treat the root causes of violence, the presence of large quantities of small arms can be a cause of violence in itself. He stressed the need to consider the personal impact of small arms – the linkage between the proliferation of small arms and the stories we read in the newspaper each day.

Dr. Laurance argued that because the establishment of global norms and regimes on small arms depends upon the participation of governments, incentives must be created for them to act in good faith, rather than escape through loopholes in treaties and conventions. He urged civil society to play a central role in the process of norm and regime-building. Because civilians are the people who witness the devastation of small arms firsthand, civil society must press to keep this issue in the spotlight and to provide decision-makers with the information they need to develop sound policies. He suggested that communities worldwide should conduct surveys of local gun sales and gun violence, along the lines of those performed by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Dr. Laurance asserted that global solutions to the small arms problem are crucial because the supply networks, financial support, enforcement, and interdiction of small arms, as well as networks for reconstruction and conflict resolution, are all global in nature. However, the creation of global norms to limit the proliferation of small arms faces an uphill battle. An opposing norm that favors continued high levels of arms sales—based on the belief that citizens have the “right” to buy guns for self-defense, self-determination, entertainment, or to provide for their families—is preventing the development of a global consensus on small arms policy.

**Clarissa Kayosa**

*Center for International Policy*

Ms. Kayosa emphasized that the solution to the small arms problem should be global in nature, but stressed the need for individual responsibility as well. She discussed several ongoing conflicts in Africa and the debilitating effects of small arms on these war-torn societies. Ms. Kayosa noted that the abuse of small arms was especially tragic for children, many of whom have lost their parents at an early age. She wondered about the future of societies where children had more experience holding guns than schoolbooks.

Ms. Kayosa argued that the conflicts in Africa were being fueled by foreign arms sales and military aid, including outside private military companies. She commented that it was unjust that the people suffering from gun violence in Africa were so far removed from the decisions to authorize this “aid.” She noted that the common practice of exchanging weapons for Africa’s natural resources—usually by taking advantage of weakened state structures—was yet another way that Africa was suffering from the small arms trade. Ms. Kayosa asked the audience to lend all possible support to conflict-ridden regions worldwide, noting that the proliferation of small arms is “a problem for all of us.”

## DISCUSSION

Several participants remarked that the trade of natural resources for weapons, especially in Africa, blocks effective enforcement of international arms embargos on countries or regions of conflict. Mr. Holum responded that the administration was considering a proposal to require imported diamonds to be accompanied by a certificate of origin. When a participant noted that many other natural resources are being traded for arms, Mr. Holum replied that it is not feasible or desirable to limit the trade of all such materials, but that states should work together to ensure that the trade in natural resources are only through legitimate channels.

In response to a question about the legal trade in small arms, Mr. Holum admitted that the U.S. is the largest exporter of conventional arms, but said that U.S. weapons are transferred to allies and only for legitimate self-defense purposes. Another State Department official remarked controls on small arms sales are particularly tight, noting that in 1999, the State Department only approved three licenses for small arms exports to Sub-Saharan Africa, and these were intended only for use in peacekeeping activities. While noting that the U.S. has the world's strictest arms export control policy, Mr. Holum admitted that there remains room for improvement in the areas of end-use monitoring and preventing unauthorized retransfers of U.S.-origin equipment.

In response to the question of the administration's position on a U.S. or International Arms Transfer Code of Conduct, Mr. Holum responded that the administration has been wary about the Code because it would prevent sales to certain U.S. allies that were not democracies but still needed U.S. support. The administration is therefore looking for a more flexible model to address legal arms transfers.

Mr. Holum also stressed that stemming demand is as important as limiting supply, noting that countries are not obliged to consume everything that is available to purchase. Much debate then ensued about the U.S. government's role in arms sales promotion through subsidies for arms exports and official guidance to embassy staff to encourage U.S. arms procurement. Mr. Holum noted that after U.S. standards are applied to a sale and an initial policy decision is made, then the Department and U.S. embassy staff are justified in promoting a U.S. company for the sale. A participant responded that, on the contrary, arms were in a different category than other commodities, and their export should not be promoted like other U.S. goods.

The UN Conference on Illicit Trafficking in All its Aspects scheduled for 2001 was also discussed. The U.S. officials suggested that the 2001 Conference should result in an agreement which is practical and enforceable, touching on both supply and demand as well as arms brokering.

The question of arms transfers to Colombia was also raised, and participants asked what the U.S. government was planning to do to ensure that weapons bound for Colombia were not diverted to unauthorized recipients. The U.S. officials present expressed their commitment to ensuring the proper end-use of transferred weapons.

## WORKSHOPS

After the plenary session, the conference divided into two sets of workshops: issue-oriented and action-oriented. The issue-oriented workshops provided background information and historical perspectives on the impact of small arms on various groups, organizations, and situations. The action-oriented workshops reviewed ways in which the small arms issue can be raised on the agenda of the public, media, and decision-makers. The workshops examined current policy initiatives underway on small arms and outlined potential areas for NGO action.

### **Undermining Development**

The undermining development workshop examined the effect of small arms on economic and social development and provided suggestions for the development community to counter these negative effects.

#### **Nicole Ball**

*Overseas Development Council*

Dr. Ball spoke about the increasingly important role of development actors in post-conflict transitions and in reducing both supply and demand for small arms. International financial institutions and other multilateral organizations can help stem the supply of small arms by promoting stricter controls on legal arms transfers, demonstrating to governments the impact of small arms proliferation, assisting programs to safeguard arms stockpiles and to collect and destroy excess arms, and providing technical support for regional organizations working to stem the illicit flow of arms across their borders. Development agents can also help control demand for small arms through work on conflict prevention and resolution, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants into society, and the strengthening of civil society.

#### **David Biggs**

*United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs*

Mr. Biggs presented the UN Development Program's (UNDP) Weapons in Exchange for Development (WED) program, and its pilot project in Gramsh, Albania. The goal of the WED program is to reduce the number of small arms in a region (either post-conflict or in this case, after the pillage of Albanian arsenals in 1997) by providing the entire community with development aid in return for collected weapons. Mr. Biggs noted that traditional "buy-back" or "goods for guns" programs reward the individual rather than the community, which changes the incentive structure. The WED program in Gramsh successfully collected over

5,700 weapons and over 130 tons of ammunition. In exchange, UNDP provided the community with rehabilitated roads, new bridges, a post office, a local telephone system, and improved street lighting. The re-establishment of public security was also a key element of the program, aided by the return of so many weapons. UNDP has developed guidelines for all its programs so they may assess whether such an initiative can be applied elsewhere. Mr. Biggs emphasized that key to the program's success in Gramsh was the community's voluntary participation and a concerted public awareness raising campaign before and during the WED program.

**Gregor Binkert**

*World Bank*

Mr. Binkert noted that although the discussion was focusing on post-conflict reconstruction and weapons removal, it is not always possible to talk about "post" conflict because some regions are in a permanent state, or a recurring pattern, of conflict. Describing his experience in Mozambique, he noted that demobilization and weapons collection programs that do not destroy excess weapons can provoke conflict and crime elsewhere as the guns find their way into the black market. For example, guns from Mozambique flooded South Africa after the peace accords, and many fear the same will happen when peace eventually arrives in Angola. Mr. Binkert also observed that the development community needs to work more cooperatively with police and security forces, both of whom should be key partners in reducing gun flows and promoting good governance.

**Johanna Mendelson**

*U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)*

Ms. Mendelson agreed that security sector reform was crucial and suggested that the U.S. government (especially USAID) focus more on the security aspect of good governance. International financial institutions should also focus more on security and post-conflict reconstruction since development cannot take place in an environment of instability. She noted that USAID has become increasingly involved in promoting police reforms, demobilization, reintegration programs, and military conversion. An Agency working group on small arms has been created to tackle the problem, though internal coordination on these types of projects remains limited.

**Discussion**

Participants noted that coordination among international organizations is also difficult because each entity needs to claim credit for field work for fund-raising purposes. Mr. Biggs noted that the UN was making an effort to coordinate the action of several UN agencies and international organizations via the UN's Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA).

## **Small Arms and Conflict**

The small arms and conflict workshop examined the effect of small arms on conflict and conflict resolution processes.

### ***William Zartman***

*Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*

Dr. Zartman discussed the symbiotic relationship between supply and demand and the impact of small arms on society. He noted that the possession of guns can make civilians belligerent and that the presence of arms can escalate already tense situations. While conflict among people cannot always be resolved, it is important to try to remove the tools of conflict from the equation in order to prevent or resolve conflicts most effectively. Dr. Zartman argued that the international community should help try to limit the supply of small arms to conflict areas and help collect and destroy the weapons after a peace agreement is reached. These restrictions should apply to both governments and rebel groups alike. Dr. Zartman highlighted the merging of control regimes among non-governmental organizations and governments, using landmines and child soldiers as current examples. Yet, he warned that it will be more difficult to gain international consensus on a small arms regime because, whereas the use of landmines has been demonized, most states hold that there are legitimate uses for small arms.

### ***Ed Laurance***

*Monterey Institute of International Studies*

Dr. Laurance argued that small arms not only affect the duration and intensity of conflict, but can actually contribute to the outbreak of conflict. Therefore, tracking the flows of weapons into unstable regions can provide early warnings of conflict. Weapons also alter both the security environment and the mindset of the people involved in a conflict, rendering conflict resolution all the more difficult. Dr. Laurance provided examples of the terrible impact small arms can have on human rights, development, and post-conflict reconstruction. He also noted with concern that the legitimate military uses of small arms work against efforts to limit the flow and misuse of these weapons.

### ***Clarissa Kayosa***

*Center for International Policy*

Ms. Kayosa discussed the effect of small arms on conflicts in Africa. The conflicts being waged in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Great Lakes region are all fueled by small arms. Government to government weapons transfers as well as

transfers to rebel militaries and military companies all contribute to the level of violence in Africa. A key to conflict resolution in Africa would be to effectively monitor and regulate weapons brought into the region.

## **Discussion**

The discussion focused on how weapons have affected war-torn societies in El Salvador, Angola, and Colombia, as well as the legitimate versus illegitimate uses and users of small arms. Participants noted that the transfer of small arms to non-state actors is particularly controversial because some people feel that as long as repressive states are able to use force against their own citizens, groups should have the right to take up arms in their own defense. Participants also mentioned that not only collection, but also destruction of weapons is critical to preventing outbreaks of violence in post-conflict or particularly tense societies.

## **Illicit Trafficking**

The illicit trafficking workshop examined illicit weapons flows to regions of conflict, international efforts to illicit arms trafficking, and the impact of American illegal gun trade on control efforts.

### **Kathi Austin**

*Fund for Peace*

Ms. Austin addressed the question of how weapons end up in the wrong hands. She focused on the case of the illicit trade in Africa, but noted that it was illustrative of patterns elsewhere. Ms. Austin noted that although the international community has expressed support for strict controls over the illicit trade in small arms, very few meaningful policies have been undertaken. Progress is generally slowed by the persistence of several myths, including: 1) pipelines are covert, too well concealed to uncover, and impossible to identify, 2) there are so many weapons, little can be done to combat the trade, and 3) the problem is too sensitive to address properly. Ms. Austin countered that pipelines can indeed be found through close surveillance of ports and border crossings, and once identified, they can be shut down. She also noted that it is necessary to demystify the problem of illicit trafficking, which must be discussed openly and directly in diplomatic, political, and military circles.

Ms. Austin observed that weapons really can be a cause of conflict, pointing out that rebels will not initiate combat if they do not have the weapons or ammunition to do so. The physical inability to fight can open avenues for peaceful conflict resolution. Ms. Austin described the composition of illicit arms pipelines, including financiers – sometimes American – who contribute money and equipment to factions in far away conflicts.

Ms. Austin mentioned that there are agents who actually initiate dialogues with embassy staff or other government officials to procure weapons. Government suppliers may involve state industries or corrupt government officials, as in Bulgaria or Ukraine. Middlemen or brokers are often involved in the illicit or gray market trade, often residing in one country, procuring the arms from another, and transporting them via a third state. Some transport and cargo industries, sometimes the same airlines that service humanitarian agencies, also transport weapons. Under the cover of the relief agency's name, they can move about undetected and unimpeded.

Ms. Austin described how the trade for weapons persists to further financial, political, and foreign policy goals. Weapons are traded for ivory, timber, oil, diamonds, and other natural resources. Some of the people who participate are former Cold War covert agents who have maintained their former lifestyles. Traffickers forge or falsify end-user certificates, provide false flight plans, use small and obscure ports, exploit corruption, and sometimes set up front companies to facilitate shipments.

### **Enrique Perez**

*U.S. Department of the Treasury*

Mr. Perez described the international initiatives to combat illicit trade that focus on law enforcement. He stressed that negotiators of the ECOSOC Firearms Protocol (to the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime) are trying to avoid the impression that they are creating a disarmament regime. Instead, they are trying to extend the OAS Convention against Illicit Firearms Trafficking to the global level. This includes criminalizing the illicit arms trade, developing marking and licensing rules, limiting the ability of arms brokers to operate outside the law, and encouraging states to exchange technical information on the prevention of illicit trafficking.

Negotiators of the Firearms Protocol are currently defining the scope of the Protocol. For example, the Protocol only addresses commercial sales, considering government transfers legitimate and a matter of national security. The Protocol aims to increase security during import, export, and transit of small arms cargo. This requires uniform end-use certificates that are difficult to counterfeit. Mr. Perez noted that implementation of the Protocol will require the cooperation of industry in devising an acceptable marking system. He stressed that ratification of the protocol is not enough; implementation is crucial.

### **Mark Pertschuk**

*Coalition to Stop Gun Violence*

Mr. Pertschuk discussed the levels of crime and gun related deaths in the United States, noting that the levels are much higher in the United States than in comparable industrialized countries. He remarked that there is a "comfort level" with guns in the United States regarding guns that makes guns sales more acceptable in the United States than in many other countries. There is also very little federal funded research into firearms injuries—partly due to NRA efforts to block funding for such activities.

Mr. Pertschuk argued that the pernicious effects of weak American gun control laws do not stop at the country's borders,

however. They also affect Canada, Mexico, and other countries in the hemisphere. Fears that international regulations would affect domestic laws undermine support for an international arms control regime. Mr. Pertschuk said that until guns are seen as a problem domestically, the U.S. government cannot successfully address the problem at the international level.

## **The Human Dimension**

The human dimension workshop examined how small arms are used in violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

### **Daniel Garcia Peña**

*American University*

Mr. Garcia Peña discussed the prevalence of small arms in Colombia, noting that Colombian civilians suffer high casualties from guerrilla, paramilitary, and criminal activities combined with poor police protection. He argued that most of these deaths are attributable to a purposeful strategy targeting specific groups and individuals rather than civilians being caught in the crossfire. In Colombia, small arms are readily available on the black market to drug traffickers, right wing paramilitaries, and left wing groups. Legal sales, such as those sent by the United States for counter-narcotics aid, also contribute to the problem by increasing the supply of arms in the region and creating an internal arms race among the factions.

Mr. Garcia Peña added that 72% of human rights violations in Colombia have been committed by paramilitaries, as opposed to 4% by the Colombian military. At the same time, the Colombian military's failure to curtail paramilitary activities or prosecute those suspected of abuses indicates the military's complicity in paramilitary action. The proposed U.S. military aid package to Colombia also treats paramilitaries lightly by supporting a military push into the guerrilla-controlled south while ignoring the paramilitary-controlled north. Mr. Garcia Peña argued that the proposed aid package would exacerbate the armed conflict rather than treating the root causes. He advocated the alternative development aid and continued negotiations with the guerrillas, both of which have proven more fruitful in the past than a military approach.

### **Michael Klare**

*Hampshire College*

Dr. Klare described the changing character of actors using small arms and light weapons. Assault rifles are increasingly used by irregular forces who are not trained in the laws of war and are not held accountable for their actions. Unschooling in the rules of proper military engagement and often motivated by the promise of drugs, food, and money, they are responsible for many violations of international humanitarian law.

## **Grassroots Action**

The grassroots action workshop drew on the experiences of other arms control campaigns to examine the possibilities for grassroots mobilization on the small arms issue.

### **Joe Volk**

*Friends Committee on National Legislation*

Mr. Volk spoke about the campaign for a U.S. Arms Transfer Code of Conduct. The idea for a Code began after the Persian Gulf War, when President Bush, along with the arms control community, argued that it would have been a lot less expensive to limit arms transfers to the Gulf states than to fight a war. When President Bush's approval of a major sale of arms to Taiwan scuttled efforts by the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council to develop common restraints on conventional arms transfers, the Washington-based Arms Transfers Working Group developed the concept of a Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers. The Code would prevent arms sales to governments that were not democratic, committed serious human rights abuses, were engaged in acts of armed aggression, or were not transparent about their arms exports and imports.

The grassroots campaign for the Code used a legislative vehicle, the Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers bill, as an organizing hook. The immediate goal was not necessarily passage of the bill, but putting the problem of conventional weapons proliferation on the public policy agenda. Over the past several years, the campaign succeeded in raising public and congressional awareness of the problem of arms exports. In fact, a variant of the Code that requires the President to pursue a multilateral Code of Conduct passed Congress in the fall of 1999. In parallel to the U.S. campaign, grassroots groups in Europe and elsewhere helped achieve passage of a European Code of Conduct and the proposal of an International Code of Conduct by 16 Nobel Peace Laureates. Thus, long after the Permanent Five failed to conclude a multilateral conventional arms control agreement, the work of grassroots campaigns in the U.S., Europe, and elsewhere may have successfully laid the foundation for success of a multilateral control regime.

### **Gary Gillespie**

*American Friends Service Committee*

Mr. Gillespie talked about his experiences in organizing local action around the international and domestic firearms issue, noting the effectiveness of addressing weapons management at the community level. His work involves teaching people to challenge the idea that they must live with weapons; creating local "listening projects" that enable local leaders to hear from their constituents; and providing nonviolence and community building training to build a culture of peace. Building an effective

local movement requires cutting across class, race, and gender lines to create awareness of, and a desire to counter, the flow of guns in a community.

## **Discussion**

Participants added information about successful strategies for grassroots activism, citing the campaigns against the use of tobacco and in favor of stricter gun control laws. The discussion centered on how to build and motivate a constituency for policy change. It was noted that activists need to be patient in this process. Many years ago, NGOs were told that small arms were not an important foreign policy issue, now it is a priority area for the U.S. government.

## **Media Strategies Workshop**

The media strategies workshop provided participants with concrete ideas for working with journalists on the small arms issue.

### **Dana Priest**

*The Washington Post*

Ms. Priest provided a range of pointers for working with the press on arms trade related stories. She encouraged the audience to decide how to pitch a story – as a long-term issue or a news-making piece – and to whom – feature writers, investigative journalists, or foreign correspondents. She urged NGOs to look to other campaigns that have made the front pages for clues about what makes advocacy issues newsworthy, compelling, and original. Above all, the material must be reliable, a fact journalists do not always take for granted when working with advocacy groups. Other tips for working with journalists: keep stories focused, coordinate more closely with reporters, and play on journalists' competitive instincts by getting the story out to a large number of journalists at once (e.g., via news conferences, letter-writing campaigns, or demonstrations).

### **Carol Bogert**

*Human Rights Watch*

Ms. Bogert counseled participants on successful strategies for working with and through the media. She noted that because journalists must work on a very short timeline and cannot dwell on issues, NGOs should be prepared to seize opportunities as they arise, such as by having photos and data available when called upon. Information that provides a human touch to an issue is also essential. NGOs should also assist journalists in developing a local angle to the issue.

**Kathi Austin**  
*Fund for Peace*

Ms. Austin emphasized that during her time as an investigator of the arms trade, the relationships she has developed with journalists have been crucial. She encouraged participants to make direct contact with journalists and editors by calling them or attending professional media events. Getting published does not necessarily require having breaking news; human interest stories also work well.

**Discussion**

Participants discussed the critical importance of field research in obtaining material for stories on the arms trade, especially those with a human interest component. Participants also noted that media attention can help foster policy development on arms trade issues, especially if coverage promotes international awareness and outrage about humanitarian concerns.

**Policy Development**

The policy development workshop examined current initiatives underway in the U.S. Congress and the administration on small arms and presented possibilities for future action.

**Michael Schiffer**  
*Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein*

Mr. Schiffer discussed both the challenges of developing policy reforms on small arms and the opportunities for doing so in the coming year. He noted that the first problem to be resolved is a lack of good data on the number and sources of small arms, but indicated that studies by the Government Accounting Office and the State Department due this spring and summer should shed some light on the matter. Other hurdles for advocates of small arms policy reform include the lack of political immediacy for most members of Congress, the highly technical nature of most of the policy proposals, and the fear of NRA reprisal for anything remotely related to domestic gun control. With this in mind, Mr. Schiffer felt that ratification of the two OAS Conventions on arms control – one to increase transparency on arms transfers and the other to reduce small arms trafficking – were important, but difficult goals for this year. Some smaller, more realistic goals might include providing more resources for Customs officers to conduct searches for arms and requiring arms brokers to register and receive licenses for items on the Commerce Department's control list. He also supported a Code of Conduct, efforts to inform presidential candidates about the problem of small arms, and

the creation of a single office in the State Department to address the issue.

**Lora Lumpe**

*Amnesty International*

Ms. Lumpe noted that the U.S. government has made some progress on the issue of small arms transfers that should serve as a model to other states: new rules on arms brokers will help reduce the U.S. “gray market” for small arms, and the reinstatement of an annual report on U.S. arms transfers in 1996 has set a high standard for transparency. The U.S. also helped broker the two OAS Conventions on arms transfers and has assisted many African states with border control and arms export and import legislation. At the same time, the U.S. continues to export large quantities of small arms – between \$400 and \$600 million a year for the past three years – without an effective system for ensuring that the arms are not illegally re-transferred to other states or to abusive forces within those states. Ms. Lumpe argued that the definition of “illicit” arms trade should be extended to sales of arms to states which violate international humanitarian and human rights law and to state-supported covert gun-running to opposition groups.

**Discussion**

Participants agreed that it is most important to establish norms on small arms transfers, without which legal reforms will be meaningless. Work on a U.S. and an international Code of Conduct (aided by passage of the “International Arms Transfers Code of Conduct” this fall) helps with this norm-building process. Other participants suggested collecting data on the impact of small arms violence through community-based research, both in the U.S. and abroad.

**Multilateral Action**

The multilateral action workshop examined various international initiatives to address small arms proliferation.

**David Jackman**

*Quaker United Nations Office*

Mr. Jackman discussed the evolving treatment of small arms issues in the United Nations. Traditionally, the UN’s work on conventional weapons, such as the development of a UN Register of Conventional Arms, has focused on major conventional weapons systems. During the past five years, however, the UN has become increasingly active on the small arms issue. The UN

has begun coordinating inter-agency efforts, organized panels of government experts, and held Security Council meetings devoted to the problem of small arms proliferation.

Mr. Jackman noted that unfortunately there is no consensus among member states on the small arms issue. Some would rather focus on illicit sales, while others want to push for legal controls and restraint. Working in the UN's consensus environment can be rather frustrating for NGOs seeking to reduce small arms proliferation. However, Mr. Jackman believes that looking at the "destabilizing accumulation" of small arms can be a meaningful tool for action at the UN. The UN's 2001 conference on illicit weapons trafficking should serve to promote initiatives on small arms control.

### **Greg Puley**

*Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress*

Mr. Puley discussed the Nobel Peace Laureates' International Code of Conduct. The International Code focuses on the legal trade and supply side of the arms trade. Eighteen Nobel Laureates have signed on to the Code's core principles. Development of an International Code followed introduction in the U.S. Congress of a U.S. Code of Conduct under the leadership of Representatives Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) and Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA). The International Code is designed to address some members of Congress' criticism that only a multilateral-based regime would effectively counter conventional arms proliferation.

Mr. Puley also discussed the responsibilities of states under international humanitarian law to prevent the flow of arms into regions of conflict where they might be used in violations of humanitarian law. States too often emphasize the "drugs and thugs" model of arms control, which focuses on problems of law enforcement and crime. This model allows states to avoid tackling the more difficult problem of legal sales, and the impact of small arms on conflicts and human rights abuses.

### **Michael Klare**

*Hampshire College*

Dr. Klare discussed the development of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). He noted that small arms are not just a bilateral issue, but a global problem requiring global solutions and international cooperation. IANSA fulfills this requirement by representing the NGO community in international fora; allowing NGOs to share materials, resources, expertise, information, and experience; assisting in the development of local and regional activities; and bridging the divide between North and South on small arms issues.

### **Discussion**

The discussion focused on bringing other NGOs to the table to work on small arms issues. For example, participants discussed bringing in public health specialists by demonstrating to doctors the physical and economic costs of gun-related

violence. Participants also brainstormed as to how to broaden the range of groups involved in the fight against small arms proliferation. Suggestions included highlighting what countries and companies the weapons came from and stigmatizing mutual funds that include arms manufacturers. Participants also suggested providing subsidies to weapons manufacturers NOT to make weapons (similar to paying farmers not to grow wheat).

## CLOSING SESSION

The closing session began with a review of the action-oriented workshops by workshop rapporteurs.

### **Grassroots Workshop**

In the grassroots workshop, there was discussion of experiences on campaigns. Small arms have now become a major foreign policy issue largely as a result of pressures by grassroots groups and NGOs. There was discussion of the different kinds of grassroots action in different countries and regions. The need to bring the small arms message to the local level was seen as essential.

### **Media Workshop**

The media workshop discussed establishing guidelines that would take into account the interest and agenda of the media, as well as techniques to highlight the issue. Media pressure was seen as an important tool for small arms work, because it can be effectively used to press Congress for greater transparency, oversight of the export process, and better end-use protection. Members of the workshop discussed the appeal of a uniform, simple, and identifiable message (something along the lines of the landmine campaign). The do's and don't's of working with the media were also discussed.

### **Policy Development Workshop**

The policy development workshop examined the many options for new policies on small arms, as so few have already been undertaken by the administration and Congress. Some areas that deserve immediate policy attention include: more transparency on exports, better end-use monitoring provisions, and full implementation of the code of conduct.

### **Multilateral Initiatives**

The multilateral initiatives workshop discussed the benefits of multilateral action for a global problem like small arms. Examination of the problem from a human perspective can be effectively translated into all countries and among all constituencies. The workshop also discussed problems in addressing cultures of violence and the lack of alternative problem solving options. A technique that is easily translatable to many countries is using the media to create pressure on governments

and companies by highlighting what kinds of weapons are used, where they are manufactured, and by which company. Multilateral action can only work if the message is spread around the world and not limited to Washington and among the experts.

## **Discussion**

Suggestions were made that the message can be disseminated more widely if conferences such as this one are held in other cities, at universities, in churches, etc. The conferences can serve to build constituencies for action on the small arms issue.

Participants agreed that there is a real need to make small arms a local issue. A message must be developed that includes public images and something that the everyday public can rally around and identify with. Development of a clear message will bring light to the issue and raise the profile of SAWG and IANSA. Similarly, the issue could be raised in the 2000 political campaigns.

Participants encouraged the creation of coalitions to foster greater influence and attain a position of leverage. For example, a coalition with the tourism industry could prove potent given the effect conflict and crime can have on tourism profits (e.g., after the Luxor massacre, \$1 billion were lost in potential revenues). As the number one industry in the world, the influence of the tourism industry can help to achieve reform. Furthermore, establishing connections with the executive directors of multilateral development banks can highlight the effects of small arms on recovery and reconstruction efforts.

### **Tamar Gabelnick**

*Federation of American Scientists*

Ms. Gabelnick summarized the conference by describing the multidimensional nature of the problem of small arms proliferation. To begin with, three aspects must be addressed simultaneously: the supply, demand, the overabundant supply of weapons currently in circulation. In addition, the flow of small arms affects a multitude of issues, from economic development to crime and conflict prevention. Ms. Gabelnick said that although the landmine campaign can teach us many lessons, the complexity of the small arms issue means that unlike the landmines campaign, no single policy change will rectify all of the problems, and no single weapon can be banned. Many different strategies must occur simultaneously to make real progress. Only when small arms solutions are multi-dimensional can positive advances be made. Finally, she encouraged participants to spread the word among their colleagues and communities about the scourge of guns and encourage them to get involved.

# AGENDA



## **8:30 – 9:00: Registration and coffee**

## **9:00 – 11:00: Opening Plenary**

- **William Zartman**, *Professor of International Organizations and Conflict Resolution and Director of African Studies, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies*
- **John Holum**, *Senior Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State for Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament*
- **Ed Laurance**, *Director of the Program on Security and Development, Monterey Institute of International Studies*
- **Clarissa Kayosa**, *Campaign Coordinator, Demilitarization for Democracy, Center for International Policy*
- **Moderator: Loretta Bondi**, *Advocacy Director, Arms Division, Human Rights Watch*

## **11:00 – 11:15: Coffee Break**

## **11:15 – 12:45: Thematic Workshops**

### **I. Undermining Development**

- **Nicole Ball**, *Overseas Development Council*
- **David Biggs**, *United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs*
- **Gregor Binkert**, *World Bank*
- **Johanna Mendelson**, *U.S. Agency for International Development*
- **Moderator: Robin Poulton**, *United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research*

### **II. Small Arms and Conflict**

- **William Zartman**, *School of Advanced International Studies*
- **Ed Laurance**, *Monterey Institute of International Studies*
- **Clarissa Kayosa**, *Center for International Policy*
- **Moderator: Rachel Stohl**, *Center for Defense Information*

### **III. Illicit Weapons Trafficking**

- **Kathi Austin**, *Fund for Peace*
- **Mark Pertschuk**, *Coalition to Stop Gun Violence*
- **Enrique Pérez**, *U.S. Department of the Treasury*
- **Moderator: Sally Chin**, *British American Security Information Council*

### **IV. The Human Dimension**

- **Daniel Garcia Peña**, *American University*
- **Michael Klare**, *Hampshire College*
- **Moderator: Loretta Bondí**, *Human Rights Watch*

**12:45 – 2:00: Lunch**

**2:00 – 3:30: Action-Oriented Workshops**

#### **I. Grassroots Action**

- **Joe Volk**, *Friends Committee on National Legislation*
- **Gary Gillespie**, *American Friends Service Committee*
- **Moderator: Mark Pertschuk**, *Coalition to Stop Gun Violence*

#### **II. Media Strategies**

- **Dana Priest**, *The Washington Post*
- **Carol Bogert**, *Human Rights Watch*
- **Kathi Austin**, *Fund for Peace*
- **Moderator: Loretta Bondí**, *Human Rights Watch*

#### **III. Policy Development**

- **Lora Lumpe**, *Amnesty International*

- **Michael Schiffer**, *Office of Senator Feinstein*
- **Moderator: Tamar Gabelnick**, *Federation of American Scientists*

#### **IV. Multilateral Action**

- **Michael Klare**, *Hampshire College*
- **David Jackman**, *Quaker United Nations Office*
- **Greg Puley**, *Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress*
- **Moderator: Rachel Stohl**, *Center for Defense Information*

#### **3:30 – 3:45: Coffee Break**

#### **3:45 – 5:00: Closing Session**

- **Michael Klare**, *Hampshire College*
- **Tamar Gabelnick**, *Federation of American Scientists*
- **Session Rapporteurs**

## TEXT OF JOHN HOLUM'S FEBRUARY 4 SPEECH ON ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

The uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons remains a major international problem and one without ready solutions, says John Holum, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

"The dirty business of illicit small arms trafficking fuels conflict, fortifies extremism, and destabilizes entire regions," and both government and non-governmental officials must keep working at addressing the problem, Holum said in remarks February 4 to a Small Arms Working Group meeting at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies in Washington "Rest assured that the United States will continue to do its part, and to be a global leader in this fight," he said.

Following is the text of Holum's remarks, as prepared for delivery:

Remarks of John D. Holum Senior Advisor for Arms Control and International Security  
Small Arms Working Group Meeting Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies  
Washington, DC  
February 4, 2000

### **Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons: U.S. Perspectives and Priorities**

#### **Introduction**

I am delighted to be here this morning to participate in this panel discussion and to contribute to what I anticipate will be a useful dialogue. Over the past five years, curbing the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons has become an international imperative, leading to a virtual explosion of initiatives, with increasingly positive results. I have been asked to address the various efforts underway to advance these efforts. I will also outline U.S. priorities for the coming year, which promises to be another active one in the small arms arena.

#### **Scope of the Problem**

Arms controllers tend to focus most of their attention on the perceived bigger challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. But the dangers of illicit trafficking and accumulation of small arms and light weapons

can be no less devastating and, indeed, even more real. Weapons of mass destruction have the potential to wipe out whole cities at a time.

Small arms routinely do wipe out the equivalent of whole cities, a few people at a time. In fact, small arms are responsible for the most of the killing and injuries in the increasing number of intrastate conflicts that have occurred since the end of the Cold War.

Small arms and light weapons fall into six major categories: revolvers and self loading pistols; sub-machine guns; machine guns; grenades; anti-tank weapons; and anti-aircraft weapons. They include assault rifles, light and heavy machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, and individually portable mortars and missiles.

The relatively inexpensive unit price of small arms stands in stark contrast to their high social cost. Many of the world's poorest countries spend hundreds of millions of dollars buying small arms. Funds are diverted, crops are mortgaged, and relief supplies are stolen to finance these purchases. At each end, as the taxed and the target, the people are the losers.

Small arms and light weapons are insidious, not just because they are so easily acquired and concealed, but because they are so durable. Many of the small arms found in Africa, for example, date from World Wars I and II. Moreover, the sources of small arms are diverse and often illicit, making efforts to identify and curtail their proliferation extremely difficult.

Despite the numerous challenges, the enormous destructive potential and destabilizing impact of these weapons make efforts to curb their import, export, and stockpiling an urgent issue. Thankfully, it is one the global community recently has come to embrace, with a number of complementary efforts in every region and in a variety of multilateral fora.

### **Initiatives Underway**

Efforts to address the small arms problem began in earnest in the mid-1990s, and they've since expanded in both scope and number. The Summit of the Americas declaration in 1994 launched the first regionally focused effort. The Western Hemisphere is still breaking new ground in this area with an ambitious effort to implement the Inter American (OAS) Convention Against the Illicit Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, and Other Related Materials. To date, ten OAS members have ratified the Convention. All but four have signed. The United States submitted the Convention for Senate ratification in 1998, and hopes to secure ratification this year.

While small arms and light weapons initiatives took hold first in this hemisphere, today they are underway in virtually every region. More and more countries are confronting the reality that regional growth and prosperity cannot be divorced from regional stability and security. Ongoing efforts include:

- building and enhancing enforcement and legal capacities;
- providing training on export controls and customs practices;
- improving transparency;
- strengthening sanctions against embargo violators;

- discouraging irresponsible exports;
- enhancing stockpile security; and
- destroying surplus stocks.

Over the past 18 months Africa, in particular, has been the focus of much of this work. A number of African sub-regional efforts are already in place and more are planned. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is moving ahead on its Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation, and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons, while the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has initiated an effort focused on its member states. With strong U.S. backing, a U.N. Institute for Crime Prevention is being established in Kampala, Uganda, which will complement the Headquarters of the ECOWAS Moratorium at Bamako, Mali and the small arms activities of the U.N. Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Lome, Togo. Later this month, a Conference will be held in Kenya to address problems of small arms in East Africa. And the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is sponsoring a series of sub-regional conferences throughout the coming year to help the region prepare for the international U.N. Small Arms Conference in 2001.

In Asia, certain countries -- most notably Japan and Australia -- have played an active and important role in the small arms arena. However, the region overall is just beginning to focus on the impact of small arms regionally; during the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting last fall, the issue was added to the ARF agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

A number of multilateral organizations have put small arms on their respective agendas. The European Union (EU) has been especially active, developing a Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers, a Program for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms, and a Joint Action on Small Arms. Last December, the EU and the U.S. signed a Joint Statement of Principles that included U.S. support for the EU Code of Conduct and the establishment of a working group with ten action items. The United States also agreed with Norway to pursue jointly a number of stockpile destruction projects.

The G-8 and the Wassenaar Arrangement are also addressing aspects of the issue. For example, Wassenaar members are working to achieve agreement this year on a proposal to control MANPADS (Man Portable Air Defense Systems). The Stability Pact, NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), and the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE) also have proposals under active consideration.

At the global level, ad hoc groups like the so-called Oslo Group, are engaged. The United Nations has adopted an especially active and hands-on approach to the small arms problem. The experts' studies produced by the U.N. during the past five years have helped members better understand the scope of the problem, assess implementation efforts, and determine priorities for action. And last fall, the U.N. Security Council convened a Small Arms Ministerial Meeting.

Current U.N. efforts will culminate with the international conference in 2001 in New York to address the illicit arms trade in all its aspects. This Conference will be used to galvanize international attention and draw up a "global action plan" to address the problem. Preparations for that Conference begin this month in New York.

Another key global initiative underway, one we hope will reach successful conclusion this year, is the effort to reach agreement on an Illicit Firearms and Ammunition Trafficking Protocol to the UN Transnational Organized Crime Convention.

## **U.S. Efforts and Priorities:**

The United States is a leader on this issue. Secretary of State Albright has delivered major speeches on small arms over the past two years, and has also stressed it in congressional testimony and internal deliberations. U.S. initiatives include, first, expanding our own "best practices" such as adopting model regulations on legal trade drafted by the OAS, and encouraging stronger steps elsewhere, including steps to criminalize UN embargo violations, institute strict end-use and arms brokering controls, promote greater transparency by sharing information on transfers and violations, and curb re-transfers of weapons. The U.S. provides financial and technical support to a host of small arms and light weapons initiatives in Latin America, Africa, and Europe and has led the way in the area of stockpile security and voluntary destruction of surplus stocks of still-lethal weapons.

The U.S. believes strongly that the international response to small arms problems must continue to be balanced between demand and supply-side approaches, to be multidimensional, and to be pursued coherently in all appropriate venues. We will continue to oppose efforts that attempt to impose a single, sweeping, top-down solution. Such efforts ignore innovative efforts developed by those facing the problems daily, and overlook as well the diverse character of the challenge from country to country and region to region.

However, one hazard of a multidimensional approach is the potential for duplication or diffusion of efforts. So, while welcoming the abundance of good ideas and initiatives, it will be important to ensure that they are complimentary rather than competitive and that our resources are channeled toward achieving common objectives.

For the coming year, U.S. priorities are:

- 1) To complete by the end of the year negotiation of the Firearms Protocol to the International Transnational Organized Crime Convention (TOC). A second reading of the draft Protocol began in Vienna in October of last year, and negotiations resumed last month. We are optimistic that negotiations will succeed, but concerted efforts will be needed to keep them on track and exclude extraneous issues from the Protocol.
- 2) To support agreement on guidelines to restrict transfers of Man-Portable Defense Systems (MANPADS) in the Wassenaar Arrangement. The United States introduced this proposal in Wassenaar, and it has been adopted as a Wassenaar initiative. While there is agreement in principle to pursue the proposal, and countries remain committed to discussing the issue, the four-rounds of negotiations to date -- including during the 1999 assessment -- have not produced agreement. We will keep the issue on the agenda, and keep working to narrow remaining differences.
- 3) To increase transparency of transfers of small arms and light weapons. The U.S. has established itself as a leader in the small arms transparency, setting a global standard through its Section 655 reporting requirements. The U.S. is encouraging

other countries to adopt the Section 655 report as a model for their own transparency efforts. In Wassenaar, the U.S. has proposed expanding the current seven reporting categories to seventeen, and has encouraged members to report separately on arms sold to non-Wassenaar countries. Finally, the U.S. is proposing that member countries report all arms transfers to zones of conflict.

4) To coordinate and assist efforts both to secure military stockpiles of SA/LW against loss and theft, as well as to destroy surplus stocks of SA/LW, particularly in areas of conflict and post-conflict. Unsecured stockpiles are a main source of weapons to thieves and illicit traffickers. The U.S. has destroyed or assisted in the destruction of weapons stockpiles in a number of countries, including Liberia, Albania, Kuwait, Haiti, and Panama. We have provided assistance as part of the KFOR and SFOR peacekeeping missions. And we have a number of destruction projects in the planning stage, including cooperative efforts with Norway in Southeastern Europe.

While good efforts are underway, the U.S. believes that this aspect of the small arms problem needs still greater attention. Measures to secure active stocks and destroy excess weapons are cheap, often costing just pennies a weapon for large stocks. We could reap large dividends by curbing crime and insecurity, reducing the threat to development, and allowing the reconstruction of societies attempting to recover from civil war and/or ethnic conflicts.

The unfortunate reality is that there are huge quantities of small arms and light weapons in circulation, both those left over from the Cold War and the result of new production. Our efforts to control international transfers will produce little benefit for the populations most directly affected unless and until we are able to secure existing stocks and destroy surpluses.

## **Conclusion**

The uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons remains an enormous problem, one that will not be easily or quickly solved. The dirty business of illicit small arms trafficking fuels conflict, fortifies extremism, and destabilizes entire regions. All of us whose nations sell such weapons, or through whose nations traffic flows, must help find effective ways to address the problem. And each of us represented here -- government officials, non-governmental representatives, legislators, and academics -- must continue our respective efforts toward that end.

Discussion of the issue and how best to move forward will remain a key part of the process. But there is no substitute for action. We need to press ahead with innovative, concrete, and workable measures for, as Secretary General Kofi Annan reminded us when he addressed African Ministers, every day that we fail to resolve our problems through political, not military means, innocent people around the world pay a terrible price. We owe them our very best efforts.

Rest assured that the United States will continue to do its part, and to be a global leader in this fight. Thank you.

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