

Annan recommends measures to curb global scourge of small arms

25 September – Calling the control of small arms and light weapons “one of the key tasks of the Security Council,” Secretary-General Kofi Annan has recommended a series of measures to fulfil this goal.

In a new [report](#) prepared at the Council’s request, Mr. Annan calls for efforts to develop an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. He also suggests that the Council call upon all countries to use and support the Interpol Weapons and Explosives Tracking System.

Pointing to the potential usefulness of establishing a small arms advisory service within the UN, the Secretary-General says countries should be encouraged to provide resources for that initiative.

In a bid to halt the illicit proliferation of small arms within the framework of international efforts aimed at conflict prevention and peace-building, the Secretary-General recommends that the Council consider enhancing its interaction with the General Assembly on related issues. The Council is also “strongly encouraged” to continue efforts aimed at identifying the links between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the illicit exploitation of natural and other resources, as well as the trade in illegal drugs, and to develop innovative strategies in response.

On peacekeeping, the report recommends that the Council call on parties to conflicts to recognize the importance of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration after the guns are silenced. “The Council is also urged to include in the mandate of peacekeeping operations clear provisions regarding the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, as well as specific measures for the collection and disposal of illicit and/or surplus small arms and light weapons,” the Secretary-General writes.

Another recommendation in the report calls for the Council to consider “coercive measures against Member States that deliberately violate arms embargoes declared in respect of specific conflict areas.” All States, Mr. Annan says, should be called on to enhance transparency in armaments and to undertake other confidence-building measures in defence and security matters.