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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations and with regard to the General Assembly Resolution 63/23 and its note ODA/12-2009/AVPP dated 11 February 2009, has the honour to submit the views on the interrelation between armed violence and development of the Republic of Macedonia.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office for Disarmament Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, April 14, 2009

Office for Disarmament Affairs
Room S-3150



Republic of Macedonia

The presented views of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on the resolution 63/23 entitled "Promoting development through reduction and prevention of armed violence" focuses on the issue of SALW and their impact on armed violence.

Citizens possessing SALW often use it, i.e. abuse the possessed arms for various purposes, starting with perpetration of crimes (armed robberies, banditry, murders etc.) over to intimidation, violation of the public peace and order, public display of weapons and similar. The traditional reality in the country is featured by the use of weapons at family celebrations, at various holidays and similar.

The uncontrolled SALW proliferation and possession have lead to violations of legally prescribed rules and regulations, leading as well to increase of the rate of crimes perpetrated with the use of this type of weapons, resulting also in the spread sense of instability and lack of security among the citizens. This has a wide-scope impact on the every day life of citizens, having also far reaching consequences on the overall development of countries.

The term "small arms and light weapons control" covers all activities aimed at banning or at least to the establishment of controlling framework on the SALW proliferation and possession. The activities involve measures and activities aimed at:

- Control of the state border;
- Amendments to the legislation relevant in this area;
- Raising public awareness and development of communication strategies;
- Collection and destruction of obsolete arms;
- Designing strategies for management of SALW stockpiles.

In this context, the humane aspect should be taken into consideration. Uncontrolled proliferation and possession of arms causes increased sense of insecurity among citizens in their own state. Therefore, the arms control activities should involve as many citizens as possible, since the arms proliferation and possession control results in an increased level of the general security in the country.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia and other state bodies and institutions having competence in this area have the primary responsibility for SALW control.

Therefore, on 16 June, 2005, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the National SALW Control Strategy, and adopting a Decision No. 19-2390/2, on 11 May 2007 the Government of the Republic of Macedonia established a National SALW Control Commission.

Apart from implementing the National SALW Control Strategy, the primary role of the National SALW Control Commission is to control the process of planning, monitoring and analyzing the situation with SALW control, as well as to coordinate the activities of the relevant institutions of the Republic of Macedonia, dealing with problems concerning the prevention, the rooting out of illegal weapons proliferation and the control of legal weapons – all for the purpose of establishment of a more efficient SALW control.

The tasks of the National SALW Commission are the following:

- a) To identify, determine and define the SALW influence on the society, security and the economic and social development of the country;
- b) To define the intervention priorities concerning the SALW control and the implementation of the National Action Plan;
- c) To define and develop the operative measures for SALW control interventions under the envisaged goal;
- d) To develop and expand the National SALW Action Plan ;
- e) To provide a sufficient resources and mobilize them wherever necessary, for purposes of implementing the National AWLS Action Plan;
- f) To approve the detailed proposals for SALW intervention given by all relevant participants, including legislation related issues in support of the National SALW Action Plan;
- g) To coordinate the activities of all relevant participants in support of the National SALW Action Plan;
- h) To deliver timely information to all relevant participants in support of the National SALW Action Plan;
- i) To monitor all components of SALW interventions in support of the National SALW Action Plan ;
- j) To evaluate all components of the SALW interventions in support of the National SALW Action Plan;
- k) To update the National SALW Action Plan according to the changed conditions;
- l) To provide information about the national SLAW intervention measures to the UN Disarmament Department in accordance with the UN SALW Action Plan;
- m) To provide information to the OSCE on national SALW intervention measures , in compliance with the OSCE SALW Document;
- n) To work on all aspects of the implementation of the UN Program of Action for the Prevention, Fight and Eradication of Illicit SALW Trade; the OSCE Document on the Storage of Conventional Ammunition and any UN sanction concerning the SALW export;
- o) To initiate the signing of the UN Protocol against the illegal manufacture and trafficking of firearms, their parts and ammunition, supplementing to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- p) To organize working meetings the schedule of which is defined by the President of the National SALW Commission ;

- q) To deliver an annual report to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on its work and the progress that has been achieved concerning the implemented operative measures defined by the National Strategy and the Action Plan.

The structures of the National SALW Commission, i.e. the relevant participants that are to take part in the National SALW Commission are the following:

- a) The Ministry of the Interior (all of its relevant services dealing with this issue);
- b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- c) The Ministry of Defense;
- d) The Ministry of Finance – The Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia;
- e) The Ministry of Justice;
- f) The Ministry of Education and Science;
- g) The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (upon the invitation by the National Commission);
- h) The Ministry of Economy (upon the invitation by the National Commission);
- i) The Ministry of Local Self-Government (upon the invitation by the National Commission);
- j) A national contact person and
- k) The UNDP (if the national program receives direct assistance, acting in the capacity of Chief Technical Advisor).

If not already members, the following participants should be included acting in the capacity of observers:

- a) A Representative of a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO);
- b) A representative of a Civil Society Organizations; and
- c) Other international organizations that are directly implementing the SALW intervention project.

A high ranking official at the Ministry of the Interior shall be the President of the National Commission (A State Secretary or the Director of the Public Security Bureau).

Pursuing its competences concerning the SALW control under the National SALW Action Plan, the Ministry of the Interior has the following tasks:

- Detection and elimination of groups and individuals illegally engaged in SALW proliferation and possession;
- Maintaining contacts and holding meetings with the regional agencies operating in the field of SALW control;

- Development of a plan for control of the SALW movement across the state borders (issuing SALW export/import permits : issuing end-user certificates and maintaining contacts with INTERPOL and SECI);
- Drafting appropriate regulations concerning the support to SALW control interventions (adoption of and amendments to laws and secondary legislation);
- SALW risk assessment and their influence on the community (national catalogue, database, registration, incident analysis, and perception polls);
- Submitting SALW reports to relevant international organizations in accordance with the applicable international agreements and codes;
- Development of methodology for progress evaluation and monitoring;
- Development and implementation of the sensitizing stage of SALW awareness campaign (development of communication strategy, support to the community policing, etc.);
- Development of a media operative plan for support to the SALW awareness campaign;
- Development of a plan for arms collection (record-keeping on confiscated, seized and found arms);
- Identifying appropriate facilities and technology for destruction of weapons;
- Undertaking activities for obtaining resources for support of weapon destruction;
- Implementation of the plan for destruction of weapons (National Operative Action - "9 July"; to date, the Ministry of the Interior has conducted five actions of SALW destruction, destroying approximately eight thousand pieces of various SALW types);
- Identifying the surplus of reserves created with the restructuring of the police and ensuring that they are included in the weapon destruction plan.

The Law on Arms was adopted in 2005, whereas amendments and supplements to the Law were adopted in 2006 and 2007; all bylaws arising from the Law on Arms have also been adopted.