



## **Expert Meeting**

### **‘Enhancing controls and promoting reductions in stockpiles of conventional arms and ammunition’**

**Federal Foreign Office  
Berlin, 3-4 April 2007**

## **Report**

### **I. Background**

1. The aim of the meeting of government officials and experts from all regions was to provide guidance and exchange views on the effective and efficient management and security of national stockpiles of conventional arms and ammunition. The meeting thus contributed to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. With its focus on public stockpiles of ammunition it also provided input to the preparations for the UN Group of Governmental Experts scheduled to meet in 2008 under General Assembly resolution 61/72 ‘Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus’.

2. The meeting was attended by representatives from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Great Britain, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine and the United States of America. ECOWAS, EU Council Secretariat, League of Arab States, OSCE, UNODA and BICC, German Red Cross, GRIP, HSFK, OXFAM, Safer World, SEESAC, Small Arms Survey, Viva Rio participated as well. The agenda of the meeting is attached to this report as Annex 1. The key note speakers were asked in advance to contribute to an issues paper which is attached as Annex 2.

### **II. Opening**

3. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Rüdiger Lüdeking, Deputy Commissioner of the Federal Government for Arms Control and Disarmament. He highlighted the importance of effective and efficient management and security of stockpiles, the absence of which is not only a major source for the illicit trafficking in arms and ammunition, but also poses a threat to the civilian population and the environment. He referred to the most recent events on 22 March 2007 in Mozambique at the Malhuzine ammunition storage facility where explosions and fires caused significant loss of life and injury, caused mass panic among local residents and led to considerable damage to civilian property. He welcomed the dialogue among senior representatives and experts with development and security, military and police backgrounds as an opportunity to making the management and security of stockpiles an integrated part of any strategy and programme addressing issues of human security.

### III. The relevance of stockpile management and security in curbing illegal transfers of conventional weapons and ammunition

4. Discussions centred on the political will of the state concerned as the prerequisite to making the management, security and safety of stockpiles a priority. Stockpile management needed to be seen in a wider context spanning from issues of conflict prevention, good governance and legal reform to security sector reform, weapons and ammunition control and reduction, border control, weapons collection and disposal as well as public awareness. The key note speaker Mr. Michael Ashkenazy observed that in particular safety and security of ammunition stockpiles were a social and political, not merely a technical problem. Such stockpiles often represented a major threat to the population. They attracted illegal commerce. The high costs of maintaining such stockpiles were often not invested and became a hidden cost.

5. The importance of training in addressing stockpile management issues and as a focus for international assistance was discussed. Training and the commitment to ensure that trained personnel remained in the area were key to establishing good practice with regard to management, security and safety of stockpiles. Continuous training would lead to motivated manpower, ensure national ownership, build institutional memory and would thus also contribute to fighting corruption. In particular with regard to the need for continuous training, donors and receiving partners needed to assume a long-term commitment. Also, the trust needed for stockpile related cooperation as a particularly sensitive aspect of security could only be build based on a long-term working relationship.

6. Management, security and safety of stockpiles needed to be part of a national strategy. Such national strategy was best discussed in mechanisms bringing the different stakeholders together i.e. national SALW commissions including the ministries and agencies concerned. National SALW commissions and also the SALW focal points under the UN Programme of Action needed to address stockpile management issues more actively.

### IV. Stockpile management and security for SALW, including MANPADS: Physical security and inventory-management requirements of arms and ammunition.

7. Participants agreed that international guiding principles and standards for management, security and safety of stockpiles were needed. Concrete recommendations commanded authority and helped increasing awareness. However, political judgement was crucial in the concrete context. Standards needed to be implemented in a perspective of risk reduction. The OSCE had invested considerable efforts in the OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on SALW which contained provisions on national procedures for stockpile management and also outlined best practices for the stockpile management of MANPADS. A number of multilateral regimes and initiatives specifically addressed the issue of stockpile control of MANPADS, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement and the G-8 Action Plan.

8. The key note speaker, Ms Simone Wisotzki stressed that one of the main achievements of the UN Programme of Action on SALW had been the inclusion of stockpile management and security measures. Core among the principles of the Programme of Action was a clear statement in favour of a system of stockpile management to safeguard SALW in the hands of authorised bodies. It referred to physical security measures, control of access to stocks, inventory management and accounting, transport provisions, procedures and sanctions in the event of loss as well as regular reviews of stockpiles. However, continuous leakages of

SALW from state-owned arsenals underlined the scope and the seriousness of the problem. Only 30 states had reported with regard to PoA implementation that they had conducted a full review of their stockpile management systems.

9. It was observed that stockpile management schemes suffered from the same deficits as overall implementation of the UN Programme of Action. Arms control measures could not address the underlying structural causes, which limited the ability of governance: poorly functioning security sectors, criminal violence, conflictive ethnicity, economic malfunction and structural poverty. Efforts with regard to stockpile management and security needed to be undertaken in an integrated and holistic way. The need to address the issue in a regional context and to promote mechanisms of regional cooperation was underlined. Confidence-building measures such as regional seminars and information exchange of best practices were recommended to build political will and commitment to stockpile management programmes.

V. Stockpile management and security for ammunition: Specific requirements for ammunition.

10. Participants agreed that special attention was needed with regard to ammunition stockpiles. Some of the recent incidents such as Novobogdanovka in Ukraine in 2004 and 2006, Paracin in Serbia in 2006 and Malhuzine in Mozambique in 2007 were considered in detail at the meeting. The complexity of the resulting threat to security, health and the environment was discussed. The scale of the problems of insecure or unsafe ammunition stockpiles was considered to be so urgent that efforts to promote good acceptable practices across the world needed to be complemented by 'emergency programmes' to address the greatest risks. Concerned states and experts needed to consult on and develop criteria for prioritisation and urgent action, and then act upon these.

11. The key note speaker, Mr. James Bevan observed that ammunition was of unstable nature becoming a health hazard if incorrectly stored. Ammunition was a consumable good. It had a restricted shelf life, which meant it was to be used in a finite period. It was a perishable good which needed to be managed and monitored to be maintained making rules and procedures, record-keeping, tracing and physical security a necessity. Ammunition stockpiles also deserved specific attention as the illicit trade in ammunition was localised. The problem of trafficking in ammunition was above all a domestic one. It was observed that 'the problem coming over the boarder' was a myth. Diversion was particularly acute in the case of SALW ammunition, deployed in constant service with military and security forces at a low level in the hierarchy. It was small and of low value and therefore of little interest to oversight mechanisms.

12. It was observed that each type of conventional ammunition, munitions or explosives had specific requirements. But overall the issues, priorities, programmes and skills required to promote safety, security and appropriate disposal of conventional ammunition were similar for several categories of concern, including SALW ammunition, munitions for major conventional arms, bombs, IEDs, unexploded ordnance. Questions of scope were important for international norms, guidelines and programmes to promote and ensure safe and secure management of ammunition. In practice, however, norms, guidelines and programmes for different categories of conventional ammunition needed to be closely co-ordinated and sometimes integrated, in order to enhance efficiency.

VI. Marking, record-keeping and tracing: Arms and ammunition tracing standards, record-keeping and the prospects of tracing arms and ammunition.

13. Participants agreed on the necessity to promote implementation of the UN International Instrument on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The instrument stipulated common minimum standards on the marking of SALW, on the maintenance of adequate records that allow for the timely and reliable retrieval of information on the route of legally traded SALW and on the modalities for cooperation between states in tracing SALW that are recovered from the illicit sphere. The key note speaker, Mr. Holger Anders observed in particular that the instrument offered a valuable framework for promoting the strengthening of national tracing infrastructures. Support for the establishment of national capacities to adequately record all imported and, where relevant, domestically produced SALW should become a priority.

14. The political as opposed to legally binding character of the International Instrument on Tracing and the absence of ammunition in its scope of application were considered weaknesses. In this respect the Report of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons was recalled which had recommended that the issue of SALW ammunition be addressed in a comprehensive manner as part of a separate process conducted within the framework of the United Nations. Such a separate process was now under way through UN General Assembly resolution 61/71 entitled "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus". In this respect participants argued for a broad interpretation of the mandate of the Group of Governmental Experts set up under paragraph 7 of the resolution.

VII. Identification of surplus arms and ammunition: Ways to assess arms and ammunition that are surplus to requirement.

15. Participants underlined that it was for each state to assess its specific security situation and to define the size, structure and equipment of its military and security forces. The strategic environment of a state which *inter alia* may be either member of an alliance or standing alone and which may take part in peace keeping missions was to be taken into account. It was the task of stockpile management to clearly determine the condition of stored arms and ammunition and possibly to identify surplus on this basis. The importance of parliamentary oversight in this process, particularly in controlling the budgetary resources available for procurement, but also stockpile management and destruction was stressed. It was suggested that whenever arms and ammunition were purchased, the cost of decommissioning should be considered at the same time.

16. The key note speaker, Mr. Adrian Sprangemeijer observed that since the 1990ies force reduction and demobilization had created a world wide overcapacity in ammunition and equipment which could not just be sold or given to another country. The consequence was that both the ammunition and the equipment needed to be stored for a longer period, demilitarized or destroyed. With regard to post-conflict situations, two specific examples were discussed: Montenegro having a well structured Army with a functioning accounting system was faced with huge stocks of ammunition and equipment dating from the time of the state union with Serbia which might be old but were reasonably stored. This made it relatively easy to identify surplus once the political will was there to deal with the problem. By contrast, in Cambodia a process of demobilization was still going on and no final structure for the forces established nor a proper accounting system in place. With about 90% of the available ammunition being no longer serviceable, identification and destruction of surplus was not a matter of quantity or need but of safety conditions.

17. Special attention was given to the relevance of new technical developments e.g. the current introduction of new battle rifles in several countries, which would lead to the replacement of a good part of the existing inventory of small arms. The question was asked whether there was any chance to prevent these arms from entering the market but instead have them destroyed. The need for international bodies to address this issue was underlined. The feasibility of standard-setting to this end through agreement at the international level was discussed.

18. With regard to international assistance on stockpile management, it was underlined that states needed to be aware of the effects stocks had on their security and needed to be willing to act. Donors needed to engage in an in-depth dialogue to clarify issues and to build trust. Often Ministries of Defence did not understand the mechanisms of the oversaturated international arms market and that weapons quickly arrived at the grey or black market. The economic cost of keeping arms and ammunition in stock versus destroying them needed to be understood. Other actors like Ministries of Interior and Intelligence Services needed to be involved to address related issues such as organized crime, drug traffic and illicit arms trade.

#### VIII. Destruction, recycling and associated environmental issues: Challenges for the disposal of surplus arms and ammunition.

19. The conditions for project work with regard to the destruction of stockpiles of arms and ammunition stockpiles and ammunition were discussed taking into account on-going work by different agencies in particular by UNDP, EU, NATO and OSCE. It was important to understand the different motives of donors in funding activities related to stockpile management and in particular destruction, which were ranging *inter alia* from treaty compliance, counter-proliferation and security interests to humanitarian concerns. Experience showed that the political will of the receiving state to address issues of stockpile management and to make a contribution of its own was crucial. When looking at the technical conditions of such projects, in particular the cost of destruction showed regional variations depending on indigenous capacity, the techniques available or selected, cost of destruction vs. dismantlement, economies of scale. While the destruction of weapons was comparatively simple and cheap, destroying ammunition was technically complex and much more logistically challenging.

20. The key note speaker Mr. Adrian Wilkinson pointed in particular to the threat resulting from deteriorating ammunition which was mainly a result of ineffective stockpile management leading to poor security, risks of direct proliferation to conflict zones, risks of indirect proliferation to the 'grey' and then to the 'black' markets, usually going along with the failure to identify deteriorating ammunition. The danger posed by explosions in ammunition depots and the resulting hazards to local communities were discussed.

21. The importance of the work of the up-coming Group of Governmental Experts set up for 2008 under United Nations General Assembly Resolution 61/72 entitled 'Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus' was stressed. Reviewing the problems related to the management and security of ammunition stockpiles and looking into the development of standards and guidelines was an imminent task. It was important that member states submitted their national replies in accordance with para 5 of the resolution, so that the Group of Governmental Experts could benefit from these views in its work. The national German reply which was distributed at the meeting was referred to in this respect.

## IX. Conclusions

22. Ambassador Rüdiger Lüdeking, Deputy Commissioner of the Federal Government for Arms Control and Disarmament recalled the purpose of the meeting to put the issue of stockpile management on the international agenda. The discussions had shown the important and enormous task resulting from the need to make stockpile management and security efficient and effective. This was true above all for ammunition stockpiles, where the unstable and perishable nature of ammunition added particular urgency to the tasks of identification and disposal of surplus. Stockpile management was a complex issue which was not receiving sufficient political attention. Often the political will to address the resulting problems in a comprehensive way was missing. Stockpile management was an issue of good governance subject to parliamentary oversight. International cooperation was crucial, while capacity building and training deserved high attention. Stockpile management was a politically sensitive issue in the security field. Therefore trust and transparency in the donor-recipient relationship were even more important. Standards and guidelines based on best practice were a prerequisite for providing assistance. However, moving from best practice to multilateral legally binding instruments on stockpile management issues needed to be considered. The main conclusions drawn from the discussions at the expert meeting are attached as Annex 3.

## **Annex 1**

### **Expert Meeting**

### **‘Enhancing controls and promoting reductions in stockpiles of conventional arms and ammunition’**

**Federal Foreign Office  
Berlin, 3-4 April 2007**

### **Agenda**

**Tuesday, 3 April 2007**

**8.00-9.00**

Arrival of guests and registration

**9.00-9.30**

Opening

**Ambassador Rüdiger Lüdeking**, Deputy Commissioner of the Federal Government for Arms Control and Disarmament, Germany

**9.30-11.00**

Session 1: “Overview: The relevance of stockpile management and security in curbing illegal transfers of conventional weapons and ammunition, including the collection and storage of arms and ammunition within post–conflict peace processes.”

Co-chair: Mr. **Heinrich Haupt**, Head Conventional Arms Control Division, Federal Foreign Office, Germany.

Key note speaker: **Dr. Michael Ashkenazi**, Leader SALW Control, Bonn International Center for Conversion.

**Dr. Cyriaque Pawoumotom Agnekethom**, Head Small Arms Unit, ECOWAS Commission, Abuja.

**11.00-11.30**

Coffee break

**11.30-13.00**

Session 2: “Stockpile management and security for SALW, including MANPADS: Physical security and inventory-management requirements of arms and ammunition.”

Co-chair: Mr. **David de Beer**, Director Safer World, London.

Key note speaker: **Dr. Simone Wisotzki**, Researcher, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt.

Mr. **Thomas Roth**, Australian Embassy and Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna.

Mr. **Markus Schneider**, Lt. Col., Desk Officer for Arms Control, Politico-military Affairs and Arms Control Division, Ministry of Defence, Germany.

**13.00-14.30**

Lunch break

**14.30-16.00**

Session 3: “Stockpile management and security for ammunition: Specific requirements for ammunition.”

Co-chair: Mr. **Werner Bauwens**, Special Envoy for Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgium.

Key note speaker: Mr. **James Bevan**, Researcher, Small Arms Survey, Geneva.

Mr. **Claes Nilsson**, Col., Permanent Mission of Sweden to the OSCE, Vienna.

**Dr. Pablo Dreyfus**, Researcher, Viva Rio, Rio de Janeiro.

**16.00-16.30**

Coffee break

**16.30-18.00**

Session 4: "Marking, record-keeping and tracing: Arms and ammunition tracing standards, record-keeping and the prospects of tracing arms and ammunition."

Co-chair: **Amb. Pablo Macedo**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations having their Headquarters in Switzerland.

Key note speaker: Mr. **Holger Anders**, Senior Researcher, Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité (GRIP), Brussels.

Mr. **Antonio Évora**, Small Arms Team Leader, United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, New York.

**18.30**

Departure from the Federal Foreign Office, Entrance Unterwasserstr. 10  
Guided city tour to "Ganymed Brasserie".

**19.30**

Dinner at "Ganymed Brasserie", Schiffbauerdamm 5.

**Wednesday, 4 April 2007****9.00-10.30**

Session 5: "Identification of surplus arms and ammunition: Ways to assess arms and ammunition that are surplus to requirement."

Co-chair: Mr. **Jan Arve Knutsen**, Special Advisor for Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway.

Key note speaker: Mr. **Adrian Sprangemeijer**, Lt. Col. ret., Consultant, former EU Programme in Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia.

Ms. **Stephanie Pico**, SALW Policy Advisor, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, USA.

**10.30-11.00**

Coffee break

**11.00-12.30**

Session 6: "Destruction, recycling and associated environmental issues: Challenges for the disposal of surplus arms and ammunition."

Co-chair: Mr. **Michael Hasenau**, Deputy Head Conventional Arms Control Division, Federal Foreign Office, Germany.

Key note speaker: Mr. **Adrian Wilkinson**, Director South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), Belgrade.

Ms. **Olena Syrota**, Arms Control and MTC Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine.

**12.30-13.00**

Conclusions

**Ambassador Rüdiger Lüdeking**, Deputy Commissioner of the Federal Government for Arms Control and Disarmament, Germany



## **Annex 2**

### **Expert Meeting**

#### **‘Enhancing controls and promoting reductions in stockpiles of conventional arms and ammunition’**

**Federal Foreign Office  
Berlin, 3-4 April 2007**

### **Issues Paper**

#### **Session 1: “Overview: The relevance of stockpile management and security in curbing illegal transfers of conventional weapons and ammunition, including the collection and storage of arms and ammunition within post–conflict peace processes.”**

**Dr. Michael Ashkenazi, Bonn International Center for Conversion**

1. Ammunition safety and security: A social problem: Recent events in Mozambique serve as a perfect example to indicate that safety and security of stockpiles are a social and political, not technical problem. It is argued here that this should be the first stage of an approach. In many countries these stockpiles represent major threats to the safety of the populace. In addition they attract the potential for illegal/grey commerce. The high costs of maintaining these stockpiles are either not invested (in which case, accidents are likely) or they are subsumed under other budget items and become a hidden cost. Much of the problem, therefore, emerges as social and political fallout.
2. The arms theft business: Stockpiles of arms and ammunition represent a business opportunity, which, in some countries, is easy to engage in and difficult to resist. It is useful therefore, to consider addressing the issue of arms theft (and subsequent transfers) and understanding it as a business venture: who engages in it? What are the costs? Opportunities? How does one find customers? An understanding of the business dimension will help, I argue, in both determining scope and potential, and in helping to restrict the problem.
3. The political dimension of stockpile management: ‘Politics’ in the broader sense includes an examination of the different (and dynamic) interests in the business of stockpile (and surplus management). It is useful therefore to characterize and understand who the political actors (including and not limited to government, the military, PMCs, and organized crime) and their interests are.
4. The collection and storage of arms and ammunition within post-conflict peace processes: Post conflict peace processes represent a particularly problematic case of stockpile management. While technical issues do exist – related clearly to the conflict – the major issues have to do, once again, with the political dimension. As result of lack of awareness and political will, stockpiles in post-conflict societies can often be a source of illegal or illicit arms in the fabric of society.
5. Some suggestions for an analytical approach: The issues surrounding stockpile maintenance can be examined from a number of perspectives: Accounting and good budgeting. Political and social analysis. An examination of the organizational framework that permits, encourages, or hinders, the seepage of stockpile material away from the stockpiles themselves. Significantly, the issue must be examined less as a technical issue – the technical realities are well known – and more as a political issue of the countries concerned.

#### **Session 2: “Stockpile management and security for SALW, including MANPADS: Physical security and inventory-management requirements of arms and ammunition.”**

**Dr. Simone Wisotzki, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt**

Different causes can be identified for the proliferation of small arms and light weapons which often originate in legal stockpiles. Incidents of state collapse and the massive trafficking of small arms and

light weapons as in Albania or Somalia are still exceptional cases. The more typical problems of poor stockpile security are caused by less extreme breakdowns. Poor storage practices and/or the lack of personal responsibility trigger the flow of illicit small arms and light weapons. Weak governance and fragile statehood often become a structural cause, e.g. for impoverished soldiers to sell their weapons for making their livings. In most of the world, it is the steady trickle of ordinary loss that releases the most small arms over time. Wilful neglect and forgetfulness can also be identified as sources of proliferation in democracies with well-established physical stockpile security management systems. Among small arms and light weapons, the category of MANPADS, pose a specific challenge for stockpile management and security. Man-portable air defence systems are in the hands of around 105 states: Many of them have poor records of stockpile security.

One of the main achievements of the UN Programme of Action has been the inclusion of stockpile management and security measures. Since 2001 significant steps in improving stockpile management have been taken. Stockpile management has been one of the most widely covered issues in national reporting at the two BMS in 2003 and 2005. Core among the principles of the UN Programme of Action is a clear statement of a system of stockpile management that would ensure that authorised bodies' SALW are safeguarded. The PoA refers to physical security measures, control of access to stocks, inventory management and accounting, transport provisions, procedures/sanctions in the event of loss as well as regular reviews of stocks. As regards the status of implementation in 2006, most states rely on some basic systems of stockpile management. However, continuous leakages of SALW from state-owned arsenals underline the scope and the seriousness of the problem. Only 30 states reported to have conducted a full review of their stockpile management systems. Remaining weaknesses are, *inter alia*, the fragmented and diverse national stockpile management schemes; the lack of civilian oversight of military inventories; badly developed systems of recordkeeping and inventory management; dispersed storage depots with lack of procedures for accessing stocks; insufficient training and equipment.

Overall, stockpile management and security has received significant support from donor countries and other institutions. The European Union has addressed stockpile management in terms of commonly coordinated assistance to third countries as well as in their 2005 Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW. NATO added a new chapter to the Partnership for Peace work programme to promote training in stockpile management. The OSCE has invested considerable efforts in the OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on SALW which contains provisions on national procedures for stockpile management and also outlines best practices for the stockpile management of MANPADS. A number of multilateral regimes and initiatives specifically address the issue of stockpile control of MANPADS, such as the Wassenaar Elements and the G-8 Action Plan, both from 2003. Also the OSCE, NATO and a number of donor states have taken action and provided technical as well as financial support for improving stockpile management schemes of MANPADS.

Deficits in the efforts of stockpile management of SALW mainly result from the lack of coordinated approaches to support weak states in improving stockpile management in a holistic way. A considerable number of donor states have pursued seminars or bilateral programmes, so that an exchange on best practices could improve existing schemes such as the OSCE Handbook. On the recipient side, lack of political will hampers assistance programmes. Confidence-building measures such as regional seminars and information exchanges on best practices of stockpile management might help to overcome such concerns. Lastly, stockpile management schemes suffer from the same deficits as the overall PoA. Measures of arms control in weak states do not address the underlying structural causes which limit the ability of governance: They are found in poorly functioning security sectors, criminal violence, conflictive ethnicity, economic malfunction and structural poverty.

### **Session 3: “Stockpile management and security for ammunition: Specific requirements for ammunition.”**

**Dr. Owen Greene, Director CICS, University of Bradford**

In many ways, the priorities and requirements for stockpile management and security for ammunition are similar to those for the arms themselves. *Massive quantities of ammunition are held in insecure*

*locations, at substantial risk of loss, capture or diversion.* These greatly contribute to the risks of trafficking and proliferation and to prolongation and intensification of armed violence across much of the world. The quantities and locations of insecure ammunition stocks are unclear: transparency in this area is even lower than for arms, due in part to military sensitivities about information relating to potential sustainability of combat operations. But in several countries they probably involves stocks of tens or hundreds of thousands of tonnes. However, in countries at risk of armed conflict or violence, uncontrolled access to relatively modest quantities of ammunition can be highly destabilising or lethal.

*Good guidance documents on management and security of conventional ammunition stocks exist, for example in OSCE and NATO. But although these are widely accepted amongst professionals, no such good practice guidelines have yet been endorsed at a global level, limiting their legitimacy in many countries and regions where the problems are particularly intense. In recent years, international co-operation to promote and enhance stockpile management and security has increased. There are now much useful experience and precedents. However, the scale of the response is very limited in comparison with the urgency of the problems. A major international programme to greatly increase and enhance action to tackle inadequate management and insecure stocks of ammunition is urgently needed.* In practice, this could be effectively launched by a global coalition of willing states, lead by a limited number of major donors. There is no need to wait for international consensus

As for arms, many of the insecure or unsafe stores of ammunition are surplus stocks. This applies to military stocks, but also the quantities of ammunition held by many other agencies or ordinary civilians. For example, as conflicts come to an end, a proportion of ammunition holdings progressively come to be regarded as surplus to requirements. It is a priority to collect and responsibly dispose of such stocks of ammunition. The safe handling of such ammunition poses specific requirements, since they contain explosive materials. In many weapons collection programmes, unforeseen large quantities of ammunition are handed in, much of it potentially unstable – posing extra challenges for safe handling and storage. Similarly, safe destruction of ammunition requires relatively specialist skills and facilities (though ones which are nevertheless quite widely available). Specific resources and co-operation programmes are required to provide these, so that stocks can be rapidly, safely and transparently destroyed.

The scale of the problems of insecure or unsafe ammunition stocks is so great and urgent that efforts to promote good acceptable practices across the world need to be complemented by ‘emergency programmes’ to address the greatest risks. At present, this is done in a relatively ad-hoc way. Concerned states and experts need to consult on and develop criteria for prioritisation and urgent action, and then act upon these.

Each type of conventional ammunition, munitions or explosive has specific requirements. But overall the issues, priorities, programmes and skills required to promote safety, security and appropriate disposal of conventional ammunition are similar for a wide of categories of concern: SALW ammunition; munitions for major conventional arms; bombs; IEDs, unexploded ordnance. Questions of scope therefore are important for international norms, guidelines and programmes to promote and ensure safe and secure management of ammunition. There may be diplomatic/political advantages for maintaining and developing separate international initiatives. For example, an international programme to enhance SALW ammunition stockpile security may be more negotiable or widely accepted than one addressing major conventional munitions. In practice, however, norms, guidelines and programmes for different categories of conventional ammunition need to be closely co-ordinated and sometimes integrated, in order to enhance efficiency.

#### **Session 4: "Marking, record-keeping and tracing: Arms and ammunition tracing standards, record-keeping and the prospects of tracing arms and ammunition."**

**Holger Anders, Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix et la sécurité**

In December 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted the International Instrument on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The instrument developed out of the agreement in the 2001 UN Programme of Action on the illicit trade in SALW that states should consider the feasibility of

such an instrument; a subsequent group of governmental experts; and, eventually, an open-ended working group to negotiate the instrument. The tracing instrument stipulates common minimum standards on the marking of SALW; on the maintenance of adequate records that allow for the timely and reliable retrieval of information on the route of legally traded SALW; and on the modalities for cooperation between states in tracing SALW that are recovered from the illicit sphere. Weaknesses of the instrument include its political as opposed to legally binding character and the absence of ammunition in its scope of application.

An important question now relates to the implementation of the instrument. Specifically, does the instrument effectively facilitate the tracing of illicit SALW and the identification of the actors responsible for their diversions? Regrettably, little seems to have changed in practical terms since the instrument's adoption. For example, few states are reporting to plan any changes to their legislative regulations on marking and record-keeping on SALW in response to the tracing instrument. Further, although there exists no base-line data for comparison, states do not report an increase in the number of requests for cooperation in tracing. In addition, virtually all states still have to submit information to the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs on their national points of contacts on tracing illicit SALW and their national marking practices. This is a requirement under the international tracing instrument.

Reasons for the apparent absence of action include that developed states often consider their national practices on marking and record-keeping to generally conform already to the requirements under the international tracing instrument. Another challenge is the lack of awareness about the tracing instrument among relevant state actors in especially the developing world. Also, in many states there already exist other priorities in relation to SALW control or plans for strengthening national arms management capacities than strengthening tracing capacities. Importantly, officials sometimes also seem to only have a limited interest in engaging in international tracing requests in relation to SALW that were diverted outside the national jurisdiction. This is because those responsible for the diversions will in these cases generally also have operated outside the national jurisdiction of state in which the SALW were recovered. Initiating and following through a tracing request will, therefore, not offer the possibility to identify arms traffickers within the state that recovered the illicit arms.

Cross-border traces of recovered illicit SALW have taken place before the adoption of the international tracing instrument. They are likely to continue between friendly states irrespective of whether a greater number of states maintain the mechanisms and processes that would be required to be in conformity with the instrument. Nevertheless, the instrument offers a valuable framework for promoting the strengthening of national tracing infrastructures. One particular element for donors in this regard should be the support for the establishment of national capacities in developing countries to adequately record all imported, and, where relevant, domestically produced SALW. This will not automatically lead to a greater number of international tracing requests. However, it would considerably contribute to national capacities for identifying and combating SALW diversions that took place within a country.

**Session 5: “Identification of surplus arms and ammunition: Ways to assess arms and ammunition that are surplus to requirement.”**

**Adrian Sprangemeijer, Lt. Col. ret., Consultant**

General context: Mistrust is a powerful promoter of armaments. In case of doubt, it is always easier to opt for the solution which seems to entail maximum security.

International disarmament initiatives: As early as 1924 a promising attempt was made by the League of Nations resulting in the so-called Geneva Protocol followed by a World Disarmament Conference in 1932. Other international initiatives have taken place since then mostly within the framework of the United Nations. On 6 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/36 L entitled “Transparency in armaments”.

Definition of Surplus: “The amount that remains when use or need is satisfied.”

National context: International law does not offer a definition of surplus. In municipal arms procurement law, indirect regulation of surplus may be found in stipulations requiring arms procurement authorities to balance their orders against existing stocks. In this respect, national parliaments play an important role in defining size, structure and equipment of military and security forces and, thus, in dealing with the issue of surplus. Given that the assessment of the national security situation remains a national responsibility, secondary sources concerning the definition of a surplus are not openly available. Although the concept of surplus is mentioned in various documents the point at which weapons stocks exceed the threshold of necessity and become surplus is not always easy to recognize.

Stockpile management: Stockpile management is a wide ranging term when applied to arms, ammunition and explosives, as it also covers areas such as the determination of stockpile size, the types of stockpiles and the management of ammunition in service. These areas are in addition to the specific technical areas of security and safety of stockpiles.

Force Reduction: Force Reduction is a factor that will determine the amount of ammunition and equipment that is no longer needed and will ultimately define the amount of surplus in these situations.

Post Conflict Situations: In post-conflict situations a wide variety of factors determine the extent of surplus.

Political Influences caused by International Movements: The International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Campaign against Cluster Munitions have both resulted in the declaration of surplus munitions.

**Session 6: “Destruction, recycling and associated environmental issues: Challenges for the disposal of surplus arms and ammunition.”**

**Adrian Wilkinson, Director South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)**

In immediate post-conflict environments the safe destruction of recovered or captured ammunition presents a variety of technical challenges. At the lowest level, the multi-item destruction by explosive demolition of large quantities of ammunition, as opposed to the in situ destruction of a single UXO (Unexploded Ordnance), is still a complex subject. It requires a significant degree of additional training beyond what is normally provided to the normal field engineer or an EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) Technician. For the destruction of larger stockpiles of ammunition in non-conflict environments, destruction by demolition is often not an option. The potential for environmental and noise pollution, and the sheer quantities of ammunition involved, will often suggest that an industrial demilitarization approach is more effective and cost efficient. This industrial demilitarization of ammunition combines the skills of production, as well as that of mechanical, chemical and explosive engineering. Again it is a highly specialist operation, and appropriate independent technical advice should be taken before planning such an activity.

There were traditionally five methods of disposal of surplus ammunition: sale, gift, increased training use, deep sea dumping, and destruction:

-The sale or gifting of ammunition is the most cost effective means of disposal, but there are factors that need to be considered; 1) any sale or gift should comply with international export control and transfer best practices; 2) the quality of the ammunition at the end of its useful shelf life will not be as high as newly manufactured ammunition. Any end user wishing to purchase ammunition of this age should be subject to the deepest scrutiny as to why they wish to purchase such ammunition; and 3) in order to comply with international transport regulations and guidelines, the ammunition should be physically inspected to ensure that it is safe to export or transfer beyond national borders. This will mean additional costs.

-Increased use at training may initially seem to be a desirable option but associated factors may make it undesirable. When the ammunition is used it will create additional wear on equipment (such as gun

barrels, vehicle automotive systems, etc). This will inevitably reduce the life of the parent equipment and will result in additional maintenance costs. Therefore these additional costs should be balanced against the value of the training obtained from firing surplus ammunition stocks.

-The dumping of ammunition at sea is subject to international agreements as it is considered to be either hazardous or industrial waste. If a state is not a party to such an agreement, it is highly unlikely that it would receive any international donor assistance to dispose of its surplus ammunition in such a manner.

The most realistic disposal method is therefore that of destruction. Stockpile destruction can be defined as 'the process of final conversion of ammunition into an inert state that can no longer function as designed' The effective management of stockpile destruction planning and operational activities aims to physically destroy ammunition in a safe, cost effective and efficient manner.

-The physical destruction techniques available range from the relatively simple OBOD (open burning and open detonation) techniques to highly sophisticated industrial processes. The selection of the most appropriate destruction technique will depend primarily on a range of factors; 1) the resources available; 2) the physical condition of the stockpile; 3) the quantity of ammunition in terms of economies of scale; 4) national capacities; and 5) national explosive safety and environmental legislation.

Of these, the most influential factors have usually proven to be donor resources available and the economies of scale. The more ammunition for destruction, the larger the economies of scale, and therefore the wider range of affordable and efficient technologies, and the more likely that an industrial demilitarization facility could be developed. Industrial scale demilitarization has many advantages; mechanical disassembly, incineration in environmentally controlled systems and the ability to operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Their major disadvantage is the high capital set up costs of design, project management, construction and commissioning. Their operating costs are generally lower than OBOD (once amortisation of the development capital is discounted). It must be remembered that the physical destruction process of ammunition is only one process of the complete demilitarization cycle. This operational cycle is complex, comprehensive, wide-ranging and includes activities such as transportation and storage, processing operations, equipment maintenance, staff training and accounting.

Yet the development of a safe, effective and efficient industrial demilitarization capability within a State, that also reflects the safety and environmental concerns of donors, inevitably takes time, but this should not prevent the initial steps been taken to support the development of such facilities. In many regions this sort of capacity has to be developed from the semi-dormant and under-resourced State ammunition production facilities, which require infrastructure investment, staff training and demilitarization equipment procurement. Perhaps the solution is a balance, whereby OBOD should be used to destroy potentially unstable stocks in the short term, whilst a facility is developed for those nations with large stockpiles. For those countries with insignificant stockpiles, OBOD will remain the only economically practical option.

## **Annex 3**

### **Expert Meeting**

### **‘Enhancing controls and promoting reductions in stockpiles of conventional arms and ammunition’**

**Federal Foreign Office  
Berlin, 3-4 April 2007**

### **Main Conclusions**

1. Management and security of stockpiles of conventional weapons and ammunition is not merely a technical, but a political and social problem. The absence of effective and efficient management and security of stockpiles represents a major source for the illicit traffic in arms and ammunition as well as a threat to the civilian population and the environment.
2. Management and security of stockpiles need to be seen in the wider context of security sector reform and conflict prevention. Addressing the management and security of stockpiles requires a comprehensive approach encompassing *inter alia* arms and ammunition control and reduction, arms and ammunition collection and disposal, border control, legal reform, public awareness.
3. Individual states need to take the political decision in favour of making the management and security of stockpiles a priority and to make a contribution of their own. Individual states need to develop a national strategy on management and security of stockpiles. Such national strategy is best discussed in mechanisms bringing the different stakeholders together e.g. national SALW commissions. Such national strategy is best communicated through national focal points.
4. Individual states need to take a political decision on size, structure and equipment of military and security forces based on threat analysis and needs assessment. The resulting definition of surplus lies in the hands of the responsible state. Stockpiles needed for national security purposes are to be separated from stockpiles that are insecure or in surplus, the first must be safely stored and the latter destroyed.
5. Effective parliamentary oversight is crucial, particularly in controlling the budgetary resources *inter alia* available for procurement, stockpile management and security as well as destruction and disposal.
6. While SALW and in particular MANPADS as well as SALW ammunition deserve specific attention, the issues, priorities and skills required to promote the management and security of stockpiles are similar for all categories of concern. Programmes for different categories of arms and ammunition needed to be closely co-ordinated in order to be efficient, not withstanding the scope of specific international norms or guidelines.
7. Special attention is needed with regard to ammunition due to its unstable nature and restricted shelf life as well as the high risk of diversion. The scale of the current problems posed by insecure and unsafe ammunition stockpiles is so urgent that efforts to promote good practices with regard to management and security of stockpiles need to be supplemented by emergency programmes.

8. International guiding principles and standards for management and security of stockpiles are essential, also as a prerequisite for providing assistance. The need to address the issue at the global level was underlined. However, standards are to be implemented with a perspective of risk reduction, based on political judgement.

9. Management and security of stockpiles is a politically sensitive security issue, which requires a high degree of trust and transparency in the donor-recipient relationship.

10. Projects on management and security of stockpiles need to strengthen the capacity of the individual state by offering training, advice on infrastructure improvements and on technical and administrative measures including marking and record-keeping. Individual states need to take effective action to improve good governance, in particular address the diversion of arms and ammunition from legal stockpiles, illegal transfers as well as corruption.

11. Training is key to establishing good practice with regard to management and security of stockpiles, also as a means to ensure national ownership. In particular with regard to the need for continuous training, donors and receiving partners have to assume a long-term commitment. Also, the trust needed for stockpile related cooperation can only be built based on a long-term working relationship.

12. In implementing projects on management and security of stockpiles a regional respectively sub-regional focus is recommended. Confidence building measures such as regional seminars and information exchange of best practice are recommended to build political will and commitment to stockpile management programmes.

13. More attention needs to be paid to implementing the UN Programme of Action on SALW, with a focus on the provisions in favour of systems of stockpile management and security in order to safeguard SALW in the hands of authorised bodies.

14. Management and security of stockpiles need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner in the frame of the forthcoming deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts established under UN General Assembly resolution 61/71 entitled “Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus”.