

**NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS PROGRAM OF ACTION TO PREVENT,
COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL
ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

Submitted by
the Government of the Solomon Islands

June 2003 – June 2004

Note Verbale

Solomon Islands hereby submits its National Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Solomon Islands Government agrees to the publication of the entire report on the website of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Honiara, November 1, 2004

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ABBREVIATIONS

CRIN – Customs Regional Intelligence Network
DDR – Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
FRSC – (Pacific Islands) Forum Regional Security Committee
IFM – Isatabu Freedom Movement
IPMT – International Peace Monitoring Team
MEF – Malaita Eagle Force
NPC – National Peace Council
OCO – Oceania Customs Organisation
PIF – Pacific Islands Forum
PILOM – Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting
PMC – Peace Monitoring Council
RAMSI – Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RSIP – Royal Solomon Islands Police
SC – Special Constable
SPCPC – South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference
TPA – Townsville Peace Agreement

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

On the occasion of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the problem of small arms and light weapons in the Solomon Islands was captured in the statement by H.E. Mr. Vinci Niel Clodumar, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations, speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Pacific Islands Forum Group, on 10 July, 2001:

“The large-scale transfer of automatic military-style weapons is not a problem in the Pacific. Rather, the problems in the region relate to:

- the availability of old stocks of weapons in the civilian community. Often these weapons are quite basic, reconstructed from World War II leftovers;
- insufficient infrastructure for effective weapons accountancy and effective stockpile management procedures; and
- inadequate legislation to establish effective licensing and registration procedures governing ownership and use of small arms and other non-firearms [and] insufficient facilities for enforcement of this legislation.

...in many Pacific Island countries, the possession or transfer of even a handful of basic weapons into the wrong hands can have a serious impact on security and safety. Indeed, there are recent regional examples where access to or the ready availability of small arms has destabilised regional security, threatened democratic institutions and even contributed to changes in leadership and Government.”¹

Three years hence, the people and the government of the Solomon Islands are recovering from the ramifications that are reflected in the words of Mr. Clodumar. The following report illustrates efforts and existing capacities to face and overcome these challenges.

¹ Full text of the speech can be found at <http://disarmament.un.org/cab/smallarms/statements/nauruE.html>

A. NATIONAL LEVEL

1. National coordination agency

The Solomon Islands does not have a single national coordination agency or body as envisaged in the question. To date, no national coordination effort regarding SALW has been implemented among Solomon Islands Government agencies.

In this context –

- (a) the *Ministry of Police, National Security and Justice* is responsible for –
 - law enforcement coordination with the office of the Attorney General;
 - implementing laws and regulations relating to the registration, record keeping, and stockpile management of SALW in use with the Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP); and
 - structuring the procurement procedures related to SALW to be used by the RSIP.
- (b) the *Ministry of Provincial Government, National Reconciliation and Peace*, created by a provision in the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) of 15 October, 2000, has been active in supporting disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) for former combatants in the conflict; weapons stigmatization programs and mediation and reconciliation.
- (c) the *Ministry of Finance* is responsible for customs controls of SALW imports. The Solomon Islands does not export SALW.

2. National point of contact

The *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* is fulfilling the task of coordinating SALW-related foreign policy aspects, including the responsibilities of national point of contact. This information will be posted on the UNDDA website in July 2003.

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3. Legislation, regulations, administrative procedures

i) National laws, regulations and administrative procedures that exercise effective control over SALW in the areas of production, export, import, transit, and retransfer.

At the time of writing only members of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands are allowed to own and carry SALW. Notice on the possible return of handed-in licensed weapons has not been decided. Apart from the International Assistance mission, Solomon Islands is gun free zone.

National Laws, Regulations and Decrees		
<i>Area:</i>	<i>Law/ Regulation/ Decree</i>	<i>Date</i>
Production	<i>Title: Firearms and Ammunition Act to Make Further and Better Provisions for the Control of the Possession, Manufacture, Sale, Repair, Storage, Import and Export of Firearms and Ammunition, and for Matters Incidental Thereto and Connected Therewith</i>	1968 – Amended 1989/2000
	Short Title: Firearms and Ammunition Act	
	Description: <i>Section 4(1):</i> prohibits the manufacture of firearms and ammunition except at an arsenal approved by the Minister, and in accordance with conditions specified by the Minister in writing. <i>Section 4(2):</i> “manufacture” does not include repair, conversion of firearm into something incapable of firing, or the alteration, substitution or replacement of any component part of a firearm. <i>Section 40 B(2):</i> no person shall manufacture for use or sale any imitation firearm [Amendment Act, 2000]	
Export	Title: as above	1968 – Amended 1989/2000
	Short Title: Firearms and Ammunitions Act	
	Description: <i>Section 17(1):</i> prohibits the export of any firearms or ammunition from Solomon Islands without the appropriate license. <i>Section 17(2):</i> such license may be obtained by application to the Principal Licensing Officer (Commissioner of Police was so designated 14 October, 1992 by Firearms and Ammunition Act Subsidiary Legislation) on payment of the prescribed fee. <i>Section 18:</i> the Minister may by notice declare that firearms or ammunition shall not be exported from any place except ports or places specified in such notice. No firearms or ammunition shall be exported contrary to the terms of the notice. <i>Section 23(1):</i> the Minister may by notice prohibit exportation of any firearms, parts or ammunition without a special license issued by the Principal Licensing Officer. <i>Section 24(1):</i> the owner or master of any vessel used for the importation, exportation, receipt or storage of any firearm, parts or ammunition in contravention of a notice under Sec. 23 shall be liable to a fine of five thousand dollars, unless it can be proven that the offense was committed without his knowledge <i>Section 24(2):</i> the finding on board any vessel of any firearm, part, or ammunition subject to a prohibition under Sec. 23 shall be prima facie evidence that the vessel has been used for the import/export of firearms, parts or ammunition contrary to the Firearms Act	
	Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance Act	2003

	Short Title: as above	
	<p>Description:</p> <p><i>Section 15(5):</i> Any material imported under Sec.15 maybe re-exported with license or other restriction or registration and free of customs, duties and taxes or any other charge that may be sought of levied.</p> <p><i>Section 24(1):</i> subject to the Constitution, this Act and any regulation or other subsidiary legislation made under the Act shall have effect notwithstanding any other law of Solomon Islands</p>	
Import	Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act to Make Further and Better Provisions for the Control of the Possession ,Manufacture, Sale, Repair, Storage, Import and Export of Firearms and Ammunition, and for Matters Incidental Thereto and Connected Therewith</i>	1968
	Short Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act</i>	
	<p>Description:</p> <p><i>Section 15(1):</i> prohibits the import of any firearm, ammunition, or parts thereof into Solomon Islands from without, unless importer holds the appropriate license.</p> <p><i>Section 18:</i> the Minister may by notice declare that firearms or ammunition shall not be imported into any place except ports or places specified in such notice. No firearms or ammunition shall be imported contrary to the terms of such notice.</p> <p><i>Section 19:</i> Every person entering Solomon Islands with any firearm or ammunition and every consignee receiving any firearm or ammunition imported into Solomon Islands shall make a declaration thereof to a customs officer on arrival, and before clearing such firearm or ammunition shall produce an import license (issued under Section 15) to such customs officer.</p> <p><i>Section 23(1):</i> the Minister may by notice prohibit importation of any firearms, parts or ammunition without a special license issued by the Principal Licensing Officer.</p> <p><i>Section 24(1):</i> the owner or master of any vessel used for the importation, exportation, receipt or storage of any firearm, parts or ammunition in contravention of a notice under Sec.23 shall be liable to a fine of five thousand dollars, unless it can be proven that the offense was committed without his knowledge.</p> <p><i>Section 24(2):</i> the finding on board any vessel of any firearm, part, or ammunition subject to a prohibition under Sec.23 shall be prima facie evidence that the vessel has been used for the import/export of firearms, parts or ammunition contrary to the Firearms Act</p> <p><i>Section 40B(1):</i> no person shall import into Solomon Islands or sell any imitation firearm [Amendment Act, 2000]</p>	
	Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance Act	2003
Short Title: as above		

	<p>Description: <i>Section 15(3)</i>: the visiting contingent may import into Solomon Islands without license or other restriction or registration and free of customs, duties and taxes or any other charge that may be sought to be levied, equipment (including vehicles and weapons) and other supplies required for a public purpose, together with personal effects of and items for the support of members of the visiting contingent. <i>Section 24(1)</i>: subject to the Constitution, this Act and any regulation or other subsidiary legislation made under the Act shall have effect notwithstanding any other law of Solomon Islands</p>	
Transit	<p>Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act to Make Further and Better Provisions for the Control of the Possession, Manufacture, Sale, Repair, Storage, Import and Export of Firearms and Ammunition, and for Matters Incidental Thereto and Connected Therewith</i></p>	1968
	<p>Short Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act</i></p>	
	<p>Description: <i>Section 21</i>: the Principal Licensing Officer may grant, refuse, suspend, or revoke – at his discretion – transit licenses covering the importation into, removal within, transportation across, and exportation from the Solomon Islands of any firearm or ammunition in transit through the country to any place outside Solomon Islands.</p>	
Retransfer	n/a – no law currently exists in this area	

Taken from: *The Laws of Solomon Islands*, Revised Edition. (Hertford, UK: Eyre and Spottiswoode, Ltd.) Volume IV, Cap.80. 1996.

ii) What national measures exist to prevent the manufacture, stockpiling, transfer and possession of unmarked or inadequately marked SALW? How have these been implemented? (II.8)

See section 9 below for information on marking of weapons stored in police arsenals.

iii) Please describe how national laws, regulations and procedures that impact on the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects are made public. (II.23)

National laws, once passed by the National Parliament, are published in the Solomon Islands Gazette. The general public may access the Gazette by visiting the office of the Prime Minister, or by ordering a copy from the printer.

The Parliament House also notifies the local newspaper and radio stations of new legislation. Official announcements of the adoption of new laws are made in the local and national media.

4. Law enforcement/criminalisation

i) What national legislative or other measures exist to make the illegal manufacture, possession, stockpiling and trade of SALW criminal offences under domestic law? How have these measures been implemented? (II.3)

As mentioned above, Solomon Islands has been declared by Notice of the Governor General a gun surrender zone. The only persons at the time of writing that can legitimately own or possess weapons are designated members of the International Assistance mission to Solomon Islands. Details of which are listed below in the possession section of the table.

National Laws, Regulations and Decrees		
<i>Area:</i>	<i>Law/ Regulation/ Decree</i>	<i>Date</i>
Manufacture	<i>Title: Firearms and Ammunition Act to Make Further and Better Provisions for the Control of the Possession, Manufacture, Sale, Repair, Storage, Import and Export of Firearms and Ammunition, and for Matters Incidental Thereto and Connected Therewith</i>	1968 – Amended 1989/2000
	Short Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act</i>	
	Description: <i>Section 4(3): specifies punishment for the illegal manufacture of SALW of a fine of five thousand dollars or imprisonment for ten years, or both. Section 40 B(3): any person who contravenes the import, manufacture and sale prohibition provisions of Section 40 B (1) and (2) shall be liable to a fine of one thousand dollars or imprisonment for one year, or both [Amendment Act, 2000]</i>	
Possession	Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance Act	2003
	Short Title: as above	

	<p>Description:</p> <p><i>Section 9:</i> members of the visiting contingent may possess, carry and use arms in accordance with their internal orders or rules in order to – (a) protect themselves or the visiting contingent; or (b) protect other persons; or (c) protect property of the visiting contingent; or (d) protect public or private property; or (e) achieve a public purpose.</p> <p><i>Section 10(1):</i> the visiting contingent may seize any weapons as necessary for the achievement of a public purpose.</p> <p><i>Section 20(1):</i> the Governor-General may publish a notice that – (a) declares an area in the territory of Solomon Islands to be controlled weapons area; (b) states that members of the visiting contingent are permitted to carry weapons in the area; (c) specifies other persons who are permitted to carry weapons in the area; and (d) prohibits all other persons from carrying weapons in the area.</p> <p><i>Section 20(2):</i> a person who carries a weapon in a controlled weapons area while prohibited from doing so by a notice under subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of \$25 000 or imprisonment for 10 years, or both.</p> <p><i>Section 21(1):</i> The Governor-General may publish a notice that – (a) declares an area in the territory of Solomon Islands to be a weapons surrender area; (b) states that members of the visiting contingent are permitted to possess weapons in the area; (c) specifies other persons who are permitted to possess weapons in the area; and (d) prohibits all other persons from possessing weapons in the area.</p> <p><i>Section 21(2):</i> A person who – (a) is prohibited from possessing a weapon by a declaration under subsection (1); and (b) is in, comes into, possession of a weapon; and (c) fails to give the weapon, as soon as practicable, to a member of the visiting contingent shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of \$25,000 or imprisonment for 10 years, or both.</p> <p><i>Section 24(1):</i> subject to the Constitution, this Act and any regulation or other subsidiary legislation made under the Act shall have effect notwithstanding any other law of Solomon Islands</p>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="428 1352 1166 1423">Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance (Weapons Surrender) Notice 2003</td> <td data-bbox="1166 1352 1385 1423">20th August 2003</td> </tr> </table>	Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance (Weapons Surrender) Notice 2003	20 th August 2003
Title: The Facilitation of International Assistance (Weapons Surrender) Notice 2003	20 th August 2003		
	Short Title: as above		

	<p>Description:</p> <p><i>Section (1):</i> the Governor-General declares an area comprising all the land territory of Solomon Islands to be a weapons surrender area</p> <p><i>Section (2):</i> Members of the visiting contingent are permitted to possess weapons in the area.</p> <p><i>Section (3):</i> The following persons are also permitted to possess weapons in the area: (a) members of the Solomon Islands Police in possession of weapons with the authority of the Commissioner of Police in the course of their duties; and (b) persons holding a current and valid firearms license issued under Sec. 6 of the Firearms and Ammunition Act in respect of weapons covered by that licence.</p> <p><i>Section (4):</i> All persons other than those referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 are prohibited from possessing weapons in the area.</p>	
Stockpiling	See section 5 [below]	
Trade	Title: as above	1968
	Short Title: <i>Firearms and Ammunition Act</i>	
	<p>Description:</p> <p><i>Section 21:</i> the Principal Licensing Officer may grant, refuse, suspend, or revoke – at his discretion – transit licenses covering the importation into, removal within, transportation across, and exportation from the Solomon Islands of any firearm or ammunition in transit through the country to any place outside Solomon Islands.</p>	
Retransfer	n/a – no law currently exists in this area	

ii) Have those groups and individuals engaged in the illegal manufacture, trade, stockpiling, transfer, possession, as well as financing for acquisition, of illicit SALW been identified, where applicable? What action has been taken under appropriate national law against such groups and individuals? (II.6)

Although the three years after the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement were marked by uncertainty and lawlessness the arrival of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) has reinstated the rule of law and numerous former combatants have been charge with various criminal offences and are remanded in custody, await trial or have been convicted of the various improprieties.

iii) What national measures have been taken, including legal or administrative means, against activity that violates a United Nations Security Council arms embargo in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations? (II.15)

As the Solomon Islands neither exports arms, nor is used by illicit brokers to facilitate illicit transactions (specifically those involving embargoed destinations), no national

legislative or administrative measures have been implemented in this area.

5. Stockpile management and security

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Solomon Islands Government maintains no armed forces. The Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP) STAR Division, a tactical response unit that was responsible for the security and management of the Police Armory has been disbanded. At this time all SALW are maintained by the International Assistance mission and their set procedures.

i) What national standards and procedures exist for the management and security of SALW stocks held by armed forces, police or other authorized bodies? (II.17)

Although the RSIP does have regulations and records detailing SALW management and security of stocks, as detailed in last years reporting, no weapons are held at this time by RSIP. In addition all weapons held by the International Assistance mission are subject to internal procedures and standards of management.

ii) How often are stocks of SALW held by armed forces, police and other authorized bodies reviewed? (II.18)

As above

iii) How are those stocks of SALW held by armed forces, police and other authorized bodies that are surplus to requirements identified? (II.18)

Although the below procedures are till current the International Assistance Mission are the only authorized bodies in possession of SALW. All identification requirements are internal procedures of the international assistance mission.

RSIP Firearms Policy identification procedures stipulate the numbering of all firearms on the inside rear of the butt-stock (right-handed use), with yellow numbers measuring 8 cm on a black background. All numbers are to be recorded against serial numbers in the Police Weapons Register.

6. Collection and disposal

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

A discussion of the ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme in Solomon Islands is contained in section 10.

i) Please give details of any national programmes that have been established and implemented for the responsible disposal of surplus stocks of SALW held by armed forces, police and other authorized bodies. (II.18)

n/a

ii) Is destruction the means used to dispose of such stocks? (II.18)

n/a

iii) *What national measures exist to safeguard such stocks prior to their disposal? (II.18)*
n/a

iv) *Subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph II.16 of the UN Programme of Action, are all confiscated, seized or collected SALW destroyed? (II.16)*
n/a

v) *What methods has your country used to destroy surplus stocks of SALW designated for destruction? (If appropriate, please make reference to the report of the UN Secretary-General(S/2000/1092) of 15 November 2000.) (II.19)*
n/a

- Dumping at sea
- Cutting up and buried in monuments

vi) *Please give details of any information on SALW confiscated or destroyed within your jurisdiction that is submitted to relevant regional and international organizations. (II.23)*
n/a

7. Export controls

i) *Please describe the system of export and import licensing or authorization, as well as measures on international transit, used by your country for the transfer of all SALW. (II.11)*

No exportation or importation of SALW, apart for the purpose of the International Assistance mission, is currently sanctioned by the Solomon Islands Government.

ii) *Please describe the national laws, regulations and administrative procedures used by your country to ensure effective control over the export and transit of SALW. How are these measures implemented? (II.12)*

Refer to section 3 above

iii) *Does your country use authenticated end-user certificates for this purpose? (II.12)*
n/a

iv) *Does your country notify the original exporting State when re-exporting or retransferring previously imported SALW? (II.13)*
n/a

8. Brokering

i) *What national legislation or administrative procedures exist to regulate the activities of those who engage in SALW brokering within national jurisdiction and control? (e.g. registration of brokers, licensing or authorization of brokering transactions and appropriate penalties) (II.14)*

As no SALW brokers currently operate in Solomon Islands, no national legislative or administrative procedures are currently in place to regulate SALW brokering.

9. Marking, record keeping and tracing

i) Does your country require licensed manufacturers of SALW to apply an appropriate and reliable marking on each weapon as an integral part of the production process? (II.7)

Solomon Islands does not manufacture SALW, however, *Firearms and Ammunition Act, Section 9(1)* requires the licensing officer to whom an application for a license is made to ensure that the firearm concerned is marked with the prescribed mark or number in such a way as to not damage the firearm.

ii) Is this marking unique? (II.7)
n/a

iii) Does this marking identify the country of manufacture? (II.7)
n/a

iv) How does this marking otherwise allow concerned authorities to identify and trace the relevant weapon? (II.7)
n/a

v) How long are records kept on the manufacture, holding and transfer of SALW under your jurisdiction? (II.9)
n/a

vi) What national measures exist for tracing SALW held and issued by the State? (II.10)
n/a

vii) Please give details of any steps taken by your country to cooperate in tracing illicit SALW, including the strengthening of mechanisms based on the exchange of relevant information. (III.11)

Refer to Regional Level initiatives, section **B. 3** below.

10. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)

i) Please describe any disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes your country has developed and implemented, including the effective collection, control, storage and destruction of SALW. (II.21)

Following the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA), which formally ended approximately two years of armed conflict between Guadalcanal and

Malaitan militias on the island of Guadalcanal, a number of bodies have been involved in the collection and disposal of SALW held by both civilians and police. Post-conflict collection efforts were promoted via a weapons amnesty clause in the TPA that granted Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM – “Gualese”) and Malaita Eagle Force (MEF – Malaitan) militia members who surrendered their weapons immunity from prosecution for the theft and/or possession of those weapons. A general amnesty promised broader immunity from criminal acts committed during the conflict, on the condition that *all* weapons and ammunition in possession of the two groups be surrendered.

The TPA established the indigenous Peace Monitoring Council (PMC) to monitor, report on, and enforce the terms of the Agreement. An International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) was created to assist the PMC by receiving and monitoring weapons surrenders and maintaining an arms inventory. To meet amnesty requirements, former militants were to turn their weapons over to the IPMT within 30 days of the execution of the TPA, and the weapons were to remain under IPMT control for a period of 24 months. However, the TPA also included a clause allowing for a review of the security situation throughout the Solomon Islands by a government-appointed committee before the expiration of the 24-month period. A determination that co-existence had improved sufficiently would permit surrendered weapons to be transferred to the Police Armory or disposed of in a manner chosen by the Solomon Islands Government.

On the 31st July 2003 the Minister for Justice and Legal Affairs exercised his powers under the Amnesty Acts 200 and 2001 issuing a Weapons and Stolen Property Surrender Notice. The notice specified that from 1st August 2003 to 21st August 2003 that *all* firearms and ammunition shall be surrendered in accordance with the Amnesty Notice issued by the Solomon Islands Government with the assistance of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.

COLLECTION AND DESTRUCTION OF SALW

At the time of an MEF-orchestrated coup on 5 June, 2000, over 1000 weapons were stolen from police armories in Honiara by the MEF. In the first nine months following the October TPA, the IPMT collected a total of 1,131 weapons – nearly three-quarters of which were homemade – which were then stored in eight sealed and padlocked storage containers. A cross-referencing of pre- and post-coup armory inventories conducted by the IPMT in July 2001 determined that 496 high-powered police firearms remained in circulation.² Two extensions to the weapons amnesty failed to recover additional arms. Further collection efforts were complicated by compensation payments given to former militants by the Solomon Islands Government, which heightened expectations of financial gain in exchange for the surrender of arms. Compensation claims – and the threats that accompanied them – continued in spite of a 2002 Law and Order Action Plan that announced “no more buy-backs” of weapons.³ Concern that the amnesty legislation of 2000 stipulated by the TPA was flawed, combined with confusion over the expiration of the amnesty deadline, discouraged militants from turning over their weapons.

² Ibid:94

³ Ibid:95

Two weeks after an amnesty period that expired on May 31, 2002, IPMT containers held 2,043 weapons. New audits revised the July 2001 estimates of missing weapons upward by 125, to 621. Therefore, the latest surrenders, 77 guns given to police and another 45 turned over by police in early June 2002, left 499 high-powered weapons unaccounted for, though that number could be higher.⁴ The IPMT dumped hundreds of homemade guns into the sea on June 17, 2002, and all weapons held are scheduled for destruction.

Since the August Amnesty, the National Peace Council facilitated the collected 306851 rounds of ammunition and 3730 weapons with the RAMSI, which included registered guns, homemade guns, semi and automatic weapons.

DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

Since its inception in October 2002, the National Peace Council (NPC) has continued the work of the Peace Monitoring Council, which was disbanded at that time with the expiration of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA). Created by the Solomon Islands Government, the former IFM and MEF militias, and the provincial governments of Guadalcanal and Malaita, the NPC and its mandate reflect provisions in the TPA advocating reconciliation, unity, confidence-building, and the return of law and order in Solomon Islands society. To this end, the organization's Weapons Free Village Campaign encourages communities in Guadalcanal and Malaita to support and achieve weapons-free status with the help of NPC monitors. To date more than 974 villages – more than three quarters of the target of 1,200 villages by December 2004 – have been declared weapons free in public ceremonies during which chiefs and village leaders sign a weapons free declaration. Part of the campaign has included, with less emphasis since the arrival of RAMSI, the collection and destruction of weapons, a task for which the NPC has government sanction.

Through its Solomon Islands sub-office, the United Nations Development Programme has supported the Solomon Islands Government since July 2002 in the Demobilization of Special Constables Project. Funded by AusAID, UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, the EU and with some assistance from NZAID, the project addressed some internal distortions within the Royal Solomon Islands Police that resulted from the conflict. Following the cessation of hostilities, the Special Constables (SCs), known elsewhere as Police Reserves, multiplied in the absence of formal controls from approximately 400 to more than 2,000, as former combatants joined their ranks. Only one hundred from each militia – IFM and MEF – were originally slated for SC status following the peace agreement. The resulting surge in numbers meant that many SCs lacked the necessary training and skills to carry out their responsibilities. Many maintain strong ties to former militia leaders existed. Their demands for payment for the past two years prior to 2003, of their "employment" – sometimes by threat of force – have drained public finances and heightened insecurity in the country.

The project has just completed the second and final phase. More than 1,200 special constables (police reserves), mainly ex-militia were successfully demobilised and provided with reintegration assistance (resettlement package, counselling, training and

⁴ Ibid:97

referral services) between July 2002 and July 2004. Project completed in July 2004 and is regarded as successful making a major contribution to the fiscal and structural reforms of the Royal Solomon Islands Police and provided former SCs with a viable and sustainable alternative livelihood, thereby limiting their involvement in crime related activities and demand for small arms

The demobilization project's steering committee is comprised of the Royal Solomon Islands Police, the Ministry of Police, National Security and Justice, the Ministry of National Reconciliation and Peace, and UNDP.

The final outcome is that the SCs have been disbanded and the RSIP can now continue in the restructure of the police force, a major focus in the recovery efforts in Solomon Islands.

ii) Please describe how your country has addressed the special needs of children affected by armed conflict, in particular the reunification with their family, their reintegration into civil society, and their appropriate rehabilitation. (II.22)

n/a

iii) Please describe any DDR programmes or activities that your country has supported. (II.30, 34)

n/a

11. Awareness-raising

i) Please describe any public awareness and confidence-building programmes on the problems and consequences of the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects that your country has developed and implemented (including the public destruction of surplus weapons and the voluntary surrender of SALW). (II.20)

The work of the National Peace Council, especially its Weapons Free Village Campaign, serves an important public awareness function on the problems of SALW in Solomon Islands communities. Weapons Free Village ceremonies get considerable coverage in the national newspaper and are broadcast live by the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation. An upcoming Concert for National Unity, organized by the NPC, will also contribute to confidence-building and awareness of SALW issues in Solomon Island communities.

Past public events regarding SALW include weapons surrender ceremonies organized by the Royal Solomon Islands Police. Two major ceremonies, May 24th and 31st, 2002, coincided with the expiration of the most recent weapons amnesty. Public exposure for the events was maximized by a parade. An inventory was made of surrendered weapons, which were prominently displayed during the ceremonies and in newspaper articles. Collected and surrendered weapons have been destroyed or disposed of at sea. Two methods of destruction are employed: the International Peace Monitoring Team and Peace Monitoring Council (now NPC) have burned or thrown weapons into the sea. Police have cut weapons with oxyacetylene torch.

Since the above, the National Peace Council has continued with the Weapons Free Village Campaign. To date approximately 1000 villages have been awarded the weapons free status. The status of villages is constantly monitored by National Peace Council Monitors. 240 villages are in the process of receiving the weapons free status with completion of these villages to be January 2005.

ii) Please describe any education and public awareness programmes on the problems of the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects that your country has encouraged. (II.41)
n/a

B. Regional level

1. Legally binding instruments

i) Has your country been involved in negotiations for the conclusion of legally binding instruments aimed at preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects? (II.25)

No negotiations regarding SALW instruments are in progress at the present time.

ii) Where such instruments exist, please describe the steps your country has taken to ratify and fully implement them. (II.25)
n/a

2. Moratoria and action programmes

i) Please give details of any support your country has given moratoria or similar initiatives on the transfer and manufacture of SALW, and/or regional action programmes to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects (including cooperation with States concerned in the implementation of these initiatives). (II.26)
n/a

3. Regional Cooperation

i) Please describe any involvement your country has had in the establishment of subregional or regional mechanisms with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in SALW across borders (in particular trans-border customs cooperation and networks for information-sharing among law enforcement, border and customs control agencies). (II.27)

REGIONAL MECHANISMS

Since 1996, the 16 member states of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) have worked to develop a common regional approach to weapons control. Regular regional gatherings, including those of the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) – a PIF subcommittee of police, customs, and immigration organizations – the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC), the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), and the Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting (PILOM), have been used to examine current

laws and regulations, coordinate regional initiatives, disseminate information, and determine future requirements. Their deliberations produced a regional document in October 1998 known as the *Honiara Initiative: Agreement in Principle on Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives, and Other Related Materials*, which outlined a common regional approach to weapons control, including:

- legislative or other measures to criminalize the illicit manufacturing, trafficking, sale, and possession of arms and ammunition;
- measures necessary to establish jurisdiction over their sale, possession, and use;
- processes for the marking and tracing of firearms;
- procedures to confiscate or forfeit illegally manufactured or trafficked arms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials;
- strengthening and harmonization of import, export, and trans-shipment controls; including stronger controls at entry and exit points and improved inter-country notification systems;
- improvements in licensing systems and record-keeping; and
- enhanced exchange of information on various aspects of weapon control (*The Honiara Initiative*, SPCPC, October 1998)

Building upon *The Honiara Initiative*, the document *Towards a Common Approach to Weapons Control*, commonly known as the *Nadi Framework*, was produced by an SPCPC working group and the OCO in March 2000. It promotes regional cooperation and the eventual harmonization of domestic arms legislation. In addition to reaffirming the content of the *Honiara Initiative*, it is based upon an understanding that:

- the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, other related materials, and prohibited weapons is a privilege that is conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety; and
- public safety will be enhanced by imposing strict controls on the import, possession, and use of firearms, ammunition, other related materials, and prohibited weapons (SPCPC & OCO, Sec.1.1, 2000).

See the following link for full text of the *Nadi Framework*:

http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/source_documents/Regional%20fora/Pacific%20Islands/Nadi%20framework.pdf

Other regional activities on small arms have contributed to further consultation and cooperation. As a result of a regional small arms workshop hosted by Australia in May 2001, the Governments of Australia, Japan, and New Zealand agreed to assist Pacific Island countries in developing strategies to address regional small arms problems. In March of the same year, New Zealand hosted, with the UN, an Asia Pacific Regional Disarmament Conference, which included a strong focus on small arms. The meeting emphasized the importance of the *Nadi Framework* as a basis for regional initiatives and provided another avenue for regional exchange and cooperation. May 16-17, 2003, Japan pledged its support for Forum members' SALW collection efforts at the *Pacific Leaders Summit Between Japan and Members of the Pacific Islands Forum* in Okinawa. Their commitment to collaboration is encapsulated in "The Okinawa Initiative: Regional Development Strategy for a More Prosperous and Safer Pacific."

The Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO), of which Solomon Islands is a member, performs an important coordination role in the Pacific. The OCO engages in a range of activities to strengthen links between its 23 member countries, including the Customs Regional Intelligence Network (CRIN), which provides an overview of SALW trafficking patterns in the region through a quarterly bulletin.

Solomon Islands also has access to the Customs Asia Pacific Enforcement Reporting System (CAPERS). CAPERS is an international information and reporting system developed by the United States Customs Service which is used in a number of OCO member countries throughout the Pacific region. The purpose of CAPERS is to encourage greater co-operation and communication between participating members through a coordinated approach to Customs enforcement matters, providing a free exchange of information and assistance in the investigation of Customs violations as well as other law enforcement offences.

It should be noted that the limited capacity of both the Solomon Islands Government and national law and order institutions has prevented the opportunities available through OCO and CAPERS from being operationalized.

BORDER CONTROL

Limited financial resources and understaffing also limit the extent and effectiveness of border control efforts in the Solomon Islands. As a result, the Solomon Islands Government could benefit greatly from regional collaborative initiatives.

A two-week course on border control training was held at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Suva, Fiji from May 19-30, 2003. Acting PIF Secretary-General Mr. Iosefa Maiava introduced the session by noting the importance of better controls at ports of entry “in the wake of international terrorism, people smuggling and the trade of illegal drugs and weapons.” The training course, supported by the Government of France in conjunction with the Australian Law Enforcement Cooperation program of the Australian Federal Police, is intended to act as a deterrent by making border controls tougher on criminals.

.ii) Please describe any initiatives your country has undertaken to encourage regional and subregional action on illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects in order to, as appropriate, introduce, adhere, implement or strengthen relevant laws, regulations and administrative procedures. (II.28)

The Expert Working Group (EWG) to Coordinate the Development of a Regional Framework held its second meeting May 5-6, 2003 at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The EWG will report to the Forum Regional Security Committee on its progress with the Framework – including model legislation to facilitate implementation of the measures outlined in both the *Honiara Initiative* and the *Nadi Framework* – and also consult with members on the draft text. A final version of the Model Legislative Provisions will be completed by June 30 for submission to the August Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Auckland, New Zealand. In-country drafting assistance to implement

the legislative provisions will be available from the Forum to member countries upon their request.

C. Global level

1. International instruments against terrorism and crime

i) What existing international legal instruments against terrorism and transnational organized crime has your country ratified or acceded to? (II.38)

- *Convention on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft*
 - Adopted: Tokyo, September 14, 1963
 - Entered into force: December 4, 1969
 - Instrument of succession deposited by Solomon Islands Government with the International Civil Aviation Organization March 23, 1982 with effect from July 7, 1978 (date of formal independence)

- *Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation*
 - Adopted: Montreal, September 23, 1971
 - Entered into force: January 26, 1973
 - Instrument of succession deposited by Solomon Islands Government with the Government of the United Kingdom April 13, 1982

The Solomon Islands Government, in conjunction with the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, is reviewing regional implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373. The Forum's 2003 Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security underlined members' commitment to global efforts to combat terrorism and implement international anti-terrorism measures such as UNSCR 1373 and the Financial Action Task Force Special Recommendations. Solomon Islands awaits review of the Forum Regional Security Committee regarding regional implementation of these measures.

The Department of Foreign Affairs confirms that the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 15 December 1997, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 9 December 1999, are pending ratification by September 2003. A Trade Corridor Agreement with Bougainville and the renegotiation of a bilateral security plan to replace the 1997 Solomon Islands/Papua New Guinea Basic Border Agreement, which expired 17 July, 2002 are also pending.

2. International cooperation and assistance

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Severely limited institutional capacity and the precarious nature of the current situation in Solomon Islands underlines the importance of outside assistance in the following areas.

i) Please give details of any assistance, including technical and financial assistance, your country has provided for purposes of supporting the implementation of the measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects as contained in the UN Programme of Action. (III.3, 6, 10, 14)

n/a

ii) Please describe any initiatives your country has undertaken to enhance mutual legal assistance and other forms of cooperation in order to assist investigations and prosecutions in relation to the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. (III.13)

n/a

iii) Please give details of any assistance your country has provided to combat the illicit trade in SALW linked to drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism. (III.15)

n/a

iv) Please give details of your country's cooperation with Interpol for the purpose of identifying those groups and individuals engaged in the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. (II.37)

n/a

v) Please give details of your country's use and support of Interpol's International Weapons and Explosives Tracking System database (including providing relevant information on the illicit trade in SALW). (III.9)

n/a

vi) Please give details of your country's cooperation with the UN system to ensure the effective implementation of arms embargoes decided by the UN Security Council in accordance with the UN Charter. (II.32)

As the Solomon Islands neither exports arms, nor is used by illicit brokers to facilitate illicit transactions (specifically those involving embargoed destinations), no cooperative measures have been undertaken in this area.

vii) Please describe any steps your country has taken in cooperation with other states, or regional or international organizations, to develop common understandings of the basic issues and the scope of the problems related to illicit brokering in SALW. (II.39)

n/a

3. Cooperation with civil society and NGOs

i) Please give details of cooperation with civil society and non-governmental organizations in activities related to the prevention, combat and eradication of the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects, at the national, regional and global levels. (II.20, 40, 41; III.2, 18)

Created by the Solomon Islands Government via a provision in the Townsville Peace Agreement, the Peace Monitoring Council was an indigenous, civilian-led organization. Their work, and continuing efforts of their successor organization, the independent

National Peace Council, is a high-profile example of government cooperation with civil society. Government, police, and International Peace Monitoring Team collaboration with the indigenous Anglican Melanesian Brothers and Sisters was critical to the success of post-conflict weapons collection efforts. As neither the PMC nor IPMT had any enforcement authority, the PMC's neutrality and close ties with affected communities were essential to securing arms surrenders and the success of the peace agreement in general. Local NPC peace monitors continue to perform the role of the PMC, developing close relationships with former combatants and an understanding of the impact of SALW on village-level dynamics.

4. Information exchange

i) Please describe any steps taken by your country to exchange information on national marking systems on SALW. (III.12)

Information in this area was unavailable at the time of submission of the report.

ii) Please give details of any information on, inter alia, SALW confiscated or destroyed within national jurisdiction, or other relevant information such as illicit trade routes and techniques of acquisition, that your country has submitted to relevant regional and international organizations. (II.23)

n/a

5. Training, capacity-building, research

i) Please describe any initiatives your country has undertaken to enhance cooperation and exchange of experience and training among competent officials, including customs, police, intelligence and arms control officials, at the national, regional and global levels in order to combat the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects. (III.7)

General capacity-building initiatives are ongoing through the continuing collaboration of the AusAID Law and Justice Sector Institutional Strengthening Program and the Royal Solomon Islands Police.

ii) Please describe any regional and international programmes for specialist training on small arms stockpile management and security that your country has developed or supported. (III.8)

n/a

iii) Please give details of any action-oriented research aimed at facilitating greater awareness and better understanding of the nature and scope of the problems associated with the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects that your country has developed or supported. (III.18)

n/a