NAMIBIA
Country Progress Report

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

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REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
1. Introduction

1.1 Namibia continues to recognize and commit herself to the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in All its Aspects. In addition to UNPoA, Namibia enforces other regional and sub-regional declarations and protocols on small arms and light weapons such as the Bamako Declaration and SADC Protocol as effective instruments to control the illicit trade in SALW and effective management of the licit stocks of arms and ammunition globally.

1.2 Namibia is however generally concerned about the excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of illicit small arms and light weapons worldwide. The concern is particularly on its negative consequences attributed to intensified and prolonged armed conflicts that heightened the levels of social instability in the form of wars and violent crimes as well as the social disorder globally. The phenomena are of great concerns to the Republic of Namibia, because they pose serious threats to peace, safety and security as well as political stability of Namibia.

1.3 Additionally, illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons sustain conflicts, exacerbate violence, contribute to the displacement of innocent populations, fuel crime and encourage terrorism.

1.4 In view of the above background, Namibia, as a signatory to the UNPoA, submits in this country report progress recorded towards the implementation of
United Nations Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.


First National Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons

2.1 The first practical action taken by the Namibian Government immediately after becoming party to the UNPoA was the First National Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons which was held in October 2002. The Conference was organized by Government in collaboration with civil society in Namibia. The Conference solicited national views and opinions on small arms and light weapons.

2.2 The Conference was recorded as successful and concluded with specific recommendations which resulted in the policy directions on small arms and light weapons for Namibia.

Compilation of Namibia National Action Plan of Small Arms and Light Weapons

2.3 As a result of consensus and recommendations of the National Conference, the Government of Namibia compiled Namibia National Action Plan (NNAP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The Plan was approved by the Namibian Cabinet in November 2004 and subsequently officially launched by the Head of State, the President of the Republic of Namibia in April 2005. This was the second major practical action done by the Government of Namibia towards the
implementation of UNPoA and other regional and sub-regional declarations and protocols on small arms and light weapons. The government has also made good progress in the implementation of Namibia National Action Plan thanks to the complementary financial assistance from distinguished donor community. The details of such progress are listed below:

Establishment of Institutional Framework

2.4 In order to realize the Namibia National Action Plan, Government created a number of structures that ensures effective coordination of activities in combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The structures put in place a geared towards a total eradication of illicit arms and make provisions for a verifiable database for the licit small arms and light weapons in Namibia which in turn contributes to the successes implementation of the UNPoA.

2.5 Among these structures established are the Inter-Agency Committees and Sub-committees responsible for providing guidance, coordination of various activities on small arms and light weapons and the actual implementation of the Namibia National Action Plan. These Committees are detailed below:

National Management Committee (NMC)

This comprised of senior government officials at the Permanent Secretaries levels from key Government Ministries, Offices and Agencies.
The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Safety and Security (Chairperson)

The Permanent Secretary: Office of the President

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Permanent Secretary: National Planning Commission Secretariat

The Director: Namibia Central Intelligence Service

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Defence

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Justice

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

The Permanent Secretary: Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

The NMC was established in 2005 and members went through an orientation seminar facilitated by experts from SaferAfrica, Namibia’s Civil Co-operating Partner in the SAD region.

**National Focal Point (NFP)**

The National Focal Point is another very important Committee which service as the technical arm and operational body of the National Management Committee. It was established in October 2003. Its
membership is drawn from the following Government Institutions and Organizations:

Ministry of Safety and Security – Namibian Police – Chairperson six members;
Office of the President – two members
Ministry of Foreign Affairs – two members
Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration – two members
Ministry of Defence – Namibia Defence Force – two members
Ministry of Finance – Customs and Excise – two members
Ministry of Environment and Tourism – one member
Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry – one member
Polytechnic of Namibia – two members and
Namibia Non-Governmental Organizations Forum (NANGOF) – two members

The National Focal Point is quite functional; hence it is guided and chaired by a senior Government Official, Deputy Inspector-General for Operations in the Namibian Police.

Sub-Committees

Three main technical Sub-Committees were also put in place:
- Research
- National Policy and Legislative,
- Public Education and Awareness Raising

The Members of the above Sub-Committees are drawn from the National Focal Point Committee, according to their expertise. These Sub-Committees are hard at work in their own responsibility areas.
Regional Focal Points

As Namibia is administratively demarcated into thirteen regions, thirteen Regional Focal Points on small arms and light weapons were established. These Focal Points are principally charged with the actual implementation of the Namibia National Action Plan in Namibia. These bodies are operational in all the thirteen regions.


The following practical activities at national level were undertaken in the implantation of UNPoA:

The Terms of Reference of Standard Working Procedures: National Focal Point and Regional Focal Points

3.1 In order to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the National Focal Point and the Regional Focal Points, terms of references and standard working procedures have been developed and issued to all members of these Focal Points Committees. These terms and references and standard of working procedures service as guidelines of Focal Points during their day-to-day planning, organizing, coordinating and overall implementation of the Namibia National Action Plan.

National Focal Point Strategic Workshop

3.2 Another important practical activity undertaken by Namibia during the review period was the convening of the national strategic workshop. The objective of the workshop was to review and assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of Namibia National Action Plan on
small arms and light weapons and also to come up with appropriate strategies for the implementation of the Plan. Among the important resolutions taken from the workshop were the reactivation and capacity building of the Regional Focal Points. It is important to report that this resolution was successfully implemented hence the training provided to all members of Regional Focal Points particularly in the following areas:

- Provisions of the international, regional and sub-regional protocols and declarations;
- The nine facets/objectives of the NNAP;
- The Terms of Reference and Standard Working Procedures for the National Focal Point and Regional Focal Points;
- The roles and responsibilities and training needs of the Regional Focal Point Secretariats (how to organize regional meetings, minutes recording, report writing, project management including project risk management and mitigation)

It is important to report that the capacity building workshop was attended by two hundred and seventy three men and women from all the thirteen regions and sixty two non-commissioned police officers.

**Destruction of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Ammunition and Explosives**

3.3 In November 2007, the Government of the Republic of Namibia demolished some small arms and light weapons, ammunition, explosives unexploded ordinances (UXO) of which ten thousand seven hundred thirty eight (10,738) rounds of ammunition;
one thousand four hundred twenty six (1426) firearms; one hundred sixty two (162) detonators; four hundred fifty three (453) hand grenades; twenty nine (29) rockets; forty three (43) motors and three (3) anti-tank mines were destroyed.

**Review of National Legislation**

3.4 In line with the UNPoA, Bamako Declaration and SADC Protocol, Namibia has made progress in reviewing its national legislation, the Arms and Ammunition Act, 1996 (Act No. 7 of 1996). The objective of such a review was to ensure that the current Act is amended in order to address the loopholes and shortcomings/gaps in that Act. In addition the objective of the amendment of the law was also to incorporate all elements contained in Article 5 of the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials.

Another objective of the amendment of the Law is to ensure effective control over the movement of small arms and light weapons within Namibia and over the export, import, transit or retransfer of such small arms and light weapons and further to prevent illegal manufacture of and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons or their diversion to unauthorized recipients and to ensure that the law is in conformity with the international, regional and sub-regional agreed standard.

3.5 Shortcomings such as competency test, brokering, renewal of license, annual quota-allocation of firearms have been identified in the current legislation and therefore will be included in the amended law. The amendment of the Arms and
Ammunition Act is in advance stage and hope to be completed before the end of 2008.

3.6 In order to seek public opinions and inputs on the current arms and ammunition Act, a three (3) day consultative workshop was held in March 2008 in Namibia. The workshop was attended by members of the National Focal Point, all Regional Focal Points Chairpersons, Namibia Arms and Ammunition Dealers Association, Namibia Professional Hunters Association, Security Association of Namibia, Namibia Agricultural Union, Non-Governmental Organizations and International Civil Cooperating Partners i.e. the South African International Training Academy and the Institute of Security Studies.

Marking of Firearms and Ammunition

3.7 The marking of firearms and ammunition has been lacking in the current Namibia’s Arms and Ammunition Act. This however will be incorporated into the amended law so as to be in line with the SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunitions and Other Related Materials, Article 9 as well as Article 5 (3) (g), provisions ensuring the standardized marking and identification of firearms at the time of manufacture, import and export.

Record Keeping System and Practice

3.8 In the area of record keeping system, Namibia has established a computerized Central Firearm Registry System. Plans are underway to extend this system to all the regions.
The National Person Contact on the International Tracing Instrument (ITI)

3.9 Namibia continues to recognize the importance of the international tracing instrument hence it facilitates member states to effectively trace small arms and light weapons. As agreed at the Capacity Building Workshop “on the implementation of the International Instrument to enable State to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner the illicit SALWs held in December 2007, Namibia is hereby submitting the details of its National Contact Persons responsible:

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Cooperation in Tracing and Assistance received

3.10 Namibia records good cooperation that exists with all her neighbouring countries, South Africa Development Community (SADC) member states, and other Sub-regional Civil Cooperation Partners. Namibia has however so far, not received any financial or technical assistance with regard to recordkeeping, making and tracing. The country further pledges for such financial and technical assistance.

4. Challenges

4.1 Namibia continue to face the challenges of financial and human resources necessary for the implementation of her national action plan on small arms and light weapons, the UNPoA, Bamako Declaration and the SADC Protocol on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Namibia will continue to support and render her commitments to the international, regional and sub-regional initiatives on small arms and light weapons and strengthen her capacity for the implementation of all the provisions of the UNPoA, Bamako Declaration and the SADC Protocol.

5.2 Namibia’s commitment to the international, regional and sub-regional obligations on small arms and light weapons has not only been demonstrated by her active participation at international conferences, meetings and workshops, but has hosted a number of international forums. Simultaneously Namibia
ensures that, its national policies and administrative procedures are in place and in line with the international, regional and sub-regional agreed principles and/or legally binding mechanisms. Therefore will continue to strengthen capacity development and mobilize financial resources for effective and efficient implementation of the Namibia National Action Plan on small arms and light weapons.

5.3 Namibia's guiding principle is and continues to be that without arms the dynamics of wars, conflicts, violent crimes and terrorism cannot be served but without a reduction in arms and arms control, the dynamics of peace cannot be served either.