

Delegation of Sweden

Statement at the Third Biennial Meeting of States in New York July 14-18, 2008

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Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

The illicit spread of small arms and light weapons is a threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security and stability. We are all aware of this. It is also quite obvious that the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons is a serious obstacle to sustainable development. Many developing countries and regions are working hard to establish important legal instrument, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise control over small arms and light weapons. But there is still more to do in this area.

The UN Programme of Action is a key global instrument to control illicit arms and provides guidance on what is needed to move forward. Sweden has been a strong supporter of this programme since its start.

Successful implementation of programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants are important when it comes to securing that ex-combatants are re-integrated into society and small arms and weapons are taken care of by competent authorities. Specific programmes for small arms and light weapons are needed in post-conflict countries and are important components in building sustainable peace.

These are some of the considerations forming the basis for Sweden's engagements in this area.

A comprehensive outline of our activities can be found in Sweden's National Report to the UN PoA. However, I will take this opportunity to highlight some of these items.

Sweden, notably through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), has provided support for a number of projects aiming to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects as contained in the UN Programme of Action.

Sweden has been active in supporting UN and international organisations in strengthening their global programmes within small arms and light weapons. Through UN, OAS, OSCE and other regional and international organisations Sweden has supported the work of regional initiatives like the Inter-American Firearms Convention in Central America, ECOWAS small arms program in West Africa and the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration in East Africa and the Horn of Africa. Support has also been given through UN in post-conflict countries for so called “arms for development” programmes.

International and Swedish NGOs like Saferworld, Oxfam UK, ARIAS Foundation, Parliamentary Forum, Small Arms Survey Geneva, Viva Rio and Geneva Forum have received Swedish support for their work with small arms and light weapons.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes have also received Swedish support in for example the Ivory Coast, Liberia and Haiti through UNDP, in Colombia through OAS and Colombia National University and in the Great Lakes Region in Africa through the World Bank.

International implementation efforts by Sweden in 2007

In 2007, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs financed a scientific study of “United Nations Arms Embargoes, their Impact on Arms Flows and Target Behavior”, made by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Special Programme on the Implementation of Targeted Sanctions at the Department of Peace and Conflict research at Uppsala University. The study, which is available at SIPRI’s website (www.sipri.org), was presented in New York and Brussels and was the subject of a scientific seminar in London. Although not specifically aiming at SALW, the recommendations which the study makes to the UNSC for improving the effectiveness of the embargoes may be of relevance to the SALW issue.

Sweden initiated the “Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration” (SIDDR). SIDDR was initiated with the aim of proposing ways and means that can contribute to the creation of a predictable framework in which DDR processes can be planned and implemented. The SIDDR resulted in a final report released in 2006 containing recommendations for international actors involved in DDR programmes. Work on SIDDR is now being carried on by the Folke Bernadotte Academy.

The Swedish National Defence College (SNDC) is engaged in maintaining and expanding an international network of DDR experts in which theoretical and practical knowledge and experience can be shared. The programme includes training, both national and international, network building and international activities.

The SNDC is a member and presently co-chair of the Integrated DDR Training Group (IDDRTG), which is a group of training institutions with a common intention to develop and share training material based on the UN Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS). The aim is also to coordinate, develop and maintain a broad range of DDR training courses and to harmonise and synchronise training dates. The UN Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on DDR participates as an observer in the IDDRTG.

DDR courses are given in Sweden and at various other places annually. The generic DDR courses are normally two weeks long, but training can also be tailored to specific needs and conducted as in-mission training. The course curriculum provides, for example, for the effective collection, control, storage and destruction of SALW, as the major part of the disarmament sessions. The SNDC has provided DDR training support to the UN on several occasions, but also to other international organisations. The DDR courses are now planned and conducted in cooperation with the Folke Bernadotte Academy.

Sweden has been granting SEK 25 million in support to the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). An agreement has been signed between UNDP and the Government of Sweden on support to the destruction of small arms and light weapons in the OSCE region. This was made possible through a Memorandum of Understanding between the OSCE Secretariat and the UNDP BCPR which was signed in June 2006 on a Swedish initiative. Earmarked funds have been allocated to joint OSCE-UNDP SALW projects in Belarus, Montenegro and Tajikistan, as well as to SALW projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNDP SACHIB), and to the SEE Regional Small Arms Project (SEESAC).

Sweden, together with Ukraine and Latvia, is participating in a trilateral ammunition destruction project in Ukraine. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is contributing SEK 3.8 million for the period 2007–2009.

In addition, the MFA has supported the following projects since 2005:

- Small Arms Survey, Geneva: SEK 1 million in core funding per year (2005, 2006, 2007)
- IANSA SEK 350 000 (2006–2007)
- Viva Rio: SEK 350 000 (2006), SEK 275 000 (2007) for the newsletter “En la Mira”
- Geneva Forum: SEK 250 000 (2007)
- SIPRI (in addition to core funding): SEK 265 000 in 2008 for a research project on states’ SALW submissions to UNROCA; SEK 1 921 000 in 2008 for a study on SALW transfers to Africa; SEK 1 885 000 in 2008 for editing the SIPRI Yearbook.

Through Sida, Sweden has been granting support to the Nairobi process as well as the implementation of the Inter-American Firearms Convention through the Organisation of African States (OAS) and the UN. Sweden has also supported financially the Economic Community of West African States’ (ECOWAS) Small Arms Programme in West Africa (SEK 20 million for 2006–2007) and the UN-LiREC, SEK 12 million (2005–2007). In addition, Sida has supported the following SALW related projects since 2005:

- Saferworld Global Programme, SALW-components part of the programme, SEK 10.6 million (2005–2007)
- ISS Global Programme, SALW-component part of the programme, SEK 13 million (2005–2007)
- UNICEF Landmines and Small Arms Global Programme, SALW-component part of the programme, SEK 7.75 million (2006–2007)
- Oxfam UK SALW programme in West Africa, SEK 12 million (2006–2007)
- UNDP Small Arms Programme in Sierra Leone, SEK 5 million (2006)
- ARIAS Foundation SALW programme in Central America, SEK 4.5 million (2005–2007)
- Kristna Fredsrörelsen/Parliamentary Forum Global SALW programme, SEK 10 million (2005–2007).

Furthermore, Sida has provided support for DDR programmes in several regions and countries:

- World Bank MDRP DDR programme in the Great Lakes region, SEK 40 million (2006–2007)
- UNDP DDR programme in Ivory Coast, SEK 10 million (2005)

- OAS MAPP programme (DDR) in Colombia, SEK 21.8 million (2006–2007)
- Colombia National University, DDR programme, SEK1.5 million (2007)
- UNDP DDR programme in Haiti, SEK 7.5 million (2006)
- UNDP DDR programme in Liberia, SEK 25 million (2005).

The Swedish Armed Forces has participated in or supported the following projects:

- Participation in a trilateral (Sweden, Ukraine, Latvia) ammunition destruction project in Ukraine (see above).
- Financial support to UNDP project, the Small Arms Control and Reduction Project, in Bosnia and Hercegovina (UNDP SACHIB).

Participation in the work of international and regional organisations in 2007

Sweden reports annually to the voluntary UN Register on Conventional Arms. In 2007, Sweden submitted for the first time a report about SALW exports in 2006.

Sweden is an active member of the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) aimed at combating international crime in the Baltic Sea region. The cooperation is both strategic and operative. Sweden has an active role in various groups of the Operative Committee (OPC) of the Chiefs of Governments' Task Force against organised crime. The objective of the OPC is to enhance cooperation between the law-enforcing agencies in the Baltic Sea region.

The Swedish Police Service is an active member of the European Firearms Experts network (EFE) aimed at exchanging information and best practices regarding firearms crime as well as planning so-called High Impact Operations (HIO).

The National Police Board has participated in a project within the EU (Enfopol 16) aiming at improving cooperation and exchange of information between police services regarding marking of arms and tracing of illicit SALW.

Sweden cooperates with Interpol within the regular work of the law-enforcement agencies.

Furthermore, Sweden cooperates on a regular basis with Europol in this area.

The Swedish Police Service has been engaged in the elaboration of the European Tracing Manual. Continuous discussions are conducted between the EFE network and Interpol in order to find the best way of making use of both systems. At present Sweden does not use the INTERPOL Weapons Electronic Tracing System (IWETS).

Sweden cooperates with the World Customs Organisation (WCO) within the regular work of the law-enforcement agencies. Certain arms confiscation data are reported to the WCO's database CEN (Customs Enforcement Network).

The Swedish Armed Forces has been carrying out training of personnel in, for example, the Baltic states in 2006–2008 and in International Security Operations under a UN mandate.

Mr Chairman, these were some examples highlighting our national efforts to further the implementation of the PoA in co-operation with other States and organisations.

Before concluding, I would like to especially commend your efforts, Mr Chairman, to encourage an active and extensive NGO-participation at this meeting. NGOs play a very important and much appreciated role in the ongoing process. I find it important to acknowledge this fact at this very occasion.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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