

NATO/EAPC UNCLASSIFIED

**STATEMENT TO THE FOURTH BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES
BY MR. FRED C. PARKER IV,
CHAIRMAN OF THE EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL'S
AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON SALW AND MINE ACTION**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the organisers for providing the opportunity to present an overview of the contribution of NATO and its Partners to the fulfilment of the goals of the Programme of Action.

While NATO's military activities are well known, I hope to present to you another view of our complex Alliance. NATO Headquarters is the base for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the activities of its 50 nations (28 NATO Allies and 22 Partners). The EAPC is the overarching political consultative forum for the Alliance's Partnership for Peace programme of practical cooperation with NATO. The EAPC plays a role as a forum that supports the Programme of Action, and PfP Trust Fund mechanism gives our activities some "teeth". A full report from the EAPC is available in hard copy and can be picked up at the NATO display in the exhibit area along with a selection of other publications.

1. EAPC-AHWG Contribution

The EAPC's Ad Hoc Working Group on SALW and Mine Action remains one of the few focused fora meeting on a regular basis to address these specific issues. It addresses implementation of norms and standards, support for the destruction of excess weapons and munitions, training, and the exchange of information between member states and other International Organizations and NGOs. The objectives of the Working Group are to contribute to international efforts which seek to mitigate the illicit proliferation of SALW and to facilitate the full implementation of the UN PoA.

1.1 Exchange of Information

Acknowledging the essential role of civil society in the struggle against the illicit proliferation of SALW, the Working Group has sought to develop and encourage an exchange of information via its guest speaker programme. Our meetings provide a forum to exchange experiences and ideas, share best practices, make potential donors aware of needs and act as a clearinghouse to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.

Taking these exchanges of information to a greater level, a Workshop on “Combating Illicit Brokering in SALW” was held in July 2009 at NATO HQ in Brussels, Belgium. The primary aim of the event was to foster dialogue, further facilitate cooperation and promote best practices between states on how to combat illicit brokering. The Workshop brought together representatives from 16 nations, and an array of international, non-governmental and regional organisations.

1.2 Training

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Work Programme provides opportunities for Partners to participate in Alliance training and education programmes. Since the BMS3, NATO and the informal Multinational Small Arms and Ammunitions Group have continued to offer two SALW courses at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany. The first course focuses on implementation of the PoA with a focus on assisting nations with establishing physical security stockpile management (PSSM) best practices and guidelines for SALW and conventional ammunition, as well as identifying surplus munitions for destruction. The second course, the SALW Policy Course focuses on assisting policy officers responsible for assisting implementers in the field.

2. PFP Trust Fund Mechanism

The NATO/PfP Trust Fund Policy produces tangible results and constitutes the operational dimension of the Working Group’s efforts. Projects focus on the destruction of SALW, ammunition and mines and also address the consequences of defence reform. The Trust

Fund Mechanism allows donors making relatively small donations to pool their resources into a larger project and have a much more effective impact than if acting alone.

2.1 PfP Trust Fund Projects

Under Trust Fund procedures, NATO Allies work with the individual Partners to identify and implement specific projects. In each case, NATO, or one of the NATO Partners take the lead in sponsoring and developing the project proposal, and in identifying potential contributors. The Partner benefiting directly from the project is expected to take an active part in this work and to provide maximum support to the project within its own means.

On the operational side, Trust Fund projects directly address the material aspects of the problem by reducing surplus stockpiles of SALW and conventional ammunition. The Ad Hoc Working Group encourages practical cooperation among the participating countries by highlighting and encouraging PfP Trust Fund projects through providing a clearinghouse function for nations and Partners seeking assistance through the mechanism.

To date over 40 million Euros have been contributed to the NATO/PfP Trust Fund projects helping to destroy over 105 million rounds of small arms ammunition and 220,000 small arms and light weapons.

3. Conclusions –The EAPC/PfP Contribution to the UN Programme of Action

In conclusion, the overall efforts of the EAPC and the Ad-Hoc Working Group contribute to transparency and the exchange of information among international actors and governments. Moreover, our efforts produce practical results and the potential for ever-greater results is very high.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.