

Sixteenth Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition — (2013/II)

(2014/C 178/03)

I. INTRODUCTION

The sixteenth progress report on the implementation of the EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their Ammunition covers EU activities during the second half of 2013 (from 1 July 2013 until 31 December 2013). The report was prepared by the EEAS Division for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Conventional Weapons and Space in cooperation with other relevant EEAS and European Commission services. During the reporting period, the EU continued to promote the issues related to SALW and their ammunition in all multilateral fora as well as in its political dialogue with third countries in the context of relevant international instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (ITI). The adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2013 promises to complement and reinforce the work being done in UN instruments such as the PoA and the Firearms Protocol. The inclusion of SALW in the ATT's scope introduces legally binding obligations and new norms for the regulation of legal transfers of SALW, which will further reduce the risk of SALW being diverted to the illegal market. Over the period, the EU also continued the implementation of a wide range of projects on combating or preventing the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of SALW and their ammunition, and adopted new Council Decisions on additional initiatives towards these goals.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN CONTAINED IN THE EU SALW STRATEGY

II.1. Effective multilateralism to develop universal, regional and national mechanisms to counter the supply and destabilising spread of SALW and their ammunition

(a) UNGA68 First Committee

The 2013 session of the UN General Assembly First Committee offered an opportunity for the EU to support the effective and full implementation of the Outcome Document of the Second Review Conference on the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small and Light Arms (SALW) and the early entry into force, universalisation and full implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. Several resolutions were adopted providing among others for the implementation of the UN Programme of Action. The Arms Trade Treaty became one of the most contentious issues in relation to a number of resolutions: strong language in support of the ATT and its early entry into force generated vigorous debates. The EU and EU Member States together with other delegations, expressed their overwhelming support for the Treaty and intended to include strong references in relevant draft resolutions to this effect. These efforts faced firm opposition by some and the resolutions, in most of the cases, ended up with weaker language.

Resolutions, 'Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them' (Mali), 'The illicit trade of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects' (Colombia) and 'Problems of arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunitions stockpiles in surplus' (Germany/France) were adopted without a vote, having previously been subject to wide discussions and consultations, also within the EU due to the ATT language they contained. All EU Member States, in line with previous years' practice co-sponsored these resolutions. The European Union delivered an explanatory general statement before taking action on Conventional Weapons resolutions and highlighted the importance it attaches to the ATT and the first ever Security Council Resolution 2117 on Small Arms and Light Weapons. It also underlined the human rights/humanitarian consequences and the impact on violence against women and children, pointing also at the resolution on 'Women, disarmament and arms control' submitted by its sponsors without conducting prior consultations. The statement was supported by 25 third countries.

Resolutions 'Transparency in Armaments' and 'National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology' (Netherlands) containing strong language in support of the ATT were challenged by some and finally approved by a vote of 145 in favour to none against and 28 abstentions, and 171 in favour to none against and 4 abstentions, respectively.

A separate resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty was approved by a vote of 141 in favour to none against, with 28 abstentions.

In line with the importance it attaches to the ATT, the EU offered comments and questions at an introductory session by the President of the Final UN Conference on ATT.

In the margins of the First Committee, the EU also participated in an informal meeting on the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS5) of the SALW Programme of Action reiterating the EU's priorities in preparation of the Meeting from 16-20 June 2014.

(b) *Implementation of the 2001 UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects*

The EU actively participated in all rounds of **informal consultations in preparation of the 5th Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the PoA (BMS5, 16-20 June 2014, New York)**, which is going to be the next big UN meeting on SALW issues in the framework of the PoA after the Second Review Conference, which took place in August/September 2012. At these consultations and against the background of the substantive outcome documents, which the Second Review Conference adopted by consensus, the EU promoted the need for a focused discussion on the experiences and opportunities of peace support operations and other relevant actors to trace illicit SALW in conflict and post-conflict zones. The EU is convinced that increased and more systematic tracing in conflict zones can contribute significantly to improving our capacities to counter the illicit trade in SALW and their diversion to unauthorized end-users by, for instance, improving our knowledge on diversion channels, leaks from insufficiently secured stockpiles, or smuggling routes. Furthermore, the EU believes that BMS5 could make a significant contribution towards combating the illicit trade in SALW by examining the opportunities and challenges arising from recent developments in SALW manufacturing, technology and design for effective marking, record-keeping, tracing and securing SALW. Other important topics for BMS5 include, in the EU's view, stockpile security and effective international cooperation and assistance.

To complement the EU's political efforts at UN level as regards the promotion of more systematic tracing of SALW in conflict and post-conflict zones with a concrete project to practically improve the international community's monitoring capacity in this regard and to provide relevant information for the future formulation and implementation of more evidence-based strategies and projects against the illicit spread and diversion of SALW, **Council Decision 2013/698/CFSP was adopted on 25 November 2013 to establish an accessible and user-friendly global reporting mechanism on illicit SALW and other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition ('iTrace') to reduce the risk of their illicit trade.**⁽¹⁾

The system aims to track illicit SALW and other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition, plot specific weapon types, suppliers, transfer vectors and illegal recipients. Focused on conflict-affected regions and supplied with information from in-field research and already existing policy-relevant documentation on transfers of SALW and other conventional weapons and ammunition, iTrace is supposed to be the first global mechanism to monitor weapons trafficking systematically. It also seeks to help monitor ATT implementation, provide comprehensive information in support of ATT implementation reviews and strengthen the capacity of national governments to anticipate the impact of arms export licensing decisions.

During the reporting period, the development of the system has started and a series of field investigations to populate iTrace with real time data has commenced. Initially focusing on sub-Saharan Africa – including the Central African Republic, Libya and South Sudan – the scope of investigations is supposed to expand to the Middle East and, potentially, to South America and East Asia in 2014-2015. The implementing agency Conflict Armament Research Ltd (CAR) will launch iTrace at BMS5 in June 2014 in New York.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:320:0034:0042:EN:PDF>

In the framework of the **Council Decision in support of activities of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UN ODA) to implement the PoA (Council Decision 2011/428/CFSP of 18 July 2011)**⁽¹⁾, a mid-term assessment of the implementation of the supported activities demonstrated the following concrete results: At the global level, the series of regional workshops on the PoA for States of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean had a significant impact on the 2012 PoA Second Review Conference. Participating States provided feedback that the regional workshops greatly increased knowledge and awareness of SALW issues under the PoA in the lead-up to the 2012 PoA Second Review Conference. Concrete outcome documents were agreed at these regional meetings, which delineated regional and sub-regional priority issues on SALW. Moreover, increased coordination was facilitated between different national entities on the issue of SALW by the strategic effort to ensure that one representative from the capital and one representative from the Permanent Mission to the UN attended the regional meetings from each participating country. Finally, the development under the Programme of Action Implementation Support System (PoA-ISS) of the online reporting template to facilitate the submission of national reports on the implementation of the PoA was concluded successfully.

During the period of 1 July - 31 December 2013, the global work on SALW issues and the work at the 2012 Second Review Conference also translated into concrete capacity-building work in individual third countries. As regards the ITI, assistance was provided to the potential beneficiary States of Burkina Faso, Niger and Sierra Leone in preparation of the receipt of weapons marking machines in order to ensure that they would be able to begin marking and record-keeping nationally-owned weapons in accordance with the standards required under the ITI. The draft guidelines on the planning and implementation of national marking, record-keeping and tracing programmes have also been shared with West African States for their input to ensure national buy-in and to support putting in place effective and sustainable weapons-marking practices. Activities foreseen for 2014 will include the provision of the marking machines to the three beneficiary States, in-country training on the use of the machines for these three countries, and the regional training-of-trainers workshop.

During the reporting period, capacity was also built on the ground in the area of ammunition stockpile management. Intensive awareness raising and dissemination of the completed UN SaferGuard International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and its online implementation support tool kit (<http://www.un.org/disarmament/un-safeguard/>) is ongoing with the Association of Latin American Peacekeeping Training Centres (ALCOPAZ).

This has resulted in the decision of ALCOPAZ to use the IATG in their peacekeeping efforts. Brazilian national authorities in particular have also committed themselves to the task of translating the 700-page IATG into Portuguese. Awareness raising is also in the initial stages of taking place with African Countries. In the context of the regional meeting for members of the League of Arab States (LAS) to discuss the impact of the 2012 PoA Second Review Conference (10-11 June 2013, Cairo), a number of LAS States expressed an eagerness to receive training in ammunition management and welcomed the fact that the IATG have been translated into Arabic as part of the implementation of activities under the Council Decision. In 2014, advanced training on the IATG will take place in Latin America and in Africa and on-the-job mentoring on the IATG is foreseen for three Latin American and three African countries.

(c) *Arms Trade Treaty*

The EU very much welcomes the successful adoption in 2013 of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and firmly believes that, when widely and effectively implemented, the ATT can make a significant difference in making legal international arms transfers more responsible and transparent, and in combatting the illegal trade in conventional arms. Towards this aim, the EU intends to support the universalization and full and effective implementation of the Treaty and adopted, in support of these objectives, Council Decision 2013/768/CFSP of 16 December 2013 on EU activities in support of the implementation of the ATT.⁽²⁾ This Council Decision will provide significant funding in support of the ATT and will grant substantial diplomatic leverage to the EU when interacting with third countries about joining the ATT.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:188:0037:0041:EN:PDF>

⁽²⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:341:0056:0067:EN:PDF>

The inclusion of SALW in the ATT's scope was an important step and more stringent controls on legal international transfers of SALW through, for instance, more robust end-user controls and assurances as well as through diversion mitigation measures can further reduce the risk of SALW being diverted to the illegal market. Thus, the ATT will also complement and reinforce other relevant UN instruments such as the PoA and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol).

All EU Member States have signed the ATT since it was opened for signature on 3 June 2013 and, on 2 April 2014, seventeen EU Member States jointly deposited their ratification instruments, thereby significantly contributing to reaching the threshold of 50 ratifications needed for entry into force. Other EU Member States will soon deposit their ratification instruments, as their national ratification procedures are well underway.

(d) *Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms*

A proposal for a Council Decision for the Conclusion of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, was adopted on 22 March 2013 by the European Commission. On 10 December 2013, the European Parliament gave its consent to the proposal and the Council adopted the Decision on 11 February 2014. The Decision finalizes the process of transposition into EU legislation of the provisions of the Firearms Protocol. The conclusion of the Firearms Protocol by the EU was still pending and represented an international commitment for the EU.

Through the long-term component of the Instrument for Stability (IfS), which addresses global and trans-regional threats, a three-year (March 2011-February 2014) project to prevent and counter the trans-national illicit trade in firearms by promoting the ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol continued in the second half of 2013. The project is implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its geographical scope encompasses West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo) and South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay). Targeted technical assistance continued to be provided on legislative harmonisation and capacity-building on SALW management at national and regional levels (particularly with Mercosur's Working Group on Firearms and Explosives) in line with the aim of promoting the ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol in Latin America and West Africa. More specifically, during the second part of 2013, a set of comprehensive reports have been finalised on the legislative assessment as well as gap analyses for 13 out of the 15 project countries, while tailored legislative advice and legal drafting support has been provided to 7 countries for the development of their draft national laws on firearms. A comprehensive training curriculum on firearms, which was developed in cooperation with INTERPOL and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is in the last stage of finalisation, while the project experts revised UNODC's Model Law Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms to reflect the synergies with the newly adopted ATT. In addition, the project sought engagement with regional civil society bodies and parliamentarians and organized capacity building workshops in order to raise awareness on SALW issues and enhance civil society participation and oversight in the implementation of firearms strategies.

In the framework of the IfS long-term component, the EU also continued to provide financial assistance to INTERPOL for the development and roll out of a database for tracking and tracing lost, stolen, trafficked and smuggled firearms (iARMS) via the Interpol I24/7 system in order to facilitate regional and trans-regional information exchange and investigative cooperation between law enforcement agencies. The first phase (2011-2012) focused on the creation of the database and the system's pilot testing in selected countries in West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo), South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay), the Caribbean (Jamaica), Europe (Czech Republic, Croatia, Portugal, Spain) and Australia. January 2013 marked the start of the project's second phase and global roll out after the successful test run. The objective of the 2-year second phase (2013-2014) is to enhance the functionality of the system and make iARMS available to all 190 INTERPOL members. The project also foresees related capacity-building, training and criminal intelligence services on combating firearms-related crime. To date, iARMS contains around 300 000 records provided by the 107 countries which have signed up to the system. In November 2013, the first successful iARMS 'hit'

occurred on a stolen firearm linking previously unrelated cases in Costa Rica and Panama. A third phase is in preparation for the beginning of 2015 with the objective of consolidating the achievements of the first two phases, to foster the global usage of iARMS and to exploit synergies with related systems, in the EU and elsewhere.

On 21 October 2013, the Commission adopted the **Communication ‘Firearms and the Internal Security of the EU: Protecting Citizens and Disrupting Illegal Trafficking.’**⁽¹⁾ The Communication takes stock, from a law enforcement perspective, of existing EU actions to reduce trafficking of firearms and presents how the Commission sees future steps in this area. The Communication sets out a comprehensive blueprint for Europe to act together in protecting the legal sale and ownership of firearms, and preventing gun-related crime. It examines some ideas on whether and how to strengthen legislation, how to step up operational cooperation between law enforcement services, and how to work better in and with third countries to stem the inflow of illicit arms. It also considers how to reduce the risk of diversion of firearms into criminal hands through the development of effective standards on deactivating civilian and military firearms, and greater efforts to reduce illicit trafficking of firearms (whether civilian or military) from outside the EU.

The Commission is also in the process of defining a relevant **‘2015 Firearms Package,’** possibly including legislative proposals, firstly on firearms deactivation and marking proceedings and secondly on approximating criminal sanctions against illicit trafficking in firearms.

A Commission Decision establishing an **Expert Group on Measures Against Illicit Trafficking in Firearms to Safeguard the EU’s Internal Security** has been adopted on 11 April 2013 and the first meeting of the Firearms Expert Group was held on 10 December 2013.⁽²⁾ The Group is composed of experts from the internal security field, including producers of firearms and researchers and other individuals who, in the Commission’s view, offer valuable expertise which may assist the Commission with possible drafting of legislative proposals and policy initiatives to improve measures against the illicit trafficking in firearms to safeguard the EU’s internal security. The first meeting gave important suggestions about the policy priorities of two preparatory studies on new legislative proposals.

The Council also included the strategic goal of **reducing the risk of firearms to the citizen, including combating illicit trafficking in firearms,** among the **EU’s priorities for the fight against serious and organised crime between 2014 and 2017** and, accordingly, the Council adopted an Operational Action Plan which provides the necessary spur to action on the part of the Member States and Europol.

Finally, a **Euro** Barometer Survey on ‘Firearms in the EU’ was published in October 2013.⁽³⁾ It indicates that most EU citizens support stricter firearms controls and that two-thirds support EU action — in cooperation with national authorities — against firearms trafficking.

(e) *Export controls*

During the second semester of 2013, arms export control outreach activities have further developed under Council Decision 2012/711/CFSP that provides for regional seminars, study visits, staff exchanges, and individual assistance workshops.⁽⁴⁾ The Council Decision enabled two regional seminars respectively for Eastern European and Caucasus partners of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Tbilisi, Georgia, in October 2013 and for North African Mediterranean partners of the European Neighbourhood Policy, in Tunis, Tunisia, in November 2013. In addition, a legal review workshop took place in September 2013 in Serbia to assist in the review of the Serbian draft export control legislation and a study visit was hosted by Portugal for officials of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in October 2013.

Political dialogues on arms export controls issues took place with Norway and the USA in the second semester of 2013.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0716:FIN:en:PDF>

⁽²⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:107:0004:0006:EN:PDF>

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_383_en.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:321:0062:0067:EN:PDF>

II.2. SALW in the framework of political dialogues with third countries and regional organisations, SALW clauses

SALW issues were included in the agenda of a number of the EU's regular **political dialogues with third countries** and cooperation with regional organizations. Political dialogue meetings on non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, mostly undertaken by the EU's Principal Advisor and Special Envoy on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, were organised with Russia (in Moscow), Brazil (in Brussels) and China (in Beijing). He also held a number of informal consultations with various actors, including in the margins of international events such as the IAEA General Conference in Vienna (Republic of Korea), the UNGA First Committee in New York (including India, United States, Russia, UN Secretariat, South Africa), the G8 Non-Proliferation Directors Group in London (Canada), as well as with Kazakhstan (in Astana). The EU also coordinated its positions with the US at the annual EU28-US High-Level Dialogue on Nonproliferation, Disarmament, Arms Control and CBRN Risk Mitigation held on 13 December 2013 in Brussels.

In line with the **Council Conclusions on the inclusion of a SALW element in agreements between the EU and third countries** adopted in December 2008, further negotiations on the inclusion of SALW elements in relevant agreements took place in particular with Brunei, Japan and Kazakhstan. *inter alia*, the negotiations effectively contribute to awareness raising on the EU's SALW policy, provide a forum for increasing mutual understanding of relevant positions, identify possible areas for future cooperation and encourage partner countries to make concrete headway with regard to the effective implementation of relevant international instruments on SALW control.

II.3. Specific EU project assistance to Third Countries and Regional Organisations

(a) *Western Balkans*

- I. On 9 December 2013, the Council adopted Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP in **support of SEESAC (South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of SALW) disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe**⁽¹⁾. The foreseen activities will build upon the work SEESAC completed during 2010-2012 under Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP. The Council Decision will support activities in Albania, BiH, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo⁽²⁾, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia. *Inter alia*, it will help to further increase stockpile security, destroy SALW and their ammunition, improve marking and tracing of SALW, foster closer regional cooperation on SALW issues and support the collection of illegal SALW held by the population of South East European countries.

While full-scale implementation of the Council Decision will start in January 2014, some preliminary activities already took place in late 2013. In particular, with the aim of facilitating the creation of a regional Firearms Experts Network in South East Europe, SEESAC, the Regional Unit against Organised Crime in South East Europe of the French Embassy in Belgrade and the French Interior Security Attaché co-organised a regional seminar on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Firearms in South East Europe, which took place in Podgorica, Montenegro on 26 – 28 November 2013. The seminar enabled deep and unprecedented, operational as well as strategic exchanges between customs, police and justice experts from France and from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo⁽²⁾, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As a result of the discussions, participants agreed on the utility of regional cooperation in combating illicit trafficking of firearms. The decision was taken to initiate a process of consultations with the relevant national authorities as a step towards establishing a regional experts network to combat illicit trafficking in firearms within which police, justice and customs services would be represented. It was agreed that SEESAC will coordinate the consultation process and act as interim Secretariat. The first meeting of the network is expected to take place in mid-2014.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:332:0019:0030:EN:PDF>

⁽²⁾ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

II. On 1 April 2013, a follow-up project started to continue to improve, through the Instrument for Stability (IfS) short-term component, the security, safety and development perspectives for the individuals and the local communities that would be affected by accidental explosions at ammunition storage sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). It is estimated that BiH has over 24 000 tonnes of military ammunition stockpiles, out of which over 17 000 tonnes are chemically unstable and represent a high risk of uncontrolled explosion which could possibly lead to human casualties and may have negative impacts for the region as well. The BiH Ministry of Defence does not possess sufficient capacities, capabilities and financial resources to ensure that appropriate standards are in place at the storage facilities. It is implemented by UNDP in partnership with the OSCE Mission to BiH and the Ministry of Defence and focuses solely on the destruction of unstable ammunition, the improvement of safety standards of ammunition storages and the development of ammunition control capacity. The project builds on and continues the work and progress already made within an Explosive Remnants of War project that was supported and funded by the EU in two phases through the IfS during 2008-2011 to an amount of approximately EUR 4,5 million.

The project activities have been agreed with the project's key stakeholder — the BiH Ministry of Defence — taking into account the Ministry's policies and plans for the mid-term period as well as other initiatives aimed at supporting the Ministry and the Armed Forces. Furthermore, the quantities of unstable ammunition set for destruction have been approved by the BiH Presidency. Already at this stage, the project has brought significant progress to the rate of destruction of unstable ammunition. The intervention initially focused on the military ammunition destruction site of TROM, Doboï, where 13 ammunition and pyrotechnics specialists were deployed in order to overhaul and operate newly installed ammunition disposal machinery. The results surpassed the plans in two activities, namely industrial demilitarisation of unstable artillery ammunition (36 000 pieces planned, 70 000 pieces achieved) and destruction of unstable small calibre ammunition (2 000 000 pieces planned, 2 500 000 pieces achieved). A methodology for the disposal of white phosphorus was also developed and a partnership with other international partners for the disposal of highly hazardous munitions and complex weapon systems, including air bombs and rocket systems, was established. Under the Improvement of Safety Standards of the Ammunition Storages component, the priorities have been defined and approved and the actual works will commence in May 2014. As concerns ammunition control capacity development component, a training on contemporary trends in safe weapons and ammunition stockpile management was organised from 24 November until 13 December 2013, with the participation of 47 senior officers and officials of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

III. Finally, during the reporting period, EUFOR Althea continued to participate in the efforts of the international community to address the issue of surplus stocks of conventional ammunition held by the BiH Ministry of Defence.

(b) *OSCE region*

In the framework of Council Decision 2012/662/CFSP in support of activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in, and excessive accumulation of, Small Arms and Light Weapons in the region covered by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE),⁽¹⁾ the following activities were conducted during the reporting period: As regards the envisaged security upgrades of stockpile depots of conventional weapons and ammunition in Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, the on-site implementation phase to develop sustainable and effective security systems and infrastructure at selected SALW storage locations was launched. In Belarus, the installation of perimeter fences at the Gomel storage site was completed, the installation of power supply and outside and inside lighting in Gomel is in process, and a tender on the installation of fire alarm and security systems was announced in December 2013. These measures have immediately increased the security of the storage site, which is located in the densely populated suburbs of the regional city centre of Gomel and in close proximity to the Belarus-Ukraine state border.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:297:0029:0033:EN:PDF>

In Kyrgyzstan, an open tender was conducted for the construction of storage facilities for SALW and conventional ammunition in Buzhum/Batken province, Koi-Tash/Chui province, and Gulcha/Osh province. Once the contract is awarded, the contractor will be given 90 calendar days to develop the project documentation for construction and/or refurbishment of the storage facilities. Based on this documentation, early in 2014, a tender for the construction works will be launched in coordination with relevant government agencies.

In October 2013, a joint assessment of a firing/demolition range in the vicinity of Bishkek was conducted jointly by the OSCE and the Kyrgyz MoD to determine its suitability for the destruction of 51 MANPADS and 97 Anti-Tank Guided Missiles by open detonation. A suitable demolition area was identified to meet the required levels of public safety from explosive blast, fragmentation and noise abatement. The destruction took place on 6-14 November 2013, including preparations of demolition pits and training sessions for engineer troops. For the next phase of the destruction process it is planned to build up national Kyrgyz capacities to destroy SALW surplus through irreversible mechanical deformation. An international tender is planned to be announced at the beginning of 2014 to procure specialized hydraulic shears. The creation of national capacities for SALW surplus disposal through cost-effective destruction methods is also expected to considerably mitigate the security risks in Central Asia in the 'post 2014' situation, especially in the fragile security context in the South of Kyrgyzstan.

In parallel with ongoing testing of the pilot version of the special software on SALW and ammunition electronic record-keeping by the Ministries of Defence of Albania, BiH, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, and Tajikistan, and the first positive feedback received from a number of the above states, the software was adjusted to be used under the operating system Linux 'Ubuntu 13.04'. It is now available in Russian, English, Romanian/Moldovan, and Serbo-Croatian languages, and can be further translated in any other language. A number of other OSCE Participating States expressed interest in exploring the software once available in appropriate languages, and a user license was issued to Armenia to test the software.

(c) *Africa*

- I. During the second half of 2013, the implementation of Council Decision 2012/121/CFSP in support of activities to promote the EU-China-Africa dialogue and cooperation on conventional arms controls contributed to increased awareness and in-depth dialogue amongst civil society, industry, and government representatives of China, the EU, and African States on combating the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of SALW in Eastern Africa and the ATT process.

More than 30 bilateral meetings took place in Africa, China and EU Member States, including meetings with the Heads of 11 African diplomatic missions in Beijing (Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Togo, Burundi, Senegal, Djibouti, Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana), which were also attended by the Director of the Kenyan National Focal Point on SALW (KNFP) and the Executive Director of Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA). Discussions centred on sharing experiences and lessons learned in addressing the spread of SALW in Eastern Africa through national and regional instruments and on developments surrounding the ATT process. In September 2013, the preliminary findings of an internal report on weapon and ammunition supplies to rebel forces in South Sudan, which had been produced after an African-China-EU Expert Working Group (EWG) fact-finding mission in South Sudan in June 2013, were presented in Beijing during meetings with Chinese think tanks, military experts and defence industry representatives. The fourth meeting of the EWG was held on 14 November 2013 in Brussels, back-to-back with a policy dialogue seminar, held on 13 November 2013. The latter attracted 45 participants, including EWG members, officials from the EU, China, EU Member States, the African Union Commission (AUC) and intergovernmental organisations such as RECSA, together with international scholars, think tank and NGO experts. They shared perspectives on the major challenges and opportunities in tackling illicit SALW in Eastern Africa and made recommendations for collaborative Africa-China-EU actions on the ground. On 27 September 2013, EWG member Amb. Ochieng Adala gave a lecture at Peking University on the illicit trade in conventional arms, and the various measures being introduced by Africa and the international community to prevent the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms, in particular SALW. The lecture brought together 40 students and professors, and was followed by a lively debate on the effectiveness of the ATT, on the loopholes of the current arms export control systems, and on the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi.

Numerous African, Chinese and EU participants who were involved in the above activities voiced their firm support for the work accomplished so far, applauding the achievements of the EWG whilst reiterating the importance of moving the project forward, building on what has been achieved and turning to concrete action on the ground. There was increased engagement from the Chinese side, including from senior military experts who, together with their African counterparts, engaged in direct, frank and practical discussions on how best to cooperate in tackling illicit SALW and ammunition. In particular, the evidence presented re. Chinese-made SALW and ammunition falling into the hands of rebel groups operating within South Sudan led to lively discussions on how to prevent the diversion of weapons from the legal to the illegal market, including ways to improve China's end-use monitoring and verification of arms shipments, and the experience of other arms exporters. The project also generated significant media coverage in China. An EWG joint commentary calling on China and other countries to support the ATT process by swiftly signing the ATT and taking concrete steps towards its ratification was published and featured in major Chinese media outlets, such as Xinhuanet, Global Times and China Daily.

- II. In the context of the Instrument for Stability's (IfS) long-term component, the EU continued the implementation of a project to support the fight against the illicit accumulation of and trade in firearms and ammunition in Africa, through the **Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA)**, located in Nairobi. This project contributes to the implementation of the Peace and Security component of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. During the first phase of the project from January 2010 until June 2013, with a focus on the 12 RECSA Member States, the main achievements of the project included: the establishment of National Commissions on SALW in the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Chad and Cameroon, the development of National Action Plans on SALW in the Republic of Congo, DRC and Malawi, as well as strengthened legislative capacity in terms of harmonisation with SALW instruments in Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. Other activities included regional seminars to enhance trans-regional cooperation and coordination amongst civil society organisations, parliamentarians, and regional police chiefs. The project advocated the idea for the creation of an African continental Police Chiefs Coordinating body (AFRIPOL), while it also carried out a series of activities for the effective management of SALW and information generation. Following the completion of a study examining the level of implementation of the regional and international SALW commitments of Sub-Saharan countries, a second 3-year phase of the project commenced in July 2013 with a view to consolidate the results of the first phase and implement activities in the whole of the African continent.

- III. On 24 June 2013, the Council adopted Decision 2013/320/CFSP to provide up to 5 million euros in **EU support for assisting the Libyan authorities** in their tremendous task of securing their massive volume of stockpiles in conventional weapons and ammunition.⁽¹⁾ The EU offers this support to help the responsible authorities in Libya stop the further uncontrolled spread of conventional weapons and ammunition, which continues to fuel insecurity in Libya, its neighbouring countries and the broader region. The project design acknowledges the complex political situation and resulting challenges in Libya as well as the necessity to ensure national ownership and empowerment of local partners. The foreseen duration of the project is five years. In parallel to the work undertaken by the implementing agency GIZ (German Agency for International Cooperation) and the co-financing German Federal Foreign Office, the EU promoted the aims of the Council Decision at several international meetings and close coordination with other international donors, UNSMIL/UNMAS, civil society organizations and other relevant actors will continue.

The assistance provided in the framework of the Council Decision is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to support the transition process to democracy, sustainable peace and security in Libya. The Council Decision complements the efforts of the EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya to develop Libya's capacity for enhancing the security of their land, sea and air borders in the short term, and to develop a broader Integrated Border Management (IBM) strategy in the long term. It is going to be implemented by GIZ, the German Agency for International Cooperation.

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:173:0054:0064:EN:PDF>

During the reporting period, upon the request of the Libyan partners, a study trip to Germany was organised for the Arms and Ammunition Department, the Army Engineers and the Libyan Mine Action Center (LMAC). The study trip included a workshop on the future of PSSM activities in Libya and demonstrations of possibilities for industrial destruction and recycling options of ammunition as well as an introduction into training opportunities with the German Armed Forces and private institutions in the field of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). As a result of this trip, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Arms and Ammunition Department and the Army Engineers. Part of this MoU is the request to assist the respective departments with the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). With a view to establishing a training framework on PSSM issues, together with a training advisor from Danish Church Aid (DCA), twelve different course modules were reviewed and compared with international SOP regarding UN, British and German Conventional Munition Disposal (CMD), EOD and ammunition storage management rules and regulations. The available training material now complies with international standards and represents a professional basis for advanced training. The MoU also outlines assistance with a preliminary training plan. The plan will be finalized in 2014 and will result in training for officers and, subsequently, for non-commissioned officers of the Arms and Ammunition Department and the Army Engineers. All involved parties have agreed that trainings should be based on the international UN standards IATG (International Ammunition Technical Guidelines).

The Libyan Arms and Ammunition Department and the Army Engineers have also agreed to develop a training area with different options for temporary ammunition storage, including the erection of three different structures which are used by NATO for field storage, and GIZ has been officially tasked to assist the Libyan Arms and Ammunition Department and the Army Engineers with consulting on existing and additionally required equipment. Moreover, contracts have been signed with DCA to procure and distribute gunlocks and weapon cabinets in Misrata and with the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to support the provision of temporary arms and ammunition storage sites, including training of personnel in management of arms and ammunition storage sites.

- IV. In addition, a joint project by DanChurchAid (DCA) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC), which is funded by the Instrument for Stability short-term component, has been providing risk education on SALW to the civilian population in Libya since September 2012. It aims to help reduce the number of accidents related to, and the visual presence of, SALW. DCA also advocates with local authorities policies on the safe management of SALW to help prevent armed violence. Activities to date included psycho-social support activities in 28 schools in the Misrata area, mine clearance (of 96 800 m²) in the Tripoli area, and the organisation of 11 training courses for the Ministries of Interior and Defence. In the southern Sabha area, an agreement was signed to train explosive ordnance disposal searchers and mine risk education was delivered to 2 452 people from migrant communities, fire services and schools. To support the clearance activities of the Mines Advisory Group, an armoured excavator for explosive ordnance disposal was procured. An experienced operator was recruited and national staff members were trained to operate this machine. In the Zintan area this excavator has so far contributed to the removal of (27 x 250 kg bombs and 9 x 500 kg) bombs.

Another project within this component will also be implemented by the Mines Advisory Group and start activities in January 2014 to help further reduce the humanitarian threat posed by ERW and increase safe practices and behaviour of communities affected by ERW and SALW.

Finally, in March 2014, the Small Arms Survey will commence another project funded by the IfS short-term component to contribute to developing capacities of the Libyan authorities to provide internal security and public safety. Its specific objectives are to build national capacities to map, assess and analyse interventions in the security sector and to provide support to develop strategies and operational plans to address community safety, potentially including also security threats posed by SALW.

(d) *Central America*

- I. The EU also continued the implementation of a project supporting the Central American Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Programme (CASAC). Through the Instrument for Stability long-term component, the project, which was previously implemented by UNDP, entered its second phase of support in September 2012 with the Security Commission of the Central American Integration System (SICA) as its implementing partner. The contribution of the EU project to the CASAC initiative aims at establishing the foundation for a regional structure and long-term strategy to fight the illicit trafficking of arms in Central America, both at national and regional level. The project is implemented in Central America and neighbouring countries, including the Caribbean region (particular focus is put on Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama). Main activities include regional and national public awareness campaigns and conferences, strengthening of national coordination mechanisms and registry systems, and cross-border projects as well as training in various areas.
 - II. At the same time, the EU is currently also elaborating a possible Council Decision in support of further complementary activities on SALW control in Central America to specifically address CFSP objectives of necessary work to be undertaken jointly by the UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) and CASAC in order to successfully combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and ammunition in this region.
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