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(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

COUNCIL

Seventeenth Progress Report on the implementation of the EU Strategy to Combat Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition — (2014/I)

(2014/C 385/02)

I. INTRODUCTION

The seventeenth 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 first half of 2014 (from 1 January to 30 June 2014). 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.

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) *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 participated actively in the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons ('BMS5'), which took place in New York on 16-20 June 2014. In preparation of BMS5, the EU submitted a working paper ⁽¹⁾ on its preferred focus for the Meeting and participated actively in all informal consultations.

Important EU priorities were taken on board in the BMS5 outcome document, such as a strong focus on physical security and stockpile management (including a reference to international standards and guidelines in this area), the tracing of illicit arms in conflict and post-conflict situations, references to the initial report of the UN

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.un-arm.org/BMS5/documents/BMS5-WP-EU-20140425.pdf>

Secretary-General on the implications of technological developments in small arms manufacturing and technology for marking, record keeping and tracing, the recommendation that the 2015 Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts further addresses the latter issue, as well as a recognition of the devastating consequences of illicit SALW on civilians, particularly women and children. Unfortunately other issues were not included in the outcome document, such as references to the ATT and UNSCR 2117 and the explicit inclusion of ammunition.

High visibility of the EU was ensured at BMS5 by an active participation in the negotiation process, including through the delivery of four official statements at the plenary meetings, as well as contribution to side events, including the international launch of the EU-funded iTrace project (see below).

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, the Council adopted Decision 2013/698/CFSP⁽¹⁾ 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. 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.

In the first semester of 2014, the implementing agency for this Council Decision, Conflict Armament Research, worked on the technical development of the iTrace system and conducted first field investigations in several countries (Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria) to populate the system with real time data. Moreover, Conflict Armament Research organised the international launch of iTrace in the margins of BMS5 on 17 June and presented the iTrace project at other outreach events in Washington DC and Nairobi during the same month. The full launch of the publically-accessible iTrace online mapping portal is scheduled for the end of September 2014.

In the framework of the Council Decision in support of activities of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to implement the UN PoA (Council Decision 2011/428/CFSP of 18 July 2011)⁽²⁾, in the first half of 2014 support was provided to states to achieve full and effective implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), including through the organisation of a regional advanced training course on planning and implementing national weapons-marking, record-keeping and tracing programmes (Lomé, Togo, 18-19 March 2014). The workshop provided a platform for national experts from Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) states to incorporate best practices in implementing the ITI into their national marking, registration and tracing operations in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. The training course utilized the Marking, Record-keeping and Tracing Guidelines (MRTG) which were developed specifically for sub-Saharan African States and which were very well-received by the participants. On the basis of the workshop, the provision of weapons-marking machines to Burkina Faso, Niger and Sierra Leone is now underway with an assured higher level of knowledge and expertise in the national authorities of the beneficiary states.

Under the same Council Decision, UNODA also continued delivering support to the implementation of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), particularly in Africa and in Latin America. In this regard, an advanced training course on the IATG was organised for South and East African countries by UNODA, together with its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), in Nairobi, Kenya from 14-17 April 2014. This was the first ever IATG training course under the UN SaferGuard Programme to be held in Africa.

In Latin America, the advanced training course on the IATG was conducted by UNODA together with its Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), and in cooperation with the Latin American Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (ALCOPAZ) in Asunción, Paraguay, from 24-28 March 2014.

⁽¹⁾ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOL_2013_320_R_0034_01

⁽²⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:188:0037:0041:EN:PDF>

Both training courses achieved a high level of awareness on specific technical issues. In post-training evaluations, participants indicated several key takeaways from the course including the urgent need to put in place regular inspections of explosive facilities and reducing fire hazards in and around ammunition depots. One participant also is now working to amend his national law enforcement policy to be more in line with the IATG.

The advanced training courses were accompanied by on-the-job mentoring in selected countries in Africa and Latin America. Specialized in-country training was held in Togo and Liberia where intensive small group workshops were organised specifically targeting both policy makers and national authorities in order to address their different concerns. In Monrovia, Liberia, an informal visit was conducted to the main ammunition storehouse. Observations showed that many of the techniques and procedures presented during the advanced training course are currently in place and the emphasis should be to maintain these practices when the current national stockpile increases in the future. In Latin America, six technical assessments of Paraguayan ammunition and weapon storage sites were conducted. The assessments used the IATG Risk Reduction Checklist as the basis for evaluation. On the basis of the assessments at each site, concrete measures were recommended to the national authorities for safer and more secure ammunition stockpile management and the putting in place of the IATG standards. UNODA, together with UNLIREC, also organised an intensive in-country 3-day workshop on specific topics of the IATG for national authorities in Lima, Peru. The national authorities had not received such specific training on international standards on ammunition stockpile management prior to this activity, thus the delivery of this workshop filled a gap in the curricula of the institutions.

Finally, the Inaugural Meeting of the UN SaferGuard Technical Review Board and Strategic Coordination Group for the implementation of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) was held at UN Headquarters in New York (29-30 April 2014). This inaugural meeting brought together for the first time the UN SaferGuard Technical Review Board and key stakeholders and implementing partners on the IATG. Implementing partners discussed their experiences in bringing the IATG to post-conflict situations such as Libya, Mali and South Sudan.

The IATG have also been gaining the attention of NATO nations and an expert from the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also delineated a need for the UN SaferGuard programme to assist countries interdicting dangerous seized goods in the context of enforcing Security Council arms embargoes. Throughout the lively and engaged discussions, it was clear that the EU-supported UN SaferGuard Programme and the IATG are extending in reach to a large number of countries as well as finding traction with relevant UN bodies and international and regional organizations.

(b) *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 or unregulated trade in conventional arms. Towards this aim, the EU intends to support the universalisation and full and effective implementation of the Treaty and adopted, in support of these objectives, Council Decision 2013/768/CFSP⁽¹⁾ on EU activities in support of the implementation of the ATT. 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. The implementation of this Council Decision started in the first semester of 2014, the implementing agency is the German Federal Office of Economics and Export Control (BAFA). The first beneficiary countries are in the process of being selected, depending on their request.

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).

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:341:0056:0067:EN:PDF>

All EU Member States have signed the ATT since it was opened for signature on 3 June 2013 and, by the end of the reporting period on 30 June 2014, 21 EU Member States had deposited their ratification instruments, thereby significantly contributing to reaching the threshold of 50 ratifications needed for entry into force. Other EU Member States are expected to soon deposit their ratification instruments, as their national ratification procedures are well underway. Within the CFSP, EU Member States have worked jointly during the reporting period to identify common interests in the upcoming preparatory process for a first ATT Conference of States Parties, which is expected to take place during 2015 and the success of which is commonly assessed as being of great importance for the maintenance of political momentum in the ATT process.

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

Following the adoption by the Council, on 11 February 2014, of the 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, the UN Firearms Protocol entered into force on 3 April 2014.

Through the long-term component of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), which addresses global and trans-regional threats and was formerly known as Instrument for Stability (IFS), a project implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been ongoing since March 2011 with the aim to prevent and counter the trans-national illicit trade in firearms by promoting the ratification and implementation of the Firearms Protocol. The project's geographical scope encompasses West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo) and South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay). During the first half of 2014, UNODC continued to provide tailored legislative support to project countries to assist them in amending or adopting new domestic legislation for the implementation of the Firearms Protocol's provisions. As a result, Bolivia adopted its new firearms legislation, incorporating most of UNODC's recommendations. The project also undertook capacity-building activities, including training workshops for criminal justice practitioners from five project countries on investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking, incorporating cross cutting themes related to human rights safeguards. In light of the needs of the authorities in Benin, a marking machine was provided in close coordination with the regional office of UNODA. In addition, engagement with civil society organisations continued both through involving them in legislative assistance activities but also through holding special training modules for NGOs. UNODC also continued the collection of data on seized firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition for the purpose of conducting a study on firearms trafficking that was initiated at the end of 2013. The study's goal is to increase the understanding of the problem of firearms trafficking, reveal possible routes in the illicit trade of firearms, and identify new or emerging trends in firearms trafficking, as well as determine the inter-connectedness and transnational nature of such a phenomenon. The project was granted a no-cost extension and will run until March 2015.

In the framework of the IcSP's 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 I-24/7 system in order to facilitate regional and trans-regional information exchange and investigative cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Since January 2013, the project is running its second phase, which marks the system's global roll out after its successful development and test run during the project's first phase (2011-12). The objective of the two-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. Within the first six months of 2014, the countries that have signed up to use iARMS increased from 107 to 124, while in terms of usability a significant increase has been documented in the second quarter of this year especially regarding tracing requests. Challenges in the increase of data input remain in place, as iARMS currently contains over 300 000 records; to address this issue, INTERPOL has increased the number of outreach activities, such as participation at the 5th Fifth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action on small arms, combined with targeted training workshops. To this end, between January and June 2014, six iARMS training courses were completed, five of them with regional scope, targeting 46 countries primarily in Africa and Europe. A third phase is in preparation to start in 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.

In the first half of 2014, the Commission has started implementing the ideas contained in the Communication 'Firearms and the Internal Security of the EU: Protecting Citizens and Disrupting Illegal Trafficking' ⁽¹⁾ it adopted on 21 October 2013. As a first step, the Commission has launched 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. Two preparatory studies for the revision of the EU legislation have been finalised and will be published in September 2014. The Expert Group on Measures Against Illicit Trafficking in Firearms to Safeguard the EU's Internal Security met twice to give important suggestions about the policy priorities and general contents for the two preparatory studies.

The implementation of the EU Action Plan on firearms for the period 2014-2017, which was adopted in December 2013 by the Council, is ongoing. The United Kingdom is leading the first Joint Operation on Express Delivery checks. Europol is working on a specific initiative to promote more in-depth analysis on this type of crime including the collection of relevant data. The European Police College has launched a first training programme on firearms.

Amongst the planned activities for the second half of 2014, the Commission will host on 23 October 2014 a Joint Committee of EU and Western Balkans firearms experts, which will aim at discussing an operational action plan between the EU and the Western Balkans on the fight against illegal trafficking in firearms. On 24 October 2014, the Commission will host a High Level Panel on 'The Firearms Strategy: One year later', at which practitioners and policy-makers will take stock of the different initiatives undertaken under the 2013 Communication on Firearms and provide political and practical orientations for their implementation.

(d) *Export controls*

The implementation of Council Decision 2012/711/CFSP ⁽²⁾ on support for Union activities in order to promote, among third countries, the control of arms exports and the principles and criteria of Common Position 2008/944/CFSP continued in the first half of 2014. Arms export control outreach activities implemented by the Federal Office of Economics and Export Control in Germany (BAFA) went on with the organisation of a regional seminar for South East European countries in Tirana, Albania, in May 2014. In addition, two legal review workshops took place, in Montenegro (March 2014) and Georgia (May 2014), in order to assist these states in the review of their draft export control legislation. As a follow up measure to the legal review in Georgia, a staff exchange took place in May 2014. Furthermore, three study visits took place during the reporting period: two were intended at officials from the Eastern Partnership partners (hosted by the Czech Republic in January 2014 and Bulgaria in April 2014), and one was offered to officials from the Southern Neighbourhood countries (hosted by France in April 2014). Finally, a mid-term assessment event of the outreach activities conducted under Council Decision 2012/711/CFSP (as well as under the EU Outreach Programme for dual-use export controls) took place in Brussels in March 2014.

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 organisations. During the reporting period, the EU's Principal Advisor and Special Envoy on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament held political dialogue meetings on non-proliferation and disarmament with Russia, US, Japan and Argentina. He launched dialogues on non-proliferation and disarmament with India (New Delhi, 16 May) and Pakistan (Islamabad, 16 June). He also held a number of other bilateral consultations with various actors, including in the margins of important events such as the G8 Non-Proliferation Directors Group in St. Petersburg (Japan), the 2014 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee in New York (US, Japan, China, Egypt, Norway, Switzerland, the League of Arab States, UNODA), as well as with Indonesia (Jakarta, May 2014).

⁽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:L:2012:321:0062:0067:EN:PDF>

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, Kazakhstan and Malaysia. 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 Decision 2013/730/CFSP⁽¹⁾ in support of SEESAC (South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of SALW) disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe, building on the work SEESAC completed during 2010-2012 under Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP⁽²⁾. The Council Decision is meant to support activities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (*), 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, as well as support the collection of illegal SALW possessed by the population of South East European countries.

Full-scale implementation of the Council Decision was initiated in January 2014. In order to increase the security of stockpiles, SEESAC undertook preparatory activities in BiH, Kosovo (*), Moldova, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia during the first half of 2014. The reconstruction of the SALW and ammunition storage of the Ministry of Interior in Kosovo (*) is ongoing and contracting was completed, while security infrastructure improvements have commenced at the Montenegro Ministry of Defence's Brezovik ammunition depot. In addition, SEESAC facilitated consultations on the courses and methodology necessary for elaborating a Regional Stockpile Management training. With regard to the disposal of SALW and their ammunition, SEESAC coordinated the destruction of over 1 200 SALW in BiH on 30 June 2014. Additionally, SEESAC facilitated a region-wide coordinated destruction effort in the Western Balkans on the occasion of the International Gun Destruction Day on 9 July, resulting in the disposal of over 5 000 pieces of SALW across the region. In order to improve the marking and tracing of SALW, SEESAC is conferring with its relevant partners in Albania, BiH, Kosovo (*), Serbia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to attest the technical specifications for the equipment needed in the respective institutions. The Council Decision also provided SEESAC with the mandate to facilitate the creation of a regional firearms experts network (SEEFEN). Invitation letters with an accompanying explanatory note were sent to the heads of the Police Directorates, Customs Administrations of the Ministries of Finances, and the Public Prosecutors' Offices of all project beneficiaries in May 2014, and the first SEEFEN meeting will be held on 23-24 September in Durrës, Albania. Information exchange among SEEFEN members will be facilitated by an online knowledge-sharing platform, which SEESAC is currently developing. Similarly, SEESAC fosters regional cooperation and information exchange through increasing the capacity of national SALW Commissions, two Formal Meetings of which have been organised in 2014 — one in Belgrade, Serbia, and another in Jahorina, BiH.

- II. The implementation of a follow-up project under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) crisis response component, focusing on the security, safety and development perspectives for individuals and local communities affected by accidental explosions at ammunition storage sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued. It is estimated that BiH has over 24 000 tonnes of military ammunition stockpiles, 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 and therefore relies on EU and international support to assist in expediting the clearance and destruction of unexploded ordnances and explosives remnants of war as well as ensuring better stockpile safety.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 332, 11.12.2013, p. 19.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 80, 26.3.2010, p. 48.

(*) 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.

The devastating floods that hit BiH in May 2014 caused a significant civilian and humanitarian crisis with over 70 % of flood-affected areas suspected to contain mines and over 2 000 flood-induced landslides driving previously undetected mines into floodwaters and along river banks, creating a clear security risk for the civilian population. The BiH Mine Action Committee allocated 4 million m² of mine suspected areas to the Ministry of Defence for clearance. Of this area, some 300 000 m² are now flooded and the former is under-equipped to effectively respond to a radically changed mine-security environment. The threat of impending landslides around the TROM Doboj military ammunition destruction plant could result in the uncontrolled explosion of some 400 tonnes of explosive remnants of war and live munitions stored within it, unless remediation land works are urgently undertaken. The planning for the destruction of military ammunition at TROM Doboj remained, however, unaffected by the floods.

To accelerate post-flood clearance operations and to prepare for longer term recovery, the Commission proposed a 20 per cent increase of funding — EUR 767 000 — to the original project budget of EUR 3,9 million which was accepted by UNDP following consultations with the BiH Ministry of Defence. The project will also be extended by a further 12 months. New activities that will be undertaken as part of the extension include: the provision of increased capacity to the Ministry of Defence's 611 demining personnel to deal with urgent post-flood mine detection and clearance operations across affected districts; the delivery of special training for mine action response in emergency and crisis situations: the supply of special detectors for deeper detection, de-mining machines for difficult to access terrain, additional personnel protection, field tents, medical vehicles, and marking equipment and urgent remediation land works in the vicinity of TROM Doboj to offset the risk of flood-induced landslides onto the ammunition disposal plant.

(b) *OSCE region*

The implementation of Council Decision 2012/662/CFSP⁽¹⁾ in support of activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in, and excessive accumulation of, SALW in the region covered by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) continued during the period 1 January-30 June 2014. As regards the 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 further progressed. In Belarus, all the works at the large storage arsenal located in the suburbs of Gomiel and in the vicinity of the state border with Ukraine are nearly completed. An official opening ceremony of the refurbished site is planned to be held in early autumn 2014.

In Kyrgyzstan, the designing of the new and to be refurbished storage facilities for SALW and conventional ammunition in Buzhum (Batken province), Koi-Tash (Chui province) and Gulcha (Osh province) was completed. Due to the need to conduct additional topographic and geological research in a region with high seismic activity, the expected timelines for procurement of design and construction services were extended. The construction of one new storage is expected to start in October 2015.

Following the international tender on procurement of specialized SALW destruction equipment, the specialised hydraulic shears were procured and delivered to Kyrgyzstan. Installation of the equipment, personnel training and destruction of surplus SALW will be implemented following the completion of the construction/refurbishment works at the storage sites.

Following the initial testing period of the pilot version of the special software on SALW and ammunition electronic record-keeping by the interested Ministries of Defence, Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Montenegro requested an extension of the testing, while Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan submitted national technical requirements for adjusting the software to their specific needs. Albania, Serbia, and Kazakhstan informed on their decision to use their own national record-keeping systems. Finally, consultations with other OSCE Participating States possibly interested in exploring the software, including most recently Ukraine, have continued.

(c) *Africa*

I. During the first half of 2014, the implementation of Council Decision 2012/121/CFSP⁽²⁾ in support of activities to promote the EU-China-Africa dialogue and cooperation on conventional arms controls continued to contribute to increased awareness and in-depth dialogue amongst civil society, industry, and government

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

⁽²⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:054:0008:0013:EN:PDF>

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.

On 18 March, Saferworld, China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA) and the Africa Peace Forum co-hosted in Beijing a seminar on 'Supporting Peace and Security in Africa: Towards Collaborative Actions for Combating Illicit Small Arms and Ammunition', involving over 60 participants. The meeting was held under the aegis of the joint African-EU-Chinese Expert Working Group (EWG). It succeeded in forging greater dialogue and policy coordination among African and EU Member State diplomats, the Director of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa (RECSA) and Chinese authorities on the practical actions needed to address illicit SALW and ammunition in Eastern Africa. In the margins of this seminar, a delegation of senior African arms control officials and experts met with the Chinese Foreign Ministry's Department of African Affairs, as well as with the Tanzanian Ambassador to Beijing. The visit resulted notably in the establishment of the 'Group of Ambassadors of the RECSA Member States in Beijing'. It is expected that this initiative will put SALW-related issues in Eastern Africa more prominently on the agenda of Chinese officials.

On 6 May, Saferworld, the Africa Peace Forum and CACDA held a regional conference in Nairobi on 'Enhancing Capacities and Cooperation to Tackle Illicit SALW and Ammunition in Eastern Africa'. The event was attended by over 50 Chinese, African and European diplomats, officials, scholars and experts. The meeting succeeded in bringing a sharper focus to practical initiatives to support and help the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control, and Reduction of SALW in Eastern Africa. In the margins of the conference, a delegation of Chinese officials and experts held consultations with key Kenyan stakeholders and the RECSA Secretariat.

Other EWG meetings during the reporting period included a meeting with Chinese EWG members in Beijing in January to discuss EWG current and planned activities and future funding; an African EWG member's visit to Beijing in February; bilateral meeting with the EU Delegation in China in January and February; a study visit in Kenya by EWG members and advisors in May; and meetings between African EWG members and Beijing-based African embassies in May. In addition, induction courses were delivered for the Kenya National Focal Point on SALW (in April) and for the Uganda National Focal Point on SALW (in April to June).

Moreover, at the request of the EWG, Conflict Armament Research conducted between 17-26 January a comprehensive physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) review of three weapons and ammunition storage facilities in Mogadishu, Somalia. The findings of this report are intended to assist the Federal Government of Somalia in obtaining international assistance for the construction or rehabilitation of PSSM infrastructure.

Finally, two research reports were published, one on 'China and the Arms Trade Treaty — Prospects and challenges', and a second one focusing on the circulation of SALW in Africa and containing an assessment of the effectiveness of current SALW interventions. Both reports are being circulated to over 500 civil society actors, officials, policy-makers and politicians in China, the EU and Africa.

- II. With funding from the long-term component of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), 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 Proliferation in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa (RECSA), located in Nairobi. This project contributes to the implementation of the Peace and Security component of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Following the project's first phase that ended in June 2013, and supported, inter alia, the institutional structures and legislative capacities in several countries in East Africa, the project entered in its second phase in July 2013 with the objective to enhance the capacities of African countries to efficiently implement and coordinate their efforts against the proliferation and trafficking of illicit SALW. In the first half of 2014, the project continued supporting activities to promote the creation of an African continental Police Chiefs Coordinating body (AFRIPOL), and it also carried out a series of activities for improving the institutional structure of RECSA in order to increase its effectiveness. Moreover, RECSA coordinated with relevant regional organisations to

support the joint task force initiative on the Mano River in order to plan and conduct a joint operation in the countries neighbouring the river, while it also helped by providing technical assistance and security equipment for the strengthening of the joint taskforce of the Tanganyika Corridor. After the handover of seven electronic marking machines at the end of last year to Liberia, Mali, Guinea and South Sudan, follow-up training was conducted to the relevant national authorities. In the area of stockpile security, the project supported the authorities in Rwanda to undertake the assessment and eventual construction of an armoury, followed by a training workshop. Significant efforts were made on awareness-raising, including through a RECSA side event at the 5th Fifth Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action.

- III. On 24 June 2013, the Council adopted Decision 2013/320/CFSP⁽¹⁾ to provide up to 5 million euros in EU support for assisting the Libyan authorities in their task of securing their massive volume of stockpiles in conventional weapons and ammunition. 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. 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 implemented by GIZ, the German Agency for International Cooperation.

During the reporting period, an introduction course on ammunition management was provided to Libyan officials at the Ministry of Defence's Arms and Ammunition Department. The participants were trained in basic ammunition management, including on the implementation of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG). Moreover, an outdoor training area to be used for practical training in ammunition storage was built in the premises of the Ministry of Defence in Tripoli, and several indoor training facilities are being refurbished. GIZ is also contributing to the development of a training framework on PSSM, in coordination with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and other partners. With a view to supporting the Libyan authorities in the rehabilitation and security management of ammunition storage areas, GIZ is preparing a contract with the Danish Demining Group and a local civil society organisation (3F) to destroy 21 warheads and to clear 600 000 square meters land in and around a former ammunition storage site in Souq El Ahad, while another contract is being prepared with Sterling International Group for clearing the area around an ammunition storage area in Al Wathiyah. Finally, a contract with DanChurchAid (DCA) was signed to procure and distribute gunlocks and weapon cabinets in Misrata, in support of SALW management activities funded under the EU Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (see below). The distribution of 4 800 trigger locks started in April 2014 and was completed in May 2014 with the organisation of 13 distribution events organized by DCA in collaboration with volunteers of the Libyan Red Crescent. 500 gun boxes were distributed in May 2014 through six distribution events. Towards the end of the reporting period, the advancement of several projects conducted under this Council Decision had to be delayed notably due to the deteriorating security situation in the country.

- IV. In addition, a joint project by DanChurchAid (DCA) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC), which is funded by the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) crisis response 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 include 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 as part of this package. An experienced operator was recruited and national staff members were trained to operate this machine. Mines Advisory Group contributed to the removal of 27 × 250 kg bombs and 12 × 500 kg bombs, 57 missiles and more than 2 000 projectiles and mortars in the Zintan area.

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

Another project, also implemented by the Mines Advisory Group, started activities in January 2014 to help further reduce the humanitarian threat posed by explosive remnants of war (ERW) and increase safe practices and behaviour of communities affected by ERW and SALW. More specifically, it focuses on (i) risk education linked to increasing safe practices and behaviour of local communities affected by the presence of ERW and small arms and light weapons and (ii) improving national capacities to address the threats posed by abandoned ordnance and unexploded ordnance. Activities focus on the areas of Zintan and Hun/Waddan, where the project will recruit and train ERW teams and also remove and destroy identified abandoned and unexploded ordnance.

Finally, in March 2014 a measure to build the crisis response capacities of Libyan authorities commenced. Implemented by the Geneva-based 'Small Arms Survey', this activity aims to contribute to developing the Libyan authorities' capacities to provide internal security and public safety. The specific objectives are to (i) build national capacities to map, assess and analyse interventions by government authorities in the security sector, and (ii) provide support to develop strategies and operational plans to address community safety, potentially including also security threats posed by SALW. Implementation will focus on two pilot areas to be determined in cooperation with the Libyan authorities. Cooperation with the Libyan Ministry of Interior has started and an inception workshop is foreseen for the near future.

- V. As part of its mandate to provide advice and training to support the Nigerian authorities in strengthening their capacities for combating terrorism and organised crime, the civilian CSDP mission EUCAP Sahel Niger has provided on 30 June-4 July 2014 a training on arms and ammunition management for Nigerian officials.
- VI. The EU is currently elaborating a possible Council Decision in support of physical security and stockpile management activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition in the Sahel region.

(d) *Central America*

The EU continued the implementation of a project supporting the Central American Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Programme (CASAC). Under the long-term component of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, 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, with a particular focus on the 8 SICA Member States (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic). SICA has initiated the process of developing the strategic plans of the National Multidisciplinary Committees in each country, which will support the construction of a multi-year common agenda for monitoring, reporting and the investigation programmes on firearms and violence prevention with firearms. In addition, the project through its expert group, which is integrated in the Intelligence and Arms Units of the 8 SICA member countries, focused in the first half of the year in preparing the third regional operation to be carried out later in 2014 to confiscate weapons explosives and ammunition. This will follow on two successful regional operations undertaken in 2012 and 2013, which according to SICA resulted in the arrest of 6 113 people and the confiscation of 8 863 weapons, 21 540 ammunition and 444 explosives. In coordination with the Forum of Presidents of Parliaments of Central America and the Caribbean (FOPREL), the result of a first regional meeting of Directors of Private Security Companies and Parliamentarians held in 2014 led to a draft regional law framework that is designed to update and harmonize the legislation of private security companies in the 8 beneficiary countries. Moreover, assessments for several of the SICA Member States have been concluded to identify the needs for equipment to strengthen the use of platforms on firearms tracing.
