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The aim of this Bulletin is to provide a regular update on small arms issues in Russia, Former Soviet Union and internationally in order to inform initiatives aimed at combating the proliferation of uncontrolled SALW.

*We hope that you will find these bulletins useful and we welcome any contributions and feedback. Any enquiries, information or suggestions for features or publications for review should be e-mailed to **Elena Franklin** (London) at:*

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INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

UN REVIEW CONFERENCE ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Saferworld Update 3, June 2006

The Review Conference for the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN PoA) will take place at the end of this month and beginning of July 2006. This is major international event providing the first formal opportunity to review and strengthen the UN PoA since it was agreed, and for states to re-emphasise their determination to tackle the spread and misuse of small arms.

The UN PoA was agreed at a special conference at the UN in July 2001. It set out a range of measures and initiatives to be taken by states to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons covering issues such as transfer controls, the regulation of arms brokering, stockpile management, the marking and tracing of small arms and assistance for the implementation of UN PoA commitments.

The 2001 UN Conference was a key event that focused international efforts to address the devastating global impact on small arms. Whilst progress has been made since then, much more needs to be done. Trafficking, proliferation and misuse of small arms continue to contribute to massive suffering and insecurity across the globe each year.

Under the 'Biting the Bullet' project, *Saferworld*, *International Alert* and the *University of Bradford*, produce monitoring reports which undertake full global assessment of states' implementation of the PoA. Two such reports were produced in 2003 and 2005. On 13 June, Biting the Bullet published the third monitoring report, which will be distributed at the Review Conference. The report evaluates states' overall progress in meeting all of their main UN PoA commitments over five years and makes recommendations for further development of the UN PoA. Some of the significant issues will be to clarify and elaborate on existing UN PoA commitments, for example international guidelines for national controls on small arms transfers, approaches relating to small arms ammunition and the humanitarian and development dimensions of the UN PoA. Furthermore, there are key gaps which must also be addressed, such as transfers of small arms to non-state actors and how to reduce demand for small arms.

The report evaluates the performance of over 180 countries and finds that implementation of the PoA leaves a lot to be desired.

The findings show that:

- Only 90 states (less than half) have mechanisms to co-ordinate action on SALW within government.
- Only 37 states involve civil society in their national co-ordination of action on SALW.

- Only 68 states have reviewed their legislation since the PoA was agreed in 2001, and only 37 states have specific controls over SALW brokering activities.

Progress has been particularly slow amongst states in North Africa, the Middle East and much of Asia.

NGOs are an important element of the UN PoA Review process. *Saferworld* has been working globally with other NGOs to move forward a progressive agenda. The 2006 monitoring report is an important tool for NGOs to lobby their governments. For the Review Conference to be successful, states need to tackle the problem of illicit small arms with concerted political action and be willing to discuss ways of strengthening the UN PoA. The Review Conference needs to review progress but also take the decisions required to substantially enhance implementation and develop the UN PoA. These goals are important. An effective Review Conference will help to save many lives. The Review Conference has a full agenda and time is short. Saferworld will continue its careful and intensive preparations to help the conference be a success.

IT'S TIME TO CURB GUN TRADE, SAYS MAN WHO INVENTED THE AK47
Jeremy Page, The Times, Moscow, 19 June, 2006

Kalashnikov despairs at the sight of children clutching his rifle

Hardly a day goes by without **Mikhail Kalashnikov** turning on his television set and seeing his lethal invention being brandished somewhere.

It still makes him proud to see the Kalashnikov assault rifle — better known as the AK47 — in the hands of professional soldiers and national liberation movements.

But now, aged 86, he laments that it has become the weapon of choice for terrorists, criminals and child soldiers — and, as such, the most prolific killing machine in history.

Yesterday, a week before a UN conference on the small arms trade begins in New York, he added his voice to growing calls for an international treaty that would curb sales of his own creation. “I don’t worry when my guns are used for national liberation or defence,” he told *The Times*. “But when I see how peaceful people are killed and wounded by these weapons, I get very distressed and upset. I calm down by telling myself that I invented this gun 60 years ago to protect the interests of my country.”

General Kalashnikov (retired) began designing his weapon in 1941 while recuperating in hospital from wounds suffered when a German shell hit his tank. He recalls brainstorming one night and scribbling down a design he hoped would improve the Soviet Army’s chances against the better-equipped Nazi forces, who were being issued with automatic rifles. To his frustration, it would not be completed until 1947 — hence the name Avtomat Kalashnikova 47 — but the weapon proved so reliable that it had become standard army issue within two years and was soon being exported to “friendly” governments and revolutionary movements.

Copies and adaptations were also produced in more than a dozen communist countries, including China, North Korea, East Germany and Poland.

As a result, there are an estimated 100 million AK47s in the world today — some ten times more than its American rival, the M16. And almost a billion rifles have been produced based on its design and parts, according to Izhmash, the company that makes the AK47 at its factory in Izhevsk in the Ural mountains.

Mr **Kalashnikov**, who is still chief designer at Izhmash, attributes the gun's popularity to its simplicity and reliability, especially compared with its Western counterparts.

“Even after lying in a swamp you can pick up this rifle, aim it and shoot. That's the best job description there is for a gun. Real soldiers know that and understand it. Look what's happening now: every day on television we see that the Americans in Iraq have my machineguns and assault rifles in their armoured vehicles. Even their American rifles don't work properly.”

The rifle is especially effective in jungles and deserts, so much so that the Pentagon bought thousands to equip the new Iraqi armed forces.

This year Venezuela bought 100,000 to replace its army's American rifles — and then announced plans to open a factory producing the Russian weapons under licence.

General **Kalashnikov** says that he has not profited directly from any sales of the weapon: he could not patent it in Soviet times and failed to win the rights to his design after 1991.

Since the Soviet collapse, however, he has made a comfortable living putting his name to products including umbrellas, penknives, watches and two brands of vodka. Most recently, Russia's biggest carmaker announced plans to produce an armoured military jeep version of the Lada — to be called the Kalashnikov.

Now, with his health failing, General **Kalashnikov** is putting his name to a campaign for tighter controls on the international trade in small arms.

Oxfam, Amnesty International and the International Action Network on Small Arms launched the campaign in 2003 to get an International Arms Trade Treaty adopted at the UN conference, starting next Monday. The treaty, which has the backing of 50 countries, would prohibit the transfer of small arms to governments or armed groups responsible for grave human rights abuses.

General **Kalashnikov**, who is writing a statement to be presented at the conference, told *The Times*: “It is imperative to make a decision about introducing strict sanctions on those who violate the terms of such an international agreement.”

James Dyson, of *Amnesty International*, welcomed General Kalashnikov's support. “It's interesting that even someone who has been involved in the manufacture of these weapons is recognising that they are now being used in such an irresponsible fashion.

Governments should act now to agree universal principles to regulate this deadly trade.”

GUN LORE

- The AK47 fires 600 rounds a minute, is accurate to 300m, deadly at up to 1,500m
- Used in 55 armies
- Manufactured in 11 countries
- Appears on Mozambique and Hezbollah flags
- 1 billion rifles produced based on its design
- 1,300 people killed each day worldwide by small arms

ECOWAS RECOMMENDS ADOPTION OF CONVENTION ON ARMS ***www.ghanaweb.com, 14 June, 2006***

The ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council has recommended for adoption by Heads of State and Government the Convention that seeks to ban the transfer of small arms and light weapons into and within the Sub-Region, except for the legitimate security needs of member States or for their participation in peace support operations. The Convention is one of the issues to be considered during the 30th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in Abuja. A statement issued on Wednesday by the ECOWAS Secretariat and made available to the GNA said among the various provisions of the Convention were mechanisms for tightening control over the inflow of such arms into the Sub-Region.

These include the establishment of a regional arms register; regulations to control the manufacture and individual ownership of such arms; the establishment of a group of independent experts to assist ECOWAS to monitor implementation and the development by ECOWAS of an operational plan of action for the programme.

The Mediation and Security Council, which comprises ECOWAS Foreign Ministers, endorsed the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons that was reviewed by regional technical and legal experts at two separate meetings in Bamako, Mali.

The day’s meeting reviewed the security situation in the Sub-Region, notably Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, Guinea Bissau and Togo. The statement said while acknowledging the positive developments in these countries, the Ministers called for the intensification of dialogue among the stakeholders in Cote d’Ivoire to ensure the success of the transition programme, particularly the process of citizen identification, disarmament and demobilization.

They also endorsed the establishment of the International Contact Group for Guinea Bissau (ICG-GB) to assist the country in the process of political stabilization and economic recovery.

The Council proposed the inclusion of Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, which were just out of conflict, in the work plan of the UN Peace Building Commission.

They also called for the lifting of sanctions against Liberia and the travel ban against some Liberians in order to help to consolidate post-conflict development and peace in the country.

The statement said the Ministers condemned the attack on two military bases in Kidal and Meneka, South of Kidal in Mali and commiserated with the Government and people of Mali for the loss of life suffered in the incidents.

It said the Dr **Mohamed Ibn Chambas**, ECOWAS Executive Secretary, addressed the Council at the opening of their meeting, recommended the adoption of the Convention, describing it as a further step not only in the process of making the Sub Region a zone free of conflict but also in helping to reduce the threat to peace, security and stability in the area.

He also briefed them on the worsening financial situation of the Government of Guinea Bissau, which was in arrears in the payment of salaries of public servants, adding that the political situation required the engagement, interaction and dialogue of the stakeholders.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES (RUSSIA / FSU)

GEORGIA HOSTS WORKSHOP ON SMALL ARMS, LIGHT WEAPONS CONTROLS FOR INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS

US Fed News, Washington, 10 June, 2006

The U.S. Department of State issued the following press release:

The Republic of Georgia host the "Parliamentary Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SA/LW) in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Region" in Tbilisi, on June 9-10, 2006, with the support of the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, and the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi.

Parliamentarians from around the world, the United Nations, and the European Commission discussed successes and continuing challenges within the CIS to implement the 2001 UN Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. Representatives had the opportunity to address arms brokering and trafficking in the CIS and its neighbouring states, and small arms/light weapons stockpile management and destruction.

The United States' record in effectively marking and tracing weapons, controlling defence imports and exports, and managing arms stockpiles is one of the best in the world. The United States also offers its expertise in these areas to other countries, including Georgia.

To learn more about United States actions on this issue, visit the Office of Weapons and Removal and Abatement website at www.state.gov/t/pm/wra and click on the topic "Small Arms/Light Weapons & Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS)."

UKRAINE SCRAPS PORTABLE AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS

BBC Monitoring International Reports, 19 May, 2006

Another batch of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) was scrapped at the Chemical Products Research and Development Institute in Sumy Region on Friday , 19 May.

"The Chemical Products Research and Development Institute, based in the town of Shostka in Sumy Region, will scrap redundant MANPADS on Friday," a press service official said.

The systems will be scrapped within the framework of the NATO-led Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund project, he said.

The event will be attended by Ukrainian Defence Ministry and NATO delegations. The Ukrainian delegation will be headed by Deputy Defence Minister Vladimir **Tereshchenko**.

The Ukrainian Cabinet and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Organization (NAMSO) signed an implementation agreement at the NATO headquarters in Brussels on 23 November 2005. The agreement envisions allocating financial assets for scrapping 133,000 tonnes of ammunition, 1.5m small arms and 1,000 MANPADS.

The first stage of the project envisions financial assistance from NATO member states for scrapping 1,000 MANPADS, 400,000 small arms and 15,000 tonnes of obsolete ammunition.

The overall cost of the three-year first stage amounts to about 8m euros. At the present time a total of over 3m euros have been earmarked.

The first stage of scrapping redundant Ukrainian MANPADS was carried out at the missile and ammunition storage facility in the town of Balakleya, Kharkiv Region, on 1 December 2005.

NATIONAL NGO ACTIVITIES

STATES FAILING TO DELIVER ON PROMISES TO CONTROL SMALL ARMS: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PoA IN EUROPE

Saferworld, 19 June, 2006

As states prepare to meet in New York to review progress in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action aimed at combating illicit trafficking in small arms, a new report by *Saferworld, International Alert* and the *University of Bradford* concludes that states are failing to fully implement their promises (see above). In their recommendations for more effective implementation of the PoA in Europe in particular authors of the report call for:

- Implementing effective SALW transfer controls: More rigorous application of the OSCE , EU and other multilateral transfer control criteria is required by European states. For example, some EU near-neighbouring states have pledged adherence to the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, but many such states lack the technical and administrative capacity to fully implement such controls.
- Developing and implementing controls on SALW transit and brokering: The OSCE should implement effective controls on SALW transit and brokering. For example, although many European states have agreed on the importance of developing and implementing controls through the OSCE Document on Small Arms and the Handbook on Best Practices on SALW , many states have failed to do so.
- Managing state-controlled stocks of SALW: Many European states need to build their national capacities to securely store and manage state SALW stockpiles. For example, in Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe, and the South Caucasus, significant external technical and financial assistance is needed for this.
- EU controlling SALW production overseas: EU member states need to take full responsibility for the transfer of SALW production capacity outside the EU to avoid contributing to SALW proliferation around the world, as acknowledged in the EU SALW strategy. For example, there is a developing trend whereby the manufacture of SALW is being outsourced to producers outside the 25 EU member states. This might be undertaken to avoid the stricter levels of controls over SALW export that apply in the EU.
- Integrating SALW control into wider programmes: SALW control initiatives need to be integrated into wider security and justice sector reform programmes to ensure state and civilian ownership and use of SALW is responsibly managed. For example, in many states within Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, the proliferation and misuse of SALW is linked closely to the existence of an unreformed and poorly regulated security sector.
- Greater international involvement in SALW initiatives: Increased international assistance for capacity-building and training for state officials and agencies on SALW control measures is a key priority. For example, in the South Caucasus in particular, international engagement on SALW issues is falling short. The limited extent to

which the PoA has been implemented is mirrored in low levels of engagement on the part of the international donor community.

To download the report please visit:

<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/newslist.php?lang=en&id=286>

SMALL ARMS CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN VLADIVOSTOK (RUSSIA)

22 May, 2006

As part of *Saferworld* and the *PIR Center's* ongoing work on small arms in Russia, in May 2006, the partners held a series of activities in Vladivostok, in the Primorski region of Russia. The week consisted of two rounds of lectures at the Customs Academy and Vladivostok State University of Economics and Services, a public meeting for officials, the media and the local community and a civil society training workshop. It became possible to carry out all these public events thanks to the Customs Academy and the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service.

The Primorski region in the eastern area of Russia faces a number of small arms challenges. Many people feel that small arms present a real threat, particularly coming from street crime in smaller towns. In great part the problem stems from the time when, after the USSR break-up, numerous arms and pieces of ammunition went missing from poorly secured army stockpiles. For a border region, the smuggling of small arms is also a problem. At the Customs Academy, *Saferworld* and *PIR Center* brought together a number of experienced customs officers to discuss how to improve law enforcement and regional cooperation. During the week's events, the severity of the problem of illegal arms was made clear. There large number of illegal weapons in the region has led to some serious community safety issues, for example participants spoke of armed gang members shooting indiscriminately at civilians. Many at the events had had some personal experience of small arms. The partners has held similar events in Moscow and St Petersburg, but it was apparent that the problems of illegal weapons in Primorski were the most serious. The participants welcomed the opportunity to talk openly about these issues, and began to plan an awareness-raising campaign in the region.

PRODUCTION / TRADE

CHAVEZ IN RUSSIAN ARMS FACTORY DEAL

Adrian Blomfield, Moscow, 1 June, 2006

Weeks after a US ban on weapon sales to Venezuela, Russia has agreed to build arms factories for President Hugo Chavez's Leftist government - a move likely to further sour relations between the White House and the Kremlin.

Though sharp differences have emerged over a wide range of foreign policy issues, the United States is likely to be particularly incensed because it regards the South American nation as being in its sphere of influence.

President **Chavez** - famed for his colorful attacks on **George W Bush** - reveled in America's discomfort. "The Russians are going to install a Kalashnikov rifle plant and a munitions factory so we can defend every street, every hill, every corner," he said. "The United States is failing in its attempts to blockade us, to disarm us."

Washington announced the ban earlier this month ostensibly because of concern over the president's ties with Iran and Cuba and his alleged inaction against guerrillas in neighboring Colombia.

Mr. **Chavez**, who visited Britain earlier this month, has whipped up public opinion with repeated declarations that the United States is planning to invade.

The Russian state's official arms exporter, "Rosoboronexport" confirmed that talks were taking place with the Venezuelan government, but would not give details about the factories' production capacity or when they would be built.

Last year Russia was criticized by the White House when it signed a contract to supply Venezuela with 100,000 Kalashnikovs. The first shipment is due to arrive later this month.

Mr. **Chavez**, who has accused the United States of being behind an attempted coup four years ago, also wants to buy Russian fighter jets and helicopters as part of an ambitious military modernization programme funded by Venezuela's vast oil profits. Close allies in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, **Vladimir Putin** and President Bush have fallen out over Russia's retreat from democratic principles and US support for the revolutions that toppled pro-Moscow regimes in Ukraine and Georgia.

RUSSIA RANKS TOP IN ARMS TRADE LEVELS, GOING AHEAD OF U.S. - SIPRI

Russia & CIS Military Newswire, Moscow, 26 May, 2006

Russia overtopped the U.S. and secured the first place in arms exports in 2000-2004, reads the Russian edition of *the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's* annual reference book, which was presented in Moscow

Friday.

According to the book, the largest weapon traders are Russia, the U.S., France, Germany and Great Britain. Their share is 81% of all weapon deals. From 2000 to 2004 Russia managed to overtop the U.S. that used to be the arms trading leader from 1999-2003.

Russia sold conventional weapons for \$26.9 billion during the period from 2000-2004, while the U.S. earned \$25.9 billion, France \$6.3 billion, Germany \$4.8 billion and Great Britain \$4.4 billion.

The Russian arms trade share accounted for 32% of the world total supplies of conventional weapons. The increase in the Russian share was mainly achieved owing to the sales of aircraft and ships, reads the reference book. As for these types of military equipment, Russia was unrivalled in numbers sold to foreign states in 2000-2004.

"Compared with the U.S. and Western Europe, Russia is lagging behind in terms of new-generation weapon development. However, its armament is still quite competitive in terms of price and more often than not in terms of performance," it says.

At the same time, SIPRI thinks that Russia's share in defence exports may reduce in the long run. "The reason for the looming reduction of the Russian weapons is the reduction of acquisitions of aircraft and ships on the part of China and India," reads the reference book.

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The opinions expressed by the authors in this bulletin do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editorial team.

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