United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting
The Threat to Peace and Security Posed by Trafficking and Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Date and time: September 16, 2021 at 10:00 am (EST).

Venue: VTC

Participation: All UN Member States and Permanent Observers, as well as non-governmental organizations are invited to attend. Speaking possibilities for UN Security Council members and other UN members time permitting. Participants are encouraged to limit their interventions to 3 minutes.

Objective:
Six years have passed since the adoption of resolution 2220 (2015). Taking into consideration the enormous impact that trafficking and the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALW) have on international peace and security, and building on the momentum generated by the outcome agreement of the 7th Biennal Meeting of States parties to the PoA, and the 7th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, it is necessary to have an up-to-date discussion on current and emerging challenges. It is also important to reflect on ways in which the Security Council can be more effective in addressing this issue, strengthening its preventive role and its efforts towards sustaining peace.

Background:
There is no question about the colossal negative consequences of the widespread availability, as well as the illicit circulation and misuse of conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, which endanger peace and security, fuel outbreaks of renewed conflict, contribute to armed violence, enable sustained human rights violations, and may severely hinder humanitarian access and development.

The Security Council has addressed SALW-related issues across its agenda, ranging from Security Sector Reform to arms embargoes; counter-terrorism and sustaining peace, while also treating these matters in country-specific and regionally-focused
contexts. Such was the case of the resolution adopted in 2019 dedicated to the African Union’s flagship initiative “Silencing the Guns”. The inclusion of language related to SALW in UNSC’s resolutions has also evolved significantly over the last 30 years.

Nevertheless, the United Nations addresses the problems posed by illicit small arms in a fragmented manner, from the perspectives of peace and security, development, transnational crime, humanitarian action, counter-terrorism and trade regulation. Resolution 2220 (2015) is the latest adopted by the Council focusing exclusively on this issue. It includes provisions aimed at bolstering international cooperation, effective implementation of UN arms embargoes and support to the Arms Trade Treaty. It is important to continue addressing the issues related to SALW at the Security Council, as well as in other fora.

Guiding questions:

(a) How has the Security Council addressed the threat to peace and security posed by the trafficking and illicit trade of small arms and light weapons? Has it been enough? Has the consideration in the General Assembly been enough to foster common solutions?

(b) How can the Security Council ensure in arms embargoes mandates that SALW are not diverted to or traded with unauthorized recipients?

(c) What has the impact of recent developments in the consideration of this issue at the UN been (different treaties, organizations, SDG16.4, initiatives from civil society, etc)? Which are lessons to be gathered from regional experiences and good practices (Silencing the Guns; ECOWAS, CIFTA, EU, among others)?

(d) What is the best way to address the relation between this issue and other agendas at the UN? Is it possible to establish a “breaking the silos” and complementary approach between the fragmented consideration of this portfolio?
Briefers:

- Dr. Ivor Fung, Deputy Chief of the Conventional Arms Branch, UNODA
- Paul Holtom, Conventional Arms Programme Lead. UNIDIR
- Simonetta Grassi, Head of the Global Firearms Programme, UNODC.
- Rachel Stohl, Vice President, The Stimson Center.

Logistics:

The meeting will take place via video conference (VTC) and will be streamed live and opened to public through UN WebTV. The meeting will be held in English and no simultaneous interpretation will be offered.

There will be a statement by the briefers followed by the UN Security Council members wishing to do so, as well as by other UN member states. In order to allow for as many participations as possible, each intervention will be limited to 3 minutes.

The list of speakers closes on September 15 at 6:00pm. A Chair’s Summary will be prepared reflecting the interventions of the briefer and speakers.

To register as a SPEAKER please send an email to Mr. Braulio Fausto (4conu1@sre.gob.mx). Speakers are encouraged to send their statement to the said email address. Further technical details will follow.