

THE EU INITIATIVE ON ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF SALW BY AIR TRANSPORT

The EU SALW Strategy stresses that the problem of transfers of SALW can only be solved if the sources of transfers are analysed. Suspect carriers involved in SALW dealings will be subject to special surveillance. This work is parallel to similar efforts within the OSCE.

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"Flame of Peace", public weapons destruction event in Sihanoukville, Cambodia

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Storage of SALW before destruction - Latin America



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Albania :Empty shells of demilitarised hand grenades

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COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS



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ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW)

The EU recognises that, in addition to the Weapons of Mass Destruction challenge, illicit trafficking in SALW is a security concern for all. SALW are responsible for almost 500 000 deaths a year, 300 000 of which occur in armed conflicts. The consequences of the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of SALW and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread are central to four of the five security challenges identified by the European Strategy. **SALW can contribute to terrorism and organised crime, and are a major factor in triggering and spreading conflicts, as well as in the collapse of State structures. They represent a security concern for all.** The European Union has therefore decided to actively address this problem through its SALW Strategy.

THE EU SALW STRATEGY

The European Council adopted on 16 December 2005 a Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition.

The EU SALW Strategy, building on existing EU policies and programmes, outlines a comprehensive approach using all instruments available to the EU. The EU is active in third countries affected by excessive accumulation of small arms but is also tackling the problem of the source of the illicit small arms flows. The Strategy identifies Africa as the continent worst affected by the impact of internal and cross border conflicts aggravated by the destabilising influx of small arms and light weapons. The strategy also covers Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America.

HOW DOES THE EU PURSUE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY?

EU assistance programmes cover :

- Universalisation, and full implementation, of multilateral instruments;
- Assistance in drafting national legislation on control of arms exports;
- Training of institutions, customs departments and other agencies in order to improve border controls;
- Stockpiles management, including collection and destruction of surplus SALW;
- Promotion of a broader role for peacekeeping missions so they can deal with SALW and their ammunition.

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Storage of 7,000 SALW before destruction - Cambodia

PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE EU

The EU has supported projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Balkans and most recently in Ukraine. Some examples of past and on-going projects:

Cambodia: The EU supported an integrated programme involving weapons collection and destruction, building of safe storage facilities and training of army and police with a focus on monitoring and management of the weapons they legitimately possess as well as the provision of legal assistance in drafting an arms law.

Indonesia: - Aceh Monitoring Mission - The EU mission monitored the implementation of various aspects of the peace agreement signed between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement, including the demobilisation of the latter and the decommissioning of its weaponry.

Latin America and the Caribbean: This project focuses on training activities for law enforcement officials and Members of local Parliaments, the definition of best practices for stockpile management and the development of databases. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) implements the project.

Ukraine: The EU contributes to a SALW destruction project implemented by the NATO Agency (NAMSA). The EU contribution provides equipment for the destruction of SALW.

Albania: The EU has provided support to a project aimed at the consolidation and destruction of surplus SALW.