

ANNEX (E)

**Regional Workshop on Regulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons
and Mitigation of Armed Violence**

Robert Watkins

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh

24 August 2015

Honorable Parliamentarians,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning to you all,

- Thank you for inviting me to today's workshop. The regulation of small arms and light weapons and in turn the mitigation of armed violence is a pressing issue in today's global reality. In different parts of the world we have protracted conflicts, armed insurgencies, countries on the brink of civil war, and criminal violence and activity. We can often have an image in our heads of armed conflicts dominated by tanks and bombs, but in reality the threat environment and the nature of conflict has changed.
- The majority of deaths are actually through the use of small arms, with the civilian population disproportionately affected. Small arms don't just account for deaths, but are used to commit grievous human rights violations, maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, enforced disappearances,

and torture. The accessibility of small arms and light weapons also becomes the channel used to resolve grievances; as rule of law cannot be upheld, the space for legal and peaceful means for resolving conflicts shrinks, this perpetuates a cycle of insecurity and violence, not to mention it fuels opportunistic conflict economies.

- But it is not just armed violence that regulating small arms and light weapons is important, but all the other side effects of political instability and conflicts. It is no secret that those countries doing poorly in development outcomes are what we can consider “failed states”. Contemporary armed conflicts is the main cause of people fleeing their homes, and now it’s the most common cause of food insecurity. Armed violence aggravates poverty, it impacts corruption, access to social services such as health and education, and it also diverts energy and resources away from national development efforts.
- Overall there can be some limitations for regulating armed violence; one of which is the lack of reliable data and information on the production, holdings, trade, legislation and use of small arms and light weapons. There is currently no accurate figure for the number of small arms and light weapons in global circulation, though estimates are as high as 875 million. How they get into the hands of people illegally could be through distribution, theft, leakage, divergence, pilferage, or even resale. Shipments to conflict zones are mainly small scale consignments, and the arms trade relies on

porous borders in unstable regions, with arms traded from one conflict to the next.

- The truth is, those who benefit from the trade of small arms and light weapons, take advantage of weak government structures and regulation, poverty and instability. Governments have a responsibility to provide human security and development to their citizens. Understandably, sometimes this is not an easy task and the situation on the ground can often be complicated, especially when there is little regional cooperation in cases of trafficking across borders. This issue is not just confined to one nation, but contingent on global cooperation. There are various instruments that can guide governments to regulate the trade of small arms and light weapons and mitigate the impact of armed violence.
- As you all know, the Arms Trade Treaty is a landmark agreement that entered into force at the end of last year. It is a fitting starting point for many countries to ensure that arms don't get into the wrong hands. However, it also behooves signatories to ratify the agreement and enforce its normative potential. This is true for many other instruments that exist such as the UN Firearms Protocol, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the International Tracing Instrument. All of which you will be referring to in this workshop.

- At national level there are various control measures that can be introduced to curb the proliferation of small arms, such as regulating manufacturing, which can include stringent licensing requirements and prohibiting the reactivation of deactivated weapons. Another measure includes the regulation of civilian possession, identity checks, and ways for gun owners to report stolen weapons. And one area that is not covered by the Arms Trade Treaty, but plays a crucial role in small arms and light weapons proliferation, is putting controls on brokering – middlemen who exploit gaps in legislation and states with weak export controls and enforcement.
- Of course, we mustn't forget that small armed conflicts are intimately connected with poverty and arrested economic development. There is also a role for development programming and poverty alleviation vis-à-vis regulation that would prevent people and groups from picking up arms in the first place. This not only includes strengthening the democratic space so those with a grievance have non-violent channels to resolve disputes, but also in using disarmament as part of broader peace and security initiatives in both post-conflict and non-conflict settings.
- I am glad to see the mixed participation here today, and I am confident that slowly but surely we will see more control over armed conflict. As parliamentarians, you have a significant role to play in putting in place the necessary measures and controls to protect the people you govern. In turn, the UN stands by ready to assist governments to implement their strategies;

one that observes human rights principles, complies to existing instruments, and with the shared aim of reducing conflict and human suffering.

- Thank-you.

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)
Regional Asia Parliamentary Workshop
on
Small Arms and Light Weapons
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Presented by:
Syed Tamjid ur Rahman
Chief Executive Officer
ChangeMaker

When I was young, a very famous legendary heavy weight boxer, Mohammad Ali, visited Bangladesh with his wife Veronica. Mohammad Ali's visit was a big event. People from all walks of life came to see this legendary figure. I too went to see this great hero. What amazed me was that all the people could tell the life history of Mohammad Ali by heart such as when was he born, when was the first time he received the heavy weight championship, who were the major opponents, what was his trick, how many people watched the television show, and so on. A few weeks later, at school, we were asked to write a short article on people who worked hard to save the humanity. It struck me, how little we know about these people. At the same it also struck me that how much people can be interested to know so much about persons who is hurting someone else in a boxing fight in front of the whole world? While people would hardly notice if the inventor of the Polio Vaccine crosses the path or be in the town; who happens to be saving millions of lives in the world.

Dear Honorable Members of Parliament, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. It seems to me that when it comes to saving lives, it is where we show lack of courage, we feel uncomfortable to talk about it, we lose the sense of judgement to make priorities, and our compassion seems to wear away very fast. The issue related to whole heartedly adopting the ATT in the last couple years is probably one of the classic example of this lax attitude. To sign or not to sign is certainly the question. But is that a question at all?

While, the states makes elaborate debate on the signing issue, we see that killing people continues to thrive. The business of killing human being is, probably, the most fastest growing business on the face of the earth. I am deliberately using the term "business" because there are people who are investing billions of dollars on research and development, testing, production, and selling different killing tools and equipment's and all for profit. These equipment are getting sophisticated in nature every day. The rate of sophistication and innovation is probably more faster than the cell phones that we use – a new gadget every hour.

While the entire world quietly watched this inhuman activity, the sales and usage of these killing tools are getting out of control. It is an irony that the global trade in most consumer goods is internationally regulated and carefully controlled. There are probably several layers of trade regulations for producing and selling bananas in this world, but we do not have any practical regulations for production and sales of arms.

Before the ATT, there were no legally binding, robust, and universally applicable criteria governing the transfer of conventional weapons across borders.

Now that we have ATT, it is expected to address this lack of global regulation by establishing a legally binding instrument that obligates States to take responsibilities of the risks of potential negative consequences of arms transfers. In order to have a lasting humanitarian impact, the responsibilities of violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), negative impact on socio-economic development, facilitation of corruption, and the severity of armed violence needs to be looked into. Without full consideration of these responsibilities by the states, the status quo will not change.

Why is this issue important?

We all know that arms and bullets destroy lives. Every continent in the world is marred by devastation caused by armed violence – and it is the ordinary people who are paying the ultimate price with more than one person dying every minute as a direct result of armed violence. Yet there is still no effective appreciation for the international regulation of the global arms trade.

We all know that the poorly controlled flow of weapons and ammunition around the world fuels the spiraling death toll. Gunrunners continue to operate with impunity on the shady fringes of this deadly trade. And, lax or non-existent reporting obligations make it almost impossible to tell in whose hands a gun, shell, bullet, or even a drone, will ultimately end up, or how it got there.

Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), created a globally binding regulation of the international trade in conventional weapons for the first time. As a development organization and a representative of the civil society, we expect that this will be adopted by all the countries. The need for adoption is more urgent and more greater than ever.

The gun violence is taking different shapes, dimensions and styles and reaching every corners of our society. Ranging from domestic to street, clans to community, state to ideology. It seems that there is rat race for showing power through guns where oppress, repress, and suppress are the name of the game - be it a state or a non-state actor.

The ATT provides us the opportunity to start life afresh as a strong treaty with the highest common standards. The states should wholeheartedly commit to the standards of the treaty and show respect for the citizens of the world.

Evidence suggests that treaties with high common standards, gain support over time. For example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and adoption in 1966. By 1968, only one country had become a State Party to the Covenant.

In due course, the ICCPR gained widespread support and, by February 2013, adoption comprised 167 States Parties.

There are numerous other examples, including:

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979: 31 States Parties by 1981, growing to 187 in 2013.
- The UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, adopted in 2000: 22 States Parties by 2002, growing to 174 in 2013.
- The UN Convention against Corruption, adopted in 2003: 15 States Parties by 2004, growing to 165 in 2013.

There is also ample evidence to suggest that treaties tend to have positive influences on the behavior of non-States Parties by creating global norms.

The non-States Parties have generally respected the core provisions of various treaties, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention) adopted in 1997 (161 States Parties in 2013) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions adopted in 2008 (78 States Parties in 2013), and have tended not to act explicitly against the core provisions of the conventions.

Violent conflicts and armed violence of different magnitude and scale have plagued the entire world. If this is not the time to stop the irresponsible and illegal transfers of weapons, including their parts, components, and ammunition, then my question is when will it become appropriate? If we are not serious about the lives of our citizens and do nothing to save them, we are probably likely see that weapons will continue to fuel conflict, armed violence, and abuse of human rights, and to undermine development further around the world. It can greatly influence socioeconomic inequalities, injustice, joblessness, natural resources management, human rights abuse, political exclusion and corruption.

The world has come to a consensus that peace, security and justice is important for development, and as such this was included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), as post MGD priorities. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will become a reality in September 2015. Goal 16 focuses on peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice, and accountable institutions. The inclusion of Goal 16 reflects the growing acceptance that issues related to peace, security, and good governance should play a role in the post-2015 development framework. ATT can help in achieving this goal in the coming years.

In this regard, I personally thank the Government of Bangladesh who supported the ATT initiative. Through the signing of the ATT, Bangladesh has not only demonstrated as one of the champions of peace in the region, but it has also proved once again that Bangladesh do not support violence and conflict. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh has stated in a very strong voice for a zero tolerance on any terrorism and violent activities.

Finally, the ATT would certainly create obligations as well as responsibilities for states. As a result in order to be able to implement the treaty, the states would, therefore, need clear understanding of their obligations and responsibilities. A clear-cut, specific and articulated implementation strategies would become necessary together with enhancing capacities of the states to deal with the implementation process. As such it is imperative that technical and financial assistances are provided to develop capacities of the different states so that the implementation of the ATT can be achieved.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of PGA and ChangeMaker to thank all the Dignitaries, Honorable Members of the Parliament from home and abroad who, through their valuable participation in this workshop, demonstrated their commitment to end violence and establish peace in this Earth.

Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen

REGULATIONS OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPON (SALW) **AND MITIGATION OF ARMED VIOLANCE**

Mahjabeen Khaled

Member Of Parliament

Bangladesh

Introduction

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are perhaps the most commonly used and most deadly of all armaments. These are the tools that are responsible for the deaths and injury of thousands of people including women and children all over the world both in peace and war time. Throughout the world, in situations of conflict and post-conflict, acts of violence are carried out using small arms and light weapons, which are widely available owing to a lucrative illicit trade in such goods and poor regulation and controls, including of government stockpiles. The uncontrolled proliferation of such weaponry continues to undermine international peace and security and has a devastating impact on civilians in armed conflict of any magnitude, with women and children often bearing the brunt of that impact.

Legal as well as illegal manufacturing and distribution of Small Arms and Light Weapons have increased since the end of the cold war. The withdrawal of the superpowers' support to many insurgent groups compelled many armed groups and governments to become self-reliant – a practice that led to the “privatization” of armed struggle. It was estimated by Small Arms Survey 2001 that there were more than six hundred companies in world-wide that were involved in small arms production in some aspect.

South Asia is a glaring example of how the nexus of small arms and conflict is an obstacle to a lasting peace in the region. Internal conflicts in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India

had funnelled in thousands of SALW from various sources. For many years especially from 2001 to 2006 Bangladesh also had been a convenient transit country for illicit arms trafficking.

Definition by International Legal Conventions

United Nations General Assembly defines small arms and light weapons as:

(a) "Small arms" are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns;

(b) "Light weapons" are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, inter alia, general purpose or universal machine guns, medium machine guns, heavy machine guns, rifle grenades, under-barrel grenade launchers and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, man portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, man portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a caliber of less than 100 millimeters.

The Emerging Small Arms Agenda

At the Security Council meeting held on 29 June 2007, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Small arms", the President of the Security Council recalled its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security and recognized that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects had hampered the peaceful and contributed to the prolongation of such armed conflicts. But the Council also reaffirmed the inherent right to individual or collective self-defense consistent with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

While individual countries exercise varying degrees of control over small arms and light weapons, there exist no universal laws or standards by which to regulate the production,

transfer, possession or use of small arms, and to protect individuals, families and communities from small arms abuse.

A series of significant international initiatives by countries have been taken that deserve the study by others. Those are :

- a) The 'Economic Community of West African States' - Declaration of a Moratorium on Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa" (November 1998);
- b) The 'Organization of American States' – Inter American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials' (November 1997);
- c) The Brasilia Declaration for the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Arms Trade in Small Arms and All Its Aspects, Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean States for the UN Conference (November 2000);
- d) European Union joint action on 'Combating the Destabilizing Accumulation and Spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons' (December 1998);
- e) The UN 'Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition,' supplementing the 'United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime' (March 2001).

It is vitally important that the UN commits States to take measures that will have a real and beneficial impact on the lives of the people who now suffer the devastating consequences of the presence and misuse of small arms in their communities.

Mitigation of Armed Violence and Bangladesh Perspective

There should be commitment to sustained participation in the emerging global effort to address the excessive and unregulated accumulations and proliferation of small arms that foment

conflicts around the world, make them extraordinarily destructive, and render them more resistant to peaceful resolution. It is an urgent need to resolute international action to encourage the international community to put in place a sustained program of action to address the small arms crisis and to welcome the formation and work of the International NGO Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).

The global trade in conventional arms now has international standards regulating the estimated annual US\$70 billion business. After years of effort, the UN General Assembly adopted a historic Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 2 April 2013. This is the first-ever global treaty to establish international norms aiming to prevent conventional weapons from being used for war crimes and human rights abuses. The Treaty will help foster peace and security by stemming the flow of destabilizing arms to conflict regions. The Treaty opened for signature on 3rd June 2013 and it can be mentioned that Bangladesh signed the treaty on 26 September 2013 becoming the first in the south Asian region. Its entry into force was on 24 December 2014.

Despite not being affected by any major conflict, Bangladesh still has a considerable small arms proliferation problem. Small arms proliferation and armed violence and casualties continue to be an ever-prevalent threat to economic and social development of the country. But Bangladesh is not used as a possible conduit or sanctuary for the billion dollar international trade in illicit arms and ammunition with the growing involvement of non state actors. That we have lived up to our commitment is evident from the huge arms caches recovered by our law enforcement agencies in the forest of Hobigonj in June and September last year. We have indeed turned this into an integral element of our “Zero Tolerance” approach to terrorism and violent extremism in all forms and manifestations.

According to some estimates, around 11-15% of crimes committed in Bangladesh involve the use of small arms. Thus we have to work at reversing this trend before it assumes further threatening proportions. The foremost benefits for Bangladesh from the ATT emanate from the fact that the treaty will strengthen various efforts to control and curb small arms proliferation and related atrocities in Bangladesh. Key sources of illegal SALW in Bangladesh are perceived to be those trafficked or smuggled into Bangladesh. Small arms are used extensively both by petty criminals and organised syndicates in various criminal activities in Bangladesh viz., extortions, robbing, kidnapping etc., often resulting in human casualties. Political rivalries among the

politicians often result in armed violence where illicit SALW are used. Even during various political activities such as hartals (strikes) and protests small arms are used leading to armed violence, destruction of properties, and even human fatalities. Bangladesh for some time has also been a key 'transit route' for trafficking and smuggling of weapons in South Asia. The 2004 Chittagong arms haul case is a crucial example of Bangladesh being used as a transit country. Whether the country is used as a transit route or the illegal small weapons are smuggled in targeting the country, these illegal arms are used by the miscreants both ordinary in nature as well as by the political activists and cadres.

Small arms and ammunitions have also been used by the extremist groups in Bangladesh especially by the leftist and the religious extremists. There have been some horrifying instances of use of small arms viz., grenades, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in many cases in Bangladesh. The most devastating incident occurred on 21 August 2004, when a grenade attack was perpetrated by the religious extremist outfit Harkat-ul Jihad al Islami Bangladesh (HUJIB) targeting the present-day Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, while she was delivering a speech in a rally, killing 23 people including the Awami League Women's Affairs Secretary Ivy Rahman. Although the current government under the honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been immensely successful in countering extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh, lack of international arms transfer standards leaves scope for arming these various non-state actors by external entities both state and non-state in nature. Therefore, considering the challenges posed by the unabated proliferation of SALW, an international arms trade treaty is expected to deliver handful benefits to Bangladesh.

In compliance with the Programme of Action, Bangladesh has put in place

- Tougher legislative norms and administrative procedures to regulate lawful possession, manufacture, export, import and transport of small arms and light weapons
- Strict procedures are followed in stockpile management, and confiscated illegal arms are routinely and publicly destroyed as provided for in the National Stockpile Management Program

- Bangladesh observes Small Arms Destruction Day annually on 9 July, in order to raise public awareness about the human, social and economic cost of the illicit weapons trade.
- Bangladesh also reports regularly to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and to the United Nations Standardised Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures.
- Bangladesh, , has rightly expressed its position in favour of a comprehensive, legally binding ATT. Bangladesh, while supporting the decision-making process on the 'basis of consensus', proposes observance of alternatives in case of absence of 'universal consensus'.

Recommendations

Following measures needs to be taken to put in place policies and resources to ensure their effective follow-up and implementation:

- Apoption of destruction as a major means of disposal of confiscated illigal small arms and light weapons
- Observance of 9 July every year as Small arms Destruction Day
- Issuance of licenses for small arms after strict and proper verification
- Regular monitering of the licensed arms traders to control illegal arms uses
- Strict deployment of border security force at border outposts and common border security management
- The establishment or strengthening, where appropriate, of sub regional and regional cooperation, coordination and information sharing mechanisms with a view to preventing, combating, and eradicating illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons to be given special priority.
- Provide increased international support and resources for programs and initiatives to promote social justice and advance human security as conditions essential to development, and to promote social, economic and political conditions conducive to long-term peace, stability and development.
- Monitoring and vigilance of welding machines factories
- Monitoring of activities of courier service providers and transport agencies

- Implement strict domestic controls by the countries on the manufacture, possession and use of small arms.
- Exercise restraint in the accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons, and to pursue a global "code of conduct".
- Practice maximum transparency in transactions, policies and regulations related to small arms and light weapons.
- All countries should address social, political and economic conditions that tend to generate demand for small arms and light weapons and an urgent attention to reform of the security policies
- Cooperate, notably within and between regions, in support of more effective and consistent compliance with controls and regulations, including the pursuit of universal legally binding instruments to regulate brokering, and adopt universal standards for marking, tracing, and record keeping of small arms and light weapons.
- Adopt international standards in investing and training for stockpile management, for post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants, for weapons collection, and for the destruction of surplus and collected weapons.
- Promote the conversion of weapons manufacturing capacity into socially constructive production.
- Provide increased international support and resources for programs and initiatives to promote social, economic and political conditions conducive to long-term peace, stability and development.

Conclusion

Small arms and light weapons are the primary instruments through which persistent and deeply rooted political conflicts are transformed with alarming frequency into armed violence and war. Through war, crime, domestic violence and suicides, more than 10,000 lives are lost each week to small arms violence.

The availability of small arms and light weapons exacerbates and prolongs armed conflicts, defers economic and social development, promotes crime, nurtures cultures of violence, and produces an extraordinary worldwide burden of cumulative personal tragedies and public crises.

The most devastating impact of small arms affects the vulnerable, and among the youth. The light weight, transportability and ease of use of small arms and light weapons has facilitated one of the most abusive elements of contemporary armed conflict, notably the engagement of children as armed combatants. It is a matter of urgent public responsibility that the international community now act to address the problems of the proliferation, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and to address their debilitating social, economic, political and humanitarian impacts.

Parliamentarians for Global Action

Dhaka, Bangladesh 24-25 August, 2015

Regional Asia Parliamentary Workshop on Regulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons And Mitigation of Armed Violence A Regional Perspective: Cambodia Son Chhay MP

Introduction

In Cambodia, small arms and light weapons are the dominant tools of criminal violence. More human rights abuses are committed with these than with any other weapon especially in situations where the use of armed violence has almost become a means for resolving grievances and conflicts. There are compelling arguments about why this still occurs in Cambodia. One is that our judiciary is often questionable as an independent body that is capable of undertaking legal and just dispute resolution within a country where the rule of law is not always upheld and where weapons are fundamental to the power relations and patron–client networks that keep the political officials, and others, in power.

Cambodia's background is that of a country which had been ravaged by war and conflict for more than two decades, Cambodia had experienced great suffering because of small arms and other weapons of war, in particular, land mines. Mines and undetonated devices have had severe social impacts decades long after the war. Cambodia has suffered immensely from these indiscriminate killers with victims of landmines permanently handicapped and traumatised. This had had numerous social and resource implications on our nation which is still striving to rebuild itself. As a result Cambodia has integrated the demining issue into its overall national agenda through the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals and other Strategies and with international support removed over two million mines.

In this regard, Cambodia has attached great importance to the agreed international instruments, especially the implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and more recently, ratified the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), regulating the international trade in conventional arms - from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships – entered into force on 24 December 2014.

Cambodia's Lesson for other Conflict Ridden Nations

Specifically our experiences in Cambodia I believe can provide important lessons for other post conflict nations on what worked and what did not work.

In a period in Cambodia where NGO's have been recently increasingly threatened with expulsion by the ruling party, we need to reflect that Cambodia was once one of the worse of conflict-affected countries in the world and the international community and, in particular, international NGO's have worked concertedly to support the reduction of weapons circulating in Cambodia, outside those of government control. In particular, I draw attention to both Japan Assistance Team for Small Arms Management in Cambodia (JSAC) and the Cambodian Working group for Weapons Reduction (WGWR) and their efforts.

The ongoing work of NGO's to raise awareness of the impacts of small arms on men, women, and children including their research, projects, and activism has helped support the development and implementation of far-reaching legislation and policies and their contribution cannot be understated.

Cambodia still does not possess either the necessary resources or the capability required to undertake such critical research and programs. We are still struggling with institution building. As a result of NGO-conducted research in Cambodia it has been demonstrated that, if small arms are not removed following the cessation of conflict, they may be directed towards the civilian population or may be used in interpersonal violence (ICRC, 1999, pp. 9–11). This is now reinforced by the current global situation in Arab and African countries where increasingly women, and children, in particular, face multiple forms of violence and deprivation as a direct and indirect consequence of small arms prevalence and misuse. With the agreement of the Arms Trade Treaty the global community has acknowledged that we all must work together to develop international standards to combat this problem and that this should include small arms and weapons that target the most vulnerable.

There is no doubt that the reduction of small arms and weapons has had a positive impact on human security in Cambodia, where guns are commonly used in homicides and violent incidences. Certainly large scale destruction of government stockpiles was a good start and the now well-known sculpture of a twisted gun in Phnom Penh, inspired by the famous Swedish Reuterswård original sculpture on nonviolence, is a powerful symbol. But there remain still some serious outstanding issues relating to the professionalism and integrity of Cambodia's government security forces, both our military and police, where official gun misuse is still a serious problem and where the political impediments to democratic governance, institutional capacity building, and the rule of law in Cambodia limit overall reform in terms of providing a secure and stable governance structure for the people of Cambodia and where in particular, political violence is still a prevalent issue.

These failures can help demonstrate for other nations the serious limits of what international effort and support can do without strong political will and governance reform. Thus in terms of Cambodia's current situation, the opposition party is still striving, with the support of Parliamentarians for Global Action, we hope to improve the situation but we have some way to go before all Cambodians benefit from a fair and equitably democratic society. This includes, as noted previously, creating a public administration system that is more efficient and accountable, establishing a more transparent and efficient system of public finances, and building an independent and fair legal and judicial system. It also includes developing priority sectors and strategic long terms goals in health, education and rural development, as well as specific programmes in the fields of decentralisation and local self-governance, women's empowerment, access to justice, good financial governance and poverty reduction with the aim to develop constructive relations between state and society.

The Border Proliferation of Small Arms Weapons: Regional Implications

In addition, the negative impacts of illegal arms usage and circulation of small arms go beyond Cambodia's borders. The regional situation presents some unique problems in terms of ongoing internal conflict between the State governing authority and internal resistant groups; either minorities or other separatists groups. The South Thailand insurgency is a well known example but the Rohingya situation in Burma is another new concerning development. It is usually these confrontations, involving violent acts, that lead to the demand for smuggled weapons for the resistance. This is a particular problem for less democratically stable countries within the region, such as Cambodia and Burma, because they still lack a proper legal framework and rule of law to combat the corruption issues at the heart of such

trafficking, usually from State-owned armed forces to suppliers of these insurgent groups.

The other issue which is facing the global community is the increasing spread through the use of international networks of terrorists, such as ISIS, and the strong pressure that they put to bear on vulnerable communities.

Cambodia has been dealing with illegal logging, gem mining and drug trafficking but this presents a more serious threat because it brings armed conflict directly into such vulnerable communities. It is not possible to always know how to combat these issues and the huge amount of resources necessary and expertise requires an international collaborative effort. What is clear is that we cannot tolerate this risk to Cambodia after all our efforts to free ourselves from violent internal conflict. We need to move forward with the international community to combat against the new destabilising threat of terrorism and insurgency and the consequent proliferation of arms weapons.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok by the five original Member Countries, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand with Cambodia being accepted as a Member State on 30 April 1999. The ASEAN Declaration states that the aims and purposes of the Association are: (1) to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and (2) to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries in the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter. ASEAN has acknowledged the connection between arms smuggling, border controls and terrorism, as underscored in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Statement on Cooperative Counter-Terrorist Action on Border Security. In 2007 an ASEAN workshop on small arms control was hosted by Cambodia. More recently Cambodia hosted in November 2014 (18 – 19), a regional legal assistance workshop on the Arms Trade Treaty took place in Siem Reap, Cambodia that included a United Nations prepared Governments for Cross-Border Weapons Transfer Responsibilities.

Such innovations have led to positive collaborative efforts. Countries, such as Thailand during the South Thailand insurgency, have clearly benefited by having a positive ongoing relationship with their neighbours, such as Cambodia, on sharing intelligence information and these types of regional collaboration need to be encouraged.

Furthermore we also need to ensure domestic laws reflect international standards to positively promote joint collaboration efforts and reduce inconsistent approaches on arms and light weapons smuggling. This is a shared problem with a huge implication on our region's shared human security and in Cambodia's case could further destabilise States that have not yet reached the level of security and stability of other nation States, such as Singapore, in the region. Thus developing the rule of law in Cambodia should be a focus in ensuring consistency with both regional and international norms.

Once again however as a nation and government we still have power to reduce the impact and make our communities resilient to terrorist forces. It has been proven that there is a clear correlation between poverty and armed conflict. Poor communities are breeding grounds for terrorists. Poor communities and weak States are thus key to fighting armed conflict and this must be our focus. This can be achieved by countries, including Cambodia, focusing their efforts to stabilise the nation and put resources into education and health and combat corruption and injustice so people will be less vulnerable to terrorist manipulation.

Conclusion

The last few years have been productive internationally with the Arms Trade Treaty finally concluded. This is a robust treaty that finally sets international standards for all nations and it could not come sooner with armed conflict and terrorism a clear global threat as never before witnessed.

Clearly Cambodia can contribute to this discussion given our own experience where, as I have clearly noted, there have been clear successes as well as some lessons that we are still learning from. What is clear is that nations need to safeguard themselves from this problem which affects not just the State but targets communities and families whose women and children pay the heaviest price. This is by ensuring good governance structures are developed and that policies focus on communities having access to education, health and justice. Creating stability in this way will ensure that the destabilising influence of terrorist groups are not able to take root. To do this successfully poorer countries like Cambodia that are still struggling from their own recent history with violent armed conflict depend heavily on international support, including NGO's, to develop important pillars such as the rule of law that will improve collaborative efforts - regional and international - to regulate weapons and, in so doing, mitigate armed violence.

Fire Arms and Ammunition

Royal Government of Bhutan

License & Licensing Authority

- A Licensing Authority is established who is empowered to issue licenses for control possession, use and import of all firearms and ammunition

Conditions for Issuing License

- A license for firearms and ammunition is not issued to the following:
 - i) A person below the age of 21
 - ii) A person mentally unsound
 - iii) A person with criminal record

- The licensed firearms shall not be used for purposes other than provisioned
- Any person violating the above provision is liable to a fine or imprisonment ranging from 3 months to one year or both

General Provisions

- A license holder may bring into and out of the Kingdom of Bhutan the authorized firearms and ammunition
- No license holder without the consent of the authority is allowed to sell, give as gift, or entrust fire-arms and ammunition to a foreigner or to any third person. Violation of the above shall be liable to confiscation of the firearms and ammunitions with imprisonment of one year to five years or a fine or both

- The inventory is renewed by the License Issuing Authority as and when an item is added or deleted
- The License Issuing Authority needs to physically verify the Arms and Ammunition from time to time
- No one can use firearms within a radius of one mile distance of a Dzong/town without specific authorization or except in self defense or for protecting life and property
- Prior permission of the local Dzongkhag should be obtained for firing of firearms for performing special religious rites. Violators of the above provisions are liable to pay fine or one month imprisonment or both