Addressing Firearms Trafficking in the Context of Organized Crime and Terrorism – A Multipronged Approach

Organized Criminal Groups and Terrorists’ Access to Firearms: Addressing Firearms Trafficking in the Context of Organized Crime and Terrorism

Side event to the 27th session of the CCPCJ
16 May 2018, Vienna
• Framing the issue

• Addressing the threats at policy level

• Addressing the threats at programming level - A multipronged approach
Framing the issue
• **Procurement of illicit firearms**
  Perpetrators exploit established networks and connections as well as trafficking channels and modalities

• **Level of violence**
  Firearms increase the destructive power and violence level of organized criminal and terrorist groups

• **Financing of activities**
  Organized criminal and terrorist groups increasingly engage in transnational organized criminal activities, including firearms trafficking, to finance their terrorist activities
Lack of integrated approaches
Illicit firearms trafficking and other forms of organized crime as well as terrorism are often addressed in isolation, both at the policy and the operational levels.

Need for proactive investigations
Weapons involved in organized criminal or terrorist acts are often treated as mere instrumentality to the main offence, and are not subject of criminal investigations.
Addressing the threats at policy level
UN Security Council Resolution 2370 (2017) on preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons

Recognizing the need for:

• Adoption of adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the production, export, import, brokering, transit or retransfer of SALW;
• Physical security and stockpile management;
• Implementation of marking and tracing procedures;
• Strengthening law enforcement and border control capacity;
• Collection and analysis of detailed data on illicit SALW trafficking to terrorists.
Target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals

Target 16.4
By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime

→ Combatting illicit financial and arms flows as essential and crosscutting elements of countering organized crime
The WG acknowledges that

- firearms trafficking is a transnational threat oftentimes linked to organized crime, including drug trafficking, and terrorism;

- the availability and accessibility of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition to these groups increases their destructive power and provides them with the material and financial means to pursue their goals and to perpetuate their existence.
Sixth session of the Working Group on Firearms, May 2018

The WG recommends that Member States

- Develop **integrated and holistic approaches, national strategies or action plans** to prevent and counter firearms trafficking, in particular in the context of transnational organized crime and terrorism;

- Establish **national legal frameworks** that address the interconnected challenges posed by illicit firearms trafficking, other forms of organized crime and terrorism;

- Consider establishing **multidisciplinary pools of prosecutors** in charge of organized crime, terrorism and arms trafficking, in order to better address these interconnected threats.
Addressing the threats at programming level
- A multipronged approach
**Objective:** To counter illicit arms trafficking and related serious and organized crime, and foster effective international cooperation and information exchange.

**Donors:**

GFP follows an integrated approach to prevent & counter firearms trafficking.

How to adapt this approach to address the specific links between firearms trafficking – organized crime – terrorism?
Need for an **integrated approach** that addresses:

- **Legislative measures and normative frameworks**: Implementation and adherence to firearms and terrorism instruments; Normative support to enhance risk assessments;

- **Preventive measures**: Prevent criminals and terrorist groups from acquiring firearms;

- **Law enforcement**: Enhance special investigative techniques and investigative strategies that focus on illicit firearms trafficking; Support to specialized units on terrorism and organized crimes on firearms investigations; Support the establishment of “Firearms Hubs”;

Addressing these interconnected threats - At programming level
Addressing these interconnected threats
- At programming level

Need for an integrated approach that addresses:

- **International cooperation and information exchange**: Create platforms for exchanges, such as dedicated Community of practitioners meetings; Provide material support to cross border investigations; Develop a digest of organized crime and terrorism cases involving firearms.

- **Data collection**: Ensuring that seizure data includes information on the criminal context and the potential links to terrorism or organized crime; Ensuring that data from terrorism or other serious crime databases are cross checked with firearms databases; Continued research and analysis on the subject.

- **Develop resilience to armed violence and radicalization**: Address the demand side for firearms – though (civic) education and awareness raising activities.
Developing the multipronged approach

May 2017
The GFP participates in the briefing to Member States organized by CTED

April 2018
The Secretariat to the COP-UNTOC issues a background paper on preventing organized criminal and terrorist groups from acquiring firearms

May 2018
The WG on Firearms discusses preventing organized criminal and terrorist groups from acquiring firearms

May 2018
The Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire requests data on the criminal context in which firearms are seized

September 2018 [tbc]
GFP and Wilton Park organize an expert meeting to support the development of a comprehensive strategy

2019 [tbc]
Launch of a strategy and project on addressing firearms trafficking in the context of organized crime and terrorism
Thank you!

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