

## **Links between illicit drug trafficking and illicit firearms trafficking**

*The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,*

*Recalling* the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,<sup>68</sup> in the preamble of which the parties to the Convention recognized the importance of strengthening and enhancing effective legal means for international cooperation in criminal matters for suppressing the international criminal activities of illicit traffic,

*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions 56/24 V of 24 December 2001, 57/72 of 22 November 2002, 58/241 of 23 December 2003 and 59/86 of 3 December 2004 and decision 60/519 of 8 December 2005,

*Mindful* that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/38 of 21 June 1991, on the terms of reference of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, considered that the Commission should apply an integral and balanced approach to the drug problem, taking into account all its aspects, and called upon the Commission to review the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session,<sup>69</sup>

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 50/148 of 21 December 1995, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the danger and threat posed to civil society by drug trafficking and its links to, inter alia, transnational crime, money-laundering and the arms trade, and encouraged Governments to deal with that threat and to cooperate to prevent the channelling of funds to and between those engaged in such activities,

*Noting that* the General Assembly, in section IV of its resolution 50/148, on the proposal for an international conference to combat the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, stressed that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should take into account that the proposed conference should focus, with a balanced and integral approach, inter alia, on the assessment of existing strategies, as well as on the consideration of new strategies, methods and practical measures and concrete actions to strengthen international cooperation to address the problem of illicit drugs, including the combat against criminal organizations and illicit arms trade related to drug trafficking,

*Recalling* the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session,<sup>70</sup> in particular paragraph 11 of the Political Declaration, in which Member States expressed their alarm at the growing violence resulting from links between illicit production of and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs and resolved to increase their cooperation in stemming illegal arms trafficking and to achieve concrete results in that field through appropriate measures,

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., vol. 1582, No. 27627.

<sup>69</sup> General Assembly resolution S-17/2, annex.

<sup>70</sup> General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex.

*Bearing in mind* the relevant international and regional instruments adopted to prevent and fight firearms trafficking,

*Considering* the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,<sup>71</sup> in which the States participating in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, expressed their concern about the close link between, inter alia, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons,

*Recognizing* the principle of shared responsibility as well as the necessity of having an integrated and balanced approach in the fight against the world drug problem,

*Concerned* about criminal organizations heavily arming themselves with trafficked firearms to protect their illicit drug consignments in transit, exposing both the people living along the drug trafficking routes and the law enforcement personnel who protect them to increasing levels of violence and harm,

*Noting with concern* the increased number of incidents in which criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking accept or demand firearms as payment in kind for illegally distributed drugs, and attributing that increase, in part, to the organizations' responses to cooperation among national and international law enforcement entities that successfully deprives those organizations of access to the funds and other resources they derived or expect to derive from drug trafficking and related criminal activities,

*Concerned* that, as a result of their trading illicit drugs for firearms and their easy access to illegal arms trading networks, criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking are able to arm themselves as well as if not better than local law enforcement entities,

*Bearing in mind* that stopping the flow of illegal firearms between those criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking is essential to limiting the violence that has claimed numerous human lives,

*Noting* that a further challenge to law enforcement is keeping abreast of the constantly changing patterns of criminal activities, as criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking and related criminal activities are constantly seeking new and more sophisticated methods and means with which to avoid detection,

*Reaffirming* the determination of Member States to combat the scourge of drug trafficking and related criminal activities, including the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and illegal possession and use of firearms and ammunition,

1. *Recognizes* the increasing links between drug trafficking and the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms in some regions of the world and the need to prevent the spread of that problem to other regions;

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<sup>71</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV, para. 24.

2. *Notes* that reducing the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms is a major component of the efforts to reduce the illicit drug supply in some regions of the world;

3. *Encourages* Member States to take adequate measures, consistent with their international treaty obligations and other relevant international standards, to prevent the acquisition and use of firearms and ammunition by criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking;

4. *Emphasizes* the need for cooperation among Member States, consistent with their respective domestic legal and administrative systems, in reinforcing border control with a view to preventing drug trafficking and related illicit activities, including the smuggling of firearms and ammunition;

5. *Urges* Member States, where appropriate and consistent with their respective domestic legal and administrative frameworks, to allocate sufficient resources and provide adequate training and capacity-enhancing measures for intelligence, law enforcement, customs and related authorities responsible for fighting drug trafficking in order to assist in the prevention, detection and investigation of related cases involving illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, as well as to identify and dismantle existing networks and links between those illicit activities;

6. *Notes* that efforts to combat drug trafficking can be complemented by providing training in fighting firearms trafficking for law enforcement personnel responsible for investigating such activities, where appropriate and consistent with their respective domestic legal and administrative frameworks, and urges Member States with experience in that area to promote and increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including through programmes administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, focused on capacity-building and training and to exchange experiences and best practices, so that States may fight more effectively the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms when those activities are linked with drug trafficking offences;

7. *Encourages* Member States, consistent with their national legal frameworks, to exchange information and provide judicial cooperation in order to identify and investigate possible links between activities of drug trafficking and those related to the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms and ammunition;

8. *Also encourages* Member States, when appropriate and having due regard for the sensitivity of criminal investigations and other legal obligations, to provide information to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime linking patterns of significance in firearms trafficking and drug-related trafficking, including information uncovered in the course of their investigations, and requests the Executive Director to report to the Commission, at its fifty-third session, on the information received from Member States;

9. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to take into consideration the information provided by Member States on the existing relation between drug trafficking and trafficking in firearms and ammunition when preparing the *World Drug Report* and other relevant reports on the world drug problem;

10. Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to make the present resolution available to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.