



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

A photograph showing a large number of various firearms, including assault rifles and handguns, laid out on a light-colored surface. The weapons are of different models and colors, some with black finishes and others with wood or metal. Some have tags or markings on them. A prominent assault rifle in the foreground has a magazine with the word 'Mosberg' and 'MADE IN U.S.A.' visible. The background is filled with more weapons, creating a sense of a large collection.

Global Project on Firearms

OBJECTIVES

To counter illicit manufacturing of, and transnational illicit trafficking in firearms and related forms of organized crime by promoting the ratification and implementation of the 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 (Firearms Protocol).

PROJECT STRATEGY

The project has been designed with the aim to address the transnational and complex nature of firearms-related criminality, in particular its trafficking, in an integrated way, by looking at its cross-regional dimension and its impact on crime and violence, especially transnational organized crime. The project maintains a balance between national and regional activities, with the aim of fostering the widest possible cooperation among States, while at the same time strengthening the capacities of countries at the national level through tailored assistance and development of tools.

ACTIVITIES

Through the Global Project on Firearms (GPF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is assisting governments to address the issue of illegal firearms manufacturing and trafficking and firearms-related criminality through a holistic and multipronged approach, including:



Legislative development and legal tools

UNODC provides specialized and impartial legal assistance for the review, assessment and development or amendment of domestic legislation systems in order to ensure compliance with the Firearms Protocol and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Convention). UNODC has conducted legislative assessments and gap analysis of the existing domestic legislation on firearms control in several countries. In 2012, UNODC organized regional conferences on legislative harmonization with the Firearms Protocol in Latin America and West Africa. These conferences produced recommendations for actions at the national, regional and international levels for the implementation of the Firearms Protocol provisions by the participating States.

Several legal tools have been developed to facilitate the delivery of legislative assistance, such as Legislative Guides and a Model Law on Firearms, available in all United Nations languages. Other tools have been developed to facilitate international judicial cooperation and information exchange, such as a Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool, an online Directory of Competent National Authorities, various manuals and handbooks, and a Digest of Organized Crime Cases and related good practices.

Capacity-building and development of training tools

UNODC provides technical assistance for strengthening the criminal justice responses to firearms trafficking. Under the GPF, UNODC is developing a comprehensive training curriculum on firearms control. The curriculum has a modular format and covers a wide range of areas, from normative to technical aspects, including specialized modules on complex criminal investigations and forensic work, to the development of national strategies, including advocacy and awareness-raising activities involving civil society. It is intended to serve as a guide and a reference for the planning and delivery of customized national and regional training activities.

The tailored capacity-building activities will contribute to increased capacity to effectively implement the Firearms Protocol requirements in key areas such as marking, record-keeping, tracing and transfer controls. These will also contribute to strengthening the capacity of criminal justice institutions and their practitioners to detect, investigate and prosecute firearms criminality, illicit trafficking cases and their links to organized crime; and to making effective use of mechanisms of international law enforcement, judicial cooperation and enhanced information exchange.

Research and analysis on firearms trafficking

UNODC promotes evidence-based knowledge on firearms trafficking trends and patterns. UNODC contributed towards the development of a general study on the transnational nature of routes used in trafficking in firearms, based on the analysis of information provided by States on confiscated weapons and ammunition. UNODC provides support for improving the capacities of States to collect, research and analyse crime and firearms-related data and increasing the knowledge on existing or emerging trafficking trends in order to facilitate informed decision-making.

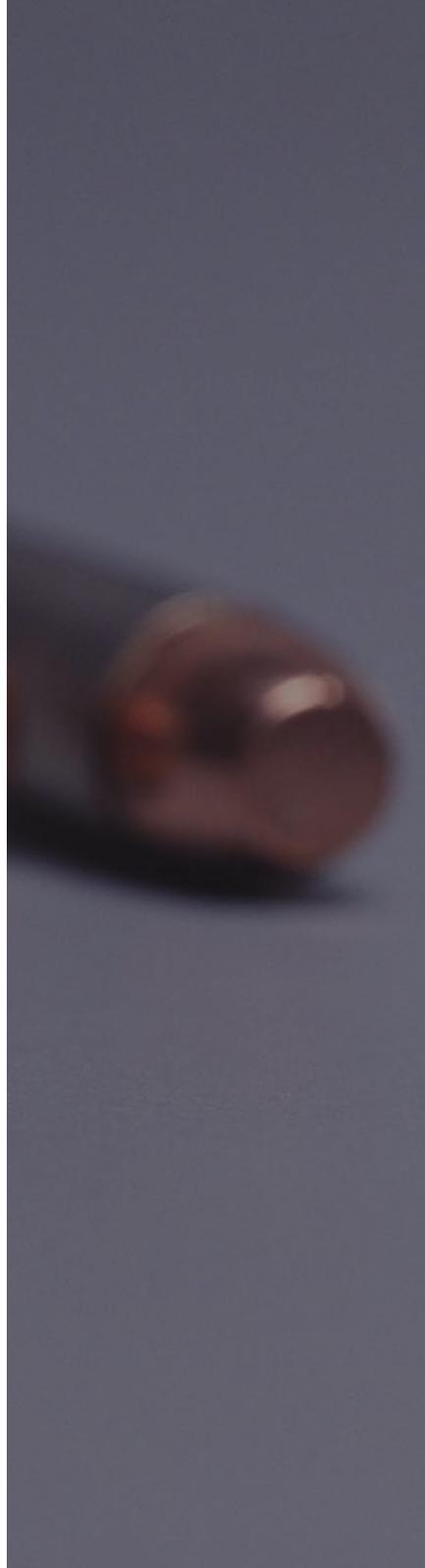
Awareness-raising for members of parliament and civil society organizations

UNODC engages parliamentarians and civil society organizations (CSO) in supporting and monitoring the implementation of effective firearms control regimes. Under GPF, UNODC provides information and capacity-building to parliamentarians and CSOs on the implementation of the Firearms Protocol provisions into the domestic legal system and their impact on the national firearms control strategies. UNODC strengthens CSOs' oversight capacity through participation in capacity-building workshops and the inclusion of special sessions for CSOs and parliamentarians.

Development of adequate awareness and crime prevention strategies to strengthen firearms control

UNODC assists States in the development of tailored knowledge and awareness-raising activities and crime prevention strategies to strengthen national controls over firearms, including, where appropriate, support for the development of collection and buy-back campaigns, and for the destruction of firearms.

UNODC is currently implementing two segments of GPF in Latin America and the Caribbean and in West Africa respectively.



BACKGROUND

The Firearms Protocol is the first legally binding instrument on firearms that has been adopted at the global level. Its purpose is to promote and enhance international cooperation and to develop cohesive mechanisms to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. Under the Firearms Protocol, States need to adopt a series of anti-crime measures and implement three sets of normative provisions in their domestic legal systems: *(a)* adequate criminal offences related to illicit manufacturing of, and trafficking in, firearms, their parts and components and ammunition in line with the Protocol requirements and definitions; *(b)* a system of government authorization or licences to ensure legitimate manufacturing of, and international movements of firearms; *(c)* implement adequate marking and recording regimes for the purpose of effective international cooperation and tracing of firearms. Furthermore, States Parties shall identify a national body or a single point of contact to act as liaison with other States Parties on matters relating to the Firearms Protocol, and notify UNODC.

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