



INTERPOL Statement

Ninth Session of the Working Group on Firearms: 04-05 May, 2022

Topic:

(2) Preventing and combatting the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in ammunition

Dear Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

The use of firearms is crosscutting and intertwined in different forms of crimes ranging from human and drug trafficking to terrorism. Investigating the source of illicit firearms, and not only their illegal possession and misuse, would result in cutting the supply of weapons to criminals and terrorist organizations and therefore prevent the commission of various offenses.

To ensure a holistic approach in combatting the proliferation of illicit firearms, national and international initiatives must also include measures on countering the illicit manufacturing and trafficking of ammunitions. After all, a gun without ammunition remains a harmless piece of metal. However, historically, a greater attention has been given to firearms rather than ammunition. This can also be observed in the lack of globally binding marking standards for ammunitions and their packaging.

In order to support Member States' investigations against firearms trafficking, INTERPOL launched three major tools that are at the disposal of its 195 Members. Namely the INTERPOL Firearms Reference Table (IFRT), the illicit Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS) and the INTERPOL Ballistic Information Network (IBIN) help law enforcement agencies around the world to identify and trace illicit firearms, as well as to conduct international ballistic comparisons. Based on the microscopic markings left on fired ammunition (cartridge case and projectile), the latter allows experts to determine a connection between a weapon and a crime scene and to establish a link between different crime scenes. Through its secure communication channel i24/7, INTERPOL also allows Member States to exchange securely confidential information and trace, whenever possible, the illicit source of ammunition.

The Working Group may elect to recommend that the Conference of the Parties considers the following recommendations:

- States parties are encouraged to control the purchase and possession of specialized equipment for ammunition reloading;
- States parties are encouraged, in cooperation with international partners, to develop globally binding standards for marking of ammunition and ammunition packaging;
- States parties are encouraged to engage discussions with ammunition manufacturers on the possibility of using different propellants / chemical signature / materials for ammunitions manufactured for civilian and government use (police/military);

- States parties are encouraged to implement national Standards Operating Procedures/ Protocols requiring national and international (when possible) ballistic comparison for all seized firearms and recovered ballistic evidences;
- States parties are encouraged to test-fire all newly registered firearms and keep a copy of the exhibits in national ABIS
- States parties are encouraged to consider becoming a member to the INTERPOL Ballistic Information Network (IBIN)