

Tuesday, 13 October 2020

**Speaking notes for
Mr. Gonzalo Fabián Medina Hernández (Mexico)
Chair of the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Firearms**

Agenda Item 2 (d): Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition

Mr. President, many thanks for giving me the floor.

Excellencies, distinguished permanent representatives, ladies and gentlemen delegates,

I had the honour to chair the seventh meeting of the Working Group and it is a pleasure for me to brief the Conference on the work of the Working Group on Firearms since the last session of the Conference.

Over the past two years, the Working Group could only meet once, and held its seventh meeting on 16 and 17 July 2020. During this meeting, the Working Group discussed two substantive agenda items and considered several interesting and pressing topics, as follows:

Under the agenda item on the “**Responsiveness of the Firearms Protocol and national legislation to new and emerging threats relating to the illicit**

manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition” the discussions focused on the most pressing new and emerging threats and on legislative approaches to counter the identified threats.

The deliberations were enhanced by a **panel discussion** facilitated by representatives of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union. Panellists described specific threats related to the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, including the reactivation of firearms, trade and trafficking in low-calibre firearms such as the so-called “Flobert” firearms, converted alarm and signal weapons and hand-made, modified and 3D-printed firearms, which were often produced with parts and components available on the legal market; the importance of harmonizing legislative responses globally or within regions so as to close gaps and avoid loopholes created through the different treatment of these threats by different states, including by creating enhanced synergies between the different legal instruments on firearms that exist at the regional and international levels.

During the discussions, several countries also acknowledged the threat posed by technological developments in relation to the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition but also noted that several of those threats had existed for several years in their regions. The speedy identification of new and emerging threats was highlighted as a key

element in giving adequate time for legislative amendments and to harness new technologies to counter the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition.

Under the second substantive agenda item the Working Group considered the topic of “**Investigative and prosecutorial approaches in countering illicit firearms trafficking and related forms of crime within and across jurisdictions**”.

The discussions on this agenda item were enhanced by a **panel discussion** facilitated by representatives of the Group of African States, the Western European and Others Group and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. Panellists spoke about the different institutions and tools in place to prevent and address illicit firearms trafficking, such as enhanced border control systems that keep track of firearms imports and exports as well as central firearms registries; intelligence-led and proactive investigations guided by investigative protocols that should focus on three aspects: the weapon, the individuals involved and the money, and may include tracing, financial investigations as well as forensic and ballistic investigations; the use of special investigative techniques; and parallel joint investigations in the firearm source country.

During the deliberations, the Working Group highlighted the importance of tracing mechanisms not only for single cases of firearms trafficking but also to identify routes and patterns and discussed the role that dedicated tracing centres and strengthened national registries can play to this regard. The Working Group also acknowledged the need to investigate the origin of illicitly trafficked firearms, including through by conducting parallel investigations.

Following the deliberations, a list of discussion points was prepared by the Chair and presented to the Working Group. These discussion points relate to a wide range of topics, including legislative measures, preventive, security and regulatory measures, law enforcement and criminal justice, international cooperation and information exchange, as well as on monitoring and measuring illicit arms flows through regular data collection and analysis. Among other things, the Working Group requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist States in identifying technical assistance needs and supporting implementation of several of these discussion points and measures, through technical and legislative assistance and through specific actions listed in the discussion points.

Together with the summary of deliberations, the list of discussion points was subsequently submitted to the Conference of the Parties as the report of the Chair of the Working Group. Before, registered delegates were invited to

comment in writing on the list of discussion points. A compilation of these comments was submitted to the Conference of the Parties in the form of a conference room paper, together with the report of the Chair.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a productive and successful session.
