

THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS

AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a major achievement of the international community. The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and their corresponding 169 targets, represent a comprehensive, transformative agenda to build a safer, more prosperous and more peaceful world for all. The SDGs call upon all stakeholders, Governments and civil society alike, to make a contribution to their implementation. The United Nations system is doing its part to contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda, including the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

Peace, security and development

Heeding the calls by many stakeholders for integrating security-related themes into the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs importantly acknowledge the inextricable link between peace and development. For the first time in the context of development, peace and security is recognized as intrinsically connected. The Goals essentially recognize that only peaceful societies will achieve their desired level of sustainable development.

Reducing illicit arms flows

The 2030 Agenda acknowledges the link between arms regulation and development as well as between illicit trafficking in arms and organized crime. One of the targets under Goal 16—a goal which focuses on promoting peaceful societies, providing access to justice, and building effective institutions—includes a significant reduction in illicit arms flows as one of its targets.

Arms regulation and development are mutually-reinforcing undertakings that contribute to a reduction in armed violence levels. The effective implementation of relevant instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the Firearms Protocol to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Arms Trade Treaty, can greatly contribute to protecting civilians and creating a peaceful environment conducive to sustainable development. Practical, international standards and guidelines, including the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), can also be used in support of SDG implementation efforts.

UNODA's commitment to supporting SDG implementation

UNODA is fully committed to supporting States in the achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goal 16. It is a co-custodian with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for Indicator 16.4.2 (see box below) and will work closely with UNODC in supporting relevant data collection for this indicator. A UN inter-agency mechanism on small arms, ammunition and the arms trade has been providing a forum for exchange of information on the SDGs within the UN system from arms control perspectives.

GOAL 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

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

INDICATOR 16.4.1

Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars)

INDICATOR 16.4.2

[UNODA/UNODC CO-CUSTODIANS]
Proportion of seized small arms and light weapons that are recorded and traced, in accordance with international standards and legal instruments

INDICATOR 16.4.3*

Number of collected small arms and light weapons that have been marked, recorded, and destroyed in accordance with relevant international instruments, to prevent their diversion into illicit flows
(*Proposed)

A third indicator (16.4.3) has been proposed that takes into account destruction of arms, which is an important component of reducing illicit arms flows. This indicator will be considered by the Statistical Commission in 2020.

UNODA will also work to support States in the implementation of other relevant Goals in addition to 16, such as Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 17 on revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Gender mainstreaming contributes to more effective disarmament and arms regulation policies and programmes and building partnerships both inside and outside the United Nations is crucial to SDG success.

With regards to target 16.4, UNODA believes that by supporting adequate arms regulation, the groundwork can be laid for institutions to be sustainably strengthened and for peace and justice to flourish. Arms regulation pursued through policy and actions based on the concept of measurability is particularly important to the implementation of Goal 16 and its target 16.4. In this regard, UNODA stands ready to support States in capacity-building related to data collection. The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) has been functioning as a flexible funding mechanism in order to promote the nexus on progress between conventional arms regulation and development, particularly to contribute to achieving target 16.4.

UNODA will seek means of utilizing its existing tools and mandates to support SDG implementation, such as:



Data collection through the UN Programme of Action

In June 2016, States underlined at the sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2, para. 2) the importance of the full and effective implementation of this programme and the International Tracing Instrument to attaining Goal 16 and target 16.4. States also noted that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has implications for the realization of several other SDGs, such as those relating to poverty reduction, economic growth, health, gender equality and safe cities and communities.

The sixth Biennial Meeting of States encouraged the development of national indicators based on the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument to measure progress made towards target 16.4. States also recognized that the data received from national reports on implementation of these instruments could provide a solid basis for national indicators for progress on target 16.4. In line with this understanding, UNODA will collect SDG-relevant data included in the national reports, which are submitted pursuant to the Programme of Action and International Tracing Instrument.

Other UNODA activities in support of the SDGs

UNODA stands ready to assist in the areas listed below. All interested stakeholders should contact the Conventional Arms Branch for more information (conventional-arms@un.org).

- Establishment of baselines for measuring progress for 16.4.2 and 16.4.3
- Elaboration of guidelines for data collection for 16.4.2 and 16.4.3
- Elaboration of toolkits for implementing relevant Goals
- Data management/analysis for 16.4.2 and 16.4.3
- Weapons collection and stockpile management programmes
- Capacity-building and training in data collection
- Assistance in the development of national and regional indicators