



**Symposia on Small Arms and Light Weapons Tracing and  
Stockpile Management in Conflict and Post-conflict Situations**

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23 October 2017  
New York

Ambassador Brunet,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished experts,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the 2016 Global Peace Index produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace, the world marked 10-year deterioration in peace. Terrorism is at all-time high, the number of battle deaths from conflicts are at 25 year-high. The number of refugees and displaced people are at the highest since the Second World War. Easily available illicit guns threaten electoral processes, undermine police authority, and deeply harm peacekeeping. They facilitate sexual violence and the recruitment of child soldiers. Armed violence makes public health costs soar. And armed insecurity is the number one reason that businesses decide not to invest in a country. The economic impact of violence on the world economy amounted to 13.6 trillion dollars in 2015, representing 13.3% of the world GDP, \$1,876 for every person in the world, or about 11 times more than the size of the global foreign investment.

There is one combined conclusion of this sad state of affairs: that progress on virtually *every* development goal is severely hampered in areas where weapons are poorly regulated.

Governments increasingly recognize that communities everywhere suffer from the effects of weak controls on firearms. Under the Sustainable Development Goal 16, governments agreed to reduce all forms of violence.<sup>1</sup> They have also committed to significantly reduce arms trafficking by 2030,<sup>2</sup> and to strengthen institutions as a means to prevent violence, terrorism and crime.<sup>3</sup>

The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is historic in several ways, and the universal recognition by governments of the link between development and security is one of them. But we have a long way to go to reflect this direction in practical policies.

When developing a national SDG action plan and strategies, we need to encourage inclusive participation by all relevant sectors – including Defence and Interior.

Only by bridging the gap between development policies and relevant national security considerations, we can ensure that military and police arsenals are sustainably secured against diversion, and that weaponry is properly marked.

This is where we should jointly aim to achieve concrete progress in the coming years, and this should be a critical part of what the Secretary-General calls “disarmament that saves lives”. The United Nations Secretariat stands ready to work with Member States to roll out a sound preparatory process for the upcoming third Review Conference of June 2018.

Today marks the beginning of a series of four thematic expert symposia.

The outcomes of our symposia will feed into five regional conferences which we will hold early next year, across the globe, building broad momentum for getting meaningful results out of the upcoming Review Conference.

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<sup>1</sup> SDG 16.1.

<sup>2</sup> SDG Target 16.4.

<sup>3</sup> SDG Target 16.a.

These activities are made possible by the European Union, and we organize them with the valued technical support of the Small Arms Survey. On behalf of the United Nations, I thank these organizations for helping create a momentum that would lead to a successful outcome of RevCon3.

Over the next two days you will focus on developing forward-looking recommendations that should lead to a robust outcome document in June.

I wish you the best in your deliberations, and I am keenly interested in working closely with you in the next several months towards “disarmament actions that can actually save lives”.

Thank you very much.