



**Statement by the High Representative for the Global Week of  
Action Against Gun Violence**

Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu  
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs  
United Nations



New York  
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Every day, hundreds of lives are lost due to gun violence worldwide. Guns are responsible for about half of all violent deaths – nearly a quarter million each year. But the dire consequences of gun violence are not limited to those slain by guns. For every person killed by a gun, many more are injured, maimed, and forced to flee their home and community. Still many more live under constant threats of gun violence.

Economic and social cost of gun violence is appalling. It is estimated that nearly 2 trillion US dollars could be saved – equivalent to 2.6 per cent of the global GDP<sup>1</sup> – if the global homicide rates were significantly reduced. If we were to achieve the ambitious goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – which explicitly links sustainable development and security – we need to tackle this scourge head-on.

The pandemic of violence has many roots. These range from legal, political, to socio-economic, to cultural factors. Lack of adequate legislation and regulation on gun control, insufficient resource and capacity to enforce such legislation, lack of employment and alternative livelihood for youths, ex-gangs and ex-combatants, and cultures that glorify violence and equates guns with masculinity – all exacerbates gun violence.

Such complex, multi-faceted problems require equally multi-faceted, sustainable solutions that address root causes. Governments, while primarily responsible for controlling guns, cannot do it alone.

To end the crisis of gun violence, we must work together. The Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence is a conduit for fostering cooperation on this critical issue among all stakeholders – government, international, regional and sub-regional organizations, research institutes, private companies, and civil society organizations – to come together and pool our experience, strength and expertise.

And we must address the human factor behind the gun violence. It is essential that we recognize that gun violence affects women, men, girls and boys differently and that we need to seek different strategies to address all dimensions of gun violence.

Next month, States will gather at the United Nations in New York for the Third Review Conference on the Programme of Action on small arms – the key global instrument that has guided international efforts in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms over the past two decades. The Conference will provide an important opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment to silence the guns that affect so many innocent lives, and to continue its work towards achieving our common goal of peace, security and development for all.

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1 Global Burden of Armed Violence 2015: Every Body Counts