



Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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Working Group on Firearms

Vienna, 18 and 19 May 2016

Annotated provisional agenda

Provisional agenda

1. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Opening of the meeting;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
2. How record-keeping, marking and tracing, as well as data collection and analysis and the sharing of information, under articles 6, 7, 8 and 12 of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, help reduce illicit trafficking in firearms.
3. Development or strengthening of experts and competent authorities in firearms control networks in order to improve regional and international cooperation, exchange of information and good practices, with the objective of preventing and fighting against illicit firearms trafficking.
4. Enhancing technical assistance and capacity-building to counter illicit trafficking in firearms in the context of crime prevention and criminal justice.
5. Other matters.
6. Adoption of the report.

Annotations

1. Organizational matters

(a) Opening of the meeting

The meeting of the Working Group on Firearms will be opened on 18 May 2016 at 10 a.m.



(b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

In its resolution 5/4, entitled “Illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition”, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group on firearms, in accordance with article 32, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and rule 2, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure for the Conference, to be chaired by a member of the Bureau of the Conference, to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate with regard to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Also in that resolution, the Conference decided that the working group should perform the following functions: (a) facilitate implementation of the Firearms Protocol through the exchange of experience and practices among experts and practitioners; (b) make recommendations to the Conference on how States parties could better implement the provisions of the Firearms Protocol; (c) assist the Conference in providing guidance to its secretariat on the activities of the Secretariat and on the development of technical assistance tools relating to the implementation of the Firearms Protocol; and (d) make recommendations to the Conference on how the working group could better coordinate with the various international bodies combating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, in the area of supporting and promoting implementation of the Firearms Protocol.

In its resolution 7/1, entitled “Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto”, the Conference decided, *inter alia*, that the Working Group on Firearms would be a constant element of the Conference of the Parties, forwarding its reports and recommendations to the Conference, and encouraged the Working Group to consider meeting on an annual basis, as needed.

At its meeting on 12 February 2016, the extended Bureau of the Conference of the Parties agreed on the substantive topics for the meeting of the Working Group to be held in Vienna on 18 and 19 May 2016. Subsequently, on 23 February 2016, the extended Bureau agreed, by silence procedure, on the streamlined topics for that meeting of the Working Group, as included in the present provisional agenda.

The proposed organization of work, contained in the annex to the present document, was prepared in accordance with Conference resolution 7/1, in order to enable the Working Group to perform its mandated functions within the time and according to the conference services available to it. The resources available to the Working Group will permit the holding of four plenary meetings over two days, with interpretation in the six official languages of the United Nations.

2. How record-keeping, marking and tracing, as well as data collection and analysis and the sharing of information, under articles 6, 7, 8 and 12 of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, help reduce illicit trafficking in firearms

Illicit trafficking in firearms is intrinsically linked to various forms of organized and other serious crimes, including terrorism, as firearms may be used to commit crimes and as lucrative trafficking commodities that can help fuel armed conflicts, organized crime and insecurity.

The relationship between trafficking in firearms and organized crime and its impact on development has been acknowledged under Sustainable Development Goal 16, which seeks to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”. Specifically, target 16.4 of the Goals is as follows: “By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime”. The indicator proposed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators to monitor the progress in the achievement of that target focuses on the percentage of seized small arms and light weapons that are recorded and traced, in accordance with international standards and legal instruments,¹ and would include measuring the progress of national authorities in preventing and combating illicit trafficking in firearms, including through international cooperation.

In its resolution 5/4, the Conference recalled, inter alia, that the Firearms Protocol was among the principal global instruments to combat the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. Record-keeping, marking and tracing of firearms, data collection and analysis and the sharing of information are essential and interconnected building blocks of the comprehensive regime to counter illicit trafficking in firearms.

The present agenda item builds on discussions held at previous meetings of the Working Group on Firearms and on the recommendations adopted by the Working Group. Under the agenda item, the Working Group may consider taking into account the recommendations adopted at its meeting held in Vienna from 26 to 28 May 2014, related to supporting the implementation of the Protocol requirements for record-keeping and marking; encouraging the systematic tracing of firearms in criminal investigations; promoting international cooperation in tracing and information exchange; and taking measures to support data collection and analysis on firearms trafficking and related fields (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/4).

In addition, at its meeting held in Vienna on 9 June 2015, the Working Group, inter alia, recommended that the Conference might wish to urge States parties to strengthen their domestic marking and record-keeping regimes, consistent with the requirements of the Firearms Protocol, and to urge Member States to systematically record, trace and analyse periodically the data on seized, confiscated, collected and found firearms suspected of being involved in an illicit activity, with a view to

¹ As contained in the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2).

identifying their origin and detecting possible forms of illicit trafficking (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2015/3).

For its consideration of this item, the Working Group will have before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2). The Working Group may also wish to consult the note by the Secretariat on good practices, gaps and challenges in countering the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and measures to facilitate the implementation of the Firearms Protocol, prepared for the first meeting of the Working Group, held in Vienna on 21 and 22 May 2012 (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2012/3), as well as the background paper prepared by the Secretariat for the meeting of the Working Group held from 26 to 28 May 2014, on challenges and good practices in countering illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and measures to facilitate the implementation of the Firearms Protocol (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/2).

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on good practices, gaps and challenges in countering the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and measures to facilitate the implementation of the Firearms Protocol (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2012/3)

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat on challenges and good practices in countering illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and measures to facilitate the implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/2)

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2)

3. Development or strengthening of experts and competent authorities in firearms control networks in order to improve regional and international cooperation, exchange of information and good practices, with the objective of preventing and fighting against illicit firearms trafficking

Effectively countering illicit trafficking in firearms requires significant cooperation among Member States, including the exchange of relevant information and data, good practices and experiences among competent firearms control authorities and criminal justice practitioners. International and regional cooperation are often hampered by the lack of sufficient information exchange and of equivalent firearms terminology and by the hidden nature of this lucrative crime, which is often difficult to detect and to prosecute. The lack of specialized knowledge and capacity to identify and trace firearms and to conduct complex criminal investigations has been acknowledged as a relevant obstacle to effectively countering illicit firearms trafficking.

At its meeting held from 26 to 28 May 2014, the Working Group recommended that the Conference might wish to encourage States parties to promote the regular exchange of experiences on different methods and tools to combat the illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, including marking in accordance with the Firearms Protocol (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/4).

Moreover, at its meeting held in Vienna on 9 June 2015, the Working Group recommended that the Conference might wish to invite Member States to develop or strengthen their internal capacity for the collection and analysis of data on illicit firearms trafficking, inter alia by promoting enhanced coordination among relevant competent authorities, and to provide training to law enforcement personnel on the identification, recording and reporting of seizures of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition and on producing relevant statistics on seizures at the national level. The Working Group also recommended that the Conference might wish to recommend the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to conduct awareness-raising and training activities, within the existing mandate and subject to the availability of resources, to enhance knowledge and encourage greater participation of Member States in the collection and sharing of data on illicit trafficking in firearms (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2015/3).

For its consideration of this item, the Working Group will have before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2).

In addition, the Working Group may wish to consider documents CTOC/COP/WG.6/2012/3 and CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/2, as listed under the documentation for agenda item 2.

Documentation

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2)

4. Enhancing technical assistance and capacity-building to counter trafficking in firearms in the context of crime prevention and criminal justice

Under agenda item 4, the Working Group may wish to focus on the criminal justice dimension of illicit trafficking in firearms and the related technical assistance needs.

At its meeting held in Vienna on 21 and 22 May 2012, the Working Group on Firearms highlighted some specific challenges related to the investigation and prosecution of trafficking in firearms and related offences, and provided relevant recommendations to assist States to strengthen national capacities in those particular fields (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2012/4).

At its meeting held from 26 to 28 May 2014, the Working Group recommended, inter alia, that the Conference might wish to urge States parties to develop and provide training programmes to build capacities for relevant government authorities, including law enforcement, customs, prosecution and judicial authorities, on firearms trafficking investigations and related matters (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/4).

At its meeting held on 9 June 2015, the Working Group recommended, among other things, that the Conference might wish to request UNODC to continue to assist Member States, upon request, through its Global Firearms Programme, in their efforts to strengthen their firearms control regime, consistent with the Firearms Protocol, in particular in the areas of legislative development; firearms identification, seizure, confiscation and disposal; technical support for marking, record-keeping and tracing; and training and capacity-building in the investigation and prosecution of related crimes, with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2015/3).

The development and delivery of specialized training courses on the investigation and prosecution of illicit trafficking in firearms and its links to organized crime complements the more traditional forms of technical assistance that are commonly provided and that focus on the preventive aspects, in particular marking, record-keeping and stockpile management. The strengthening of the criminal justice response capacities of Member States constitutes, in that regard, an essential link between prevention and control, which is often underestimated.

For its consideration of this item, the Working Group will have before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2).

In addition, the Working Group may wish to consider documents CTOC/COP/WG.6/2012/3 and CTOC/COP/WG.6/2014/2, as listed under the documentation for agenda item 2.

Documentation

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat on measures to prevent and reduce illicit trafficking in firearms and improve regional and international cooperation, and related technical assistance activities (CTOC/COP/WG.6/2016/2)

5. Other matters

As no issues to be raised under item 5 have come to the attention of the Secretariat, no documentation regarding this item is currently foreseen.

6. Adoption of the report

The Working Group will adopt a report on its meeting, the draft of which will be prepared by the Secretariat.

Annex

Proposed organization of work

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
Wednesday, 18 May		
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	1 (a)	Opening of the meeting
	1 (b)	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3-6 p.m.	2	How record-keeping, marking and tracing, as well as data collection and analysis and the sharing of information, under articles 6, 7, 8 and 12 of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, help reduce illicit trafficking in firearms
	2	How record-keeping, marking and tracing, as well as data collection and analysis and the sharing of information, under articles 6, 7, 8 and 12 of the Firearms Protocol, help reduce illicit trafficking in firearms (<i>continued</i>)
	3	Development or strengthening of experts and competent authorities in firearms control networks in order to improve regional and international cooperation, exchange of information and good practices, with the objective of preventing and fighting against illicit firearms trafficking
Thursday, 19 May		
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	4	Enhancing technical assistance and capacity-building to counter illicit trafficking in firearms in the context of crime prevention and criminal justice
3-6 p.m.	5	Other matters
	6	Adoption of the report