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| PROJECT: | Enhancing International and Regional Cooperation To Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Brokering In Small Arms and Light Weapons in Asia and the Pacific |
| DISARMAMENT FOCUS: | Conventional Arms |
| PROJECT MANAGER: | Mr. Taijiro Kimura, Director, Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific Email: taijiro.kimura@unrcpd.org.np |
| PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: | 2009 - 2010 |
| GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS: | Asia and the Pacific region (43 States) |

Background

Illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons (SALW) diverts SALW into the illicit trade, facilitating violations of United Nations Security Council, regional arms embargoes and international humanitarian law. It fuels the violence associated with transnational organized crime, political conflicts and terrorism.

At the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects (PoA), States underlined the importance of international cooperation in tackling the problem of illicit brokering in SALW including cooperation between national law enforcement agencies and judicial systems. States also reaffirmed their commitment under the PoA to develop adequate national legislation and administrative procedures.

The Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) was established by the General Assembly (A/60/81 of 8 December 2005) to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in SALW. In its Report (A/62/163), the GGE made a number of concrete recommendations, including on developing and strengthening national legislation and administrative procedures on brokering; international cooperation on information-sharing; and international assistance and capacity-building.

It is recognized that, in order to prevent illegal arms brokers from transacting illicit SALW across national boundaries, national legislations/regulations in many States in the Asian and the Pacific region need to be strengthened. Information-sharing as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation on the issue of brokering should also be promoted.

This project proposal is aimed at supporting Member States in Asia and the Pacific in their efforts to address the issue of illicit brokering in SALW and to enhance international and regional cooperation. In this connection, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (RCPD), proposes to organize three sub-regional workshops in the region.

Objectives

- To further raise the awareness of the urgency to address the issue of illicit brokering in SALW in Asia and the Pacific;
- To identify areas where States in the region need assistance in their capacity-building on issues such as formulating and strengthening national legislation and administrative procedures, strengthening national licensing control systems, and enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies in combating illicit brokering activities;
- To promote and support the regional and sub-regional regimes/arrangements governing brokering activities.
- To promote information-sharing and cooperation among States and other stakeholders in the region in combating illicit brokering in SALW.
- To promote effective reports by countries in the region on national measures to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in SALW to be included in their national reports on the implementation of the PoA.

Content and design

The UNODA, through RCPD, with the support of the donors community and in partnership with international and regional actors, proposes to organize three workshops of two-day duration each in the following sub- regions: the South Pacific, Central Asia and South Asia, and East and South East Asia. The project will be implemented from September 2008 to September 2009.

These workshops, organized in consultations with Interpol, World Customs Organization (WCO) and its regional offices, will provide relevant stakeholders with the opportunity to review and discuss the latest developments in the field of illicit brokering in SALW, to share experience and lessons learned, and to take stock of progress made and challenges ahead.

The workshops will address the specific needs of States in each sub-region to effectively combat illicit brokering in SALW including;

- enacting and strengthening national legislations and administrative procedures
- strengthening national licensing control systems
- enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies

- promoting information-sharing and judicial cooperation among States
- enhancing international and regional cooperation, as well as assistance for capacity-building to those States with such needs.

In this regard, the presentation on specific aspects of the illicit brokering issue and action needed to address them will be made by international and regional experts including those from Interpol and WCO.

Two government officials (one policy maker and one practitioner such as customs official) from each State in the sub-regions will be invited to participate in the respective workshops. Experts from Interpol, WCO, donors, the United Nations, other relevant international,

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regional and sub-regional organizations will participate. Members of civil society in the region will also be invited to the workshops.

Expected impact

- Heightened awareness in the Asia and the Pacific of the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in SALW;
- Identified gap and challenges facing States in the region in developing and/or improving national legislation or administrative measures in this regard and possible measures to be taken in filling the gap;
- Identified the need for assistance and specific areas of such need for States in the region, such as national legislation/regulation, national licensing control systems, enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies, information-sharing and judicial cooperation among States, as well as international and regional cooperation;
- Enhanced regional and sub-regional cooperation and information sharing on combating illicit brokering in SALW;
- Increased national reporting on measures taken by States in the region to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering of SALW.

Beneficiaries

- Government officials in charge of arms trade and brokering issues from States in Asia and the Pacific, regional and sub-regional organizations, relevant actors of civil society in the region.

Partners

- Central Asia and South Asia: Shanghai Cooperation Organization, South Asia Regional Cooperation Organization
- East and South East Asia: ASEAN, Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
- The South Pacific: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

- IGOs including Interpol and WCO
- Relevant UN entities including UNODC