

# ASJ

**AUSTRALIAN SHOOTERS JOURNAL**

*The political voice of the SSAA*



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# ASJ

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## **Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects**

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## A word from the National President

In July this year, I attended the Third Meeting of the United Nations on controlling the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons as an invited member of the Australian Government delegation. Our Association was also represented by National Secretary Kaye McIntyre and our Federal Parliamentary Lobbyist Tim Bannister. In effect, we had two positions from which to influence those who would in the future form and vote for the illegal trade treaty: one from within the Australian Government's perspective and one as an official Non-Government Organisation (NGO).

The first thing to understand is that the treaty is not necessarily a bad thing. While not nearly at the stage of being agreed upon, it aims to restrict firearms and small arms such as hand-held rocket launchers to national governments; that is, rebel groups in theory could not legally buy rocket launchers from another country under the agreement.

So what does this have to do with us? Like many meetings at the UN, various groups like to add their two cents' worth and try to broaden the scope of the agreement. The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), the main anti-gun group in the world and permanently based in New York, where the UN is also based, unsurprisingly, has made many efforts to influence UN members to accept personal firearm ownership and trade restrictions within the treaty. This attempt to drag personal firearm ownership into the make-up of the treaty is quite contrary to what the original purpose of the agreement was; that is, to stem the *illegal* trade of firearms and light weapons, particularly in civil war-torn countries with ethnic and social unrest in everyday reality. Our job at the UN is to make sure that recreational shooting and hunting do not get unfairly treated and to remind the delegates that organisations such as the SSAA have a voice too.

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IANSA is headed by Australia's own Rebecca Peters, who many may remember was the chair of the National Coalition for Gun Control during the gun buy-back fiasco of 1996. There is no doubt IANSA is influential and many poor and developing countries actually welcome IANSA and its anti-gun agenda as it opens the doors to funding to those countries from wealthier countries and the UN itself. An African country, for instance, may apply for funding to train army armoury staff, build an armoury or train customs officials in firearm transfers. Papua New Guinea, during the UN meeting, expressed hope that it would receive funding



SSAA National President Bob Green was a member of the Australian Government delegation.

to implement another of its country's gun buy-backs, which they estimated would cost \$6 million. Some have described this exercise as a blatant 'international transfer of wealth'.

While many of the projects that they request funding for may sound legitimate, the effectiveness, honest expenditure of money and accountability raises many questions. As we said in our statement to the UN, the wounds of ethnic and political unrest cannot be healed by simply removing the weapons of choice of the day.

The five-day meeting itself was an unusual affair to the uninitiated. With more than 200 countries represented and NGOs such as ourselves in attendance, speaker after speaker would ingratiate themselves with the Chairman, congratulate him on his re-election and thank him for his 'excellent presentation of the meeting's agenda items'. In short, it can be a talkfest.

On the fourth day of the meeting, delegates were presented with a draft of the meeting recommendations. This came as quite a surprise to many, as the recommendations had not yet actually been talked about! The Iranian delegate took strong objection to this unusual form of democracy and stated that this would set a precedent in future disarmament discussions. He said he rejected the rule of 'take it or leave it'.

In the end, on the final day, in the final hour (in fact, the interpreters had already left, as they had worked their shift), a vote was taken and 144 countries voted for the recommendations, with Zimbabwe and Iran abstaining. The USA delegate and many others failed to attend the vote, which, in itself, spoke volumes about what they thought of the treaty and perhaps the UN. The agreement is not the ratification of the treaty, but merely an agreement on the way forward to eventually form a treaty.

In this edition of the *ASJ*, we have printed statements from the Australian Government, the SSAA and those from fellow members of the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities (WFSA). ●





# Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA)



presented by Tim Bannister, SSAA

**M**r Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to address the Third Biennial Meeting of States. My name is Tim Bannister and I represent the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia, an NGO, now in its 60th year, with 120,000 law-abiding recreational shooters and hunting members in Australia.

I say law-abiding, because our membership and recreational shooters across my country have been proven time and time again, to be the most community safety conscious and law respecting in the nation. To them, firearms are a tool that engages them in sport, hunting and they are an aid to protecting our native flora and fauna. Our members treat their firearms with respect.

**Responsible shooters and hunters are an asset of a nation and should be treated with due respect and not be the subject of misinformed or overzealous reforms.**

Mr Chairman, we are all familiar with the damage the trade in illicit small arms and their subsequent misuse can do to States and their regional neighbours. But the wounds of ethnic and political unrest cannot be healed by simply removing the weapons of choice of the day. No doubt there are those here who can testify to the carnage a machete or knife can cause.



SSAA National's Tim Bannister presented a statement on behalf of the Association to the UN.

Any object can become a weapon, when an individual makes the decision to use it for harm. As always, the solutions to violence lie with working through the complex layers of community division.

The SSAA has worked closely with its Pacific neighbours in promoting safe and responsible use of firearms. We applaud the efforts of our Government in providing training and financial aid to our neighbours in their pursuit of reducing internal conflict and violence. We will continue to support the Australian Government in its efforts and endeavours in the South Pacific to stamp out the opportunistic trade in illicit firearms. Our desire is to always see firearms in responsible hands.

Part of our role is to ensure the freedoms of our members are protected now and into the future. It is important to remember that law-abiding and legitimate firearm owners are not contributors to crime, terrorism or violence. Responsible shooters and hunters are an asset of a nation and should be treated with due respect and not be the subject of misinformed or overzealous reforms.

Reforms, laws and treaties must be always crafted with honest and evidence-based foundations, not pious hopes or best of intentions. We trust the representatives here today, take into account all stakeholders in the democratic formation of this or any other treaty and I thank you for your time. ●

THE UN HAS a variety of internal agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, which reports back to its parent body. This is in effect an organisation that is meant to be democratic and made up of member states, taking advice from itself and often applying more weight to its own agencies' reports than from independent sources.

# Australian Government

## *International cooperation, assistance and national capacity-building*

by the Honourable Robert Hill, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

**M**r Chairman.  
As you have rightly emphasised through the identification of this theme for discussion at BMS3, international cooperation, assistance and national-capacity building are key elements of the Programme of Action.

We thank the facilitator, Colombia, for the helpful and insightful work in framing the key issues for discussion. We particularly welcome the identification of specific areas in which assistance in capacity-building is required to fulfil implementation of the Programme of Action.

Australia has considerable experience in providing international assistance on several of these areas to States in our region. I would like to share some of the key developments which have occurred since the 2006 Review Conference.

Australia has funded the construction of armouries in Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu and has been engaged in Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration projects in Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville) and the Philippines (Mindanao). Australia has also supported post-conflict reconstruction, including security sector reform, in Timor Leste, Mindanao, Aceh, Cambodia and the Pacific.

I would particularly like to highlight the recent Samoa Police Project. This five-year project culminated in the opening of the new police headquarters in Apia on 1 February this year.

Australia funded construction of the \$15.6 million headquarters complex, which includes a forensic laboratory and a secure armoury. The Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police jointly provided technical support, including training for weapons management and accountability. In addition to contributing to domestic policing activities, the complex also supports training for Samoan police officers being deployed to the UN Mission in East Timor (UNMIT) and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

As part of the Samoa Police Project, Australia also provided training to improve core policing skills in investigation and prosecution, police ethics and integrity training and performance management guidance, as well as improving public access to police services in Samoa.

The project is a concrete example of how international cooperation and assistance across government agencies can aid in implementation of the Programme of Action.

With the successful completion of this project, Australia is actively exploring further regional opportunities for similar collaborative projects.

Mr Chairman.

As you and the Facilitator have identified, the efficient matching of implementation needs with practical solutions remains a challenge for all States. But, as our work in Samoa illustrates, with creativity and coordination on the part of the donor country and

the enthusiastic cooperation of the host government, extraordinary results can be achieved. In this case, by harnessing resources available on the donor side, one project has secured positive and lasting benefits and satisfied a range of needs.

Mr Chairman.

Australia welcomes the work of UN ODA in establishing the Programme of Action Implementation support System and the database for matching needs and resources established by UNIDIR.

We caution, however, that resources for implementation of the Programme of Action must be accessible, bearing in mind that services such as the internet cannot be taken for granted in developing States. This is certainly the case in our region. We, therefore, need to consider ways of ensuring that the material in these databases is universally available and that there are mechanisms accessible to all Member States to provide input. We note there is potential to use existing regional architecture, such as the Pacific Islands Forum, as hubs which can both distribute information from the UN Secretariat and transmit information provided by Member States.

Reporting is an area in which there is a clearly identified need for more streamlined coordination at the regional level. As noted in the Small Arms Survey's comprehensive analysis of the national reports submitted from 2002 to 2008, national reports should provide the basic data which can be used to match needs with resources. But many developing States, including those in our region, are often forced by limited personnel and financial resources to assign low priority to these tasks.

Mr Chairman.

We need to think creatively about capacity-building, making use where we can of existing regional structures. To do so effectively, we need to be able to hear the voices and ideas from our regional partners.

Australia has funded participation at this meeting by a senior Minister and officials from Papua New Guinea, who will also be able to speak on their experiences under the Programme of Action.

Capacity-building is also an issue on which there is considerable potential for NGOs and civil society to contribute. To enable their voices to be heard, Australia has funded participation this week by NGO representatives from two countries in our region.

Australia is also proud to fund the UNIDIR study, which will now move to focus on Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands to develop a mechanism to help States identify their priorities for small arms assistance and communicate these priorities to potential donors.

We are confident that, under your able Chairmanship, these steps will contribute to fruitful discussions this week on potential collaboration and practical outcomes.

Thank you. ●



# Australia's support for regional efforts to implement the UN Programme of Action in the Pacific region

## Samoa Policing Project

The Australian Government is working in close partnership with the Samoa Police Service to strengthen its policing capacities, including management of small arms, under the Samoa Policing Project. The Australian Government has brought to bear expertise available through various departments - the Australian agency for International Development (AusAID), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Defence Force - to work with the Samoa Police Service in capacity building activities and construction of a new police headquarters and an armoury under the project.

This activity is an example of effective whole-of-government collaboration and is making a significant contribution to Samoa's law and justice sector. It complements broader collaboration between Australia and Samoa in the law and justice sector aimed at addressing security, violence and law and justice issues in the long term. Australia is also partnering with Samoan police serving in peacekeeping operations in East Timor, Sudan and Solomon Islands.

The Samoa Policing Project is an example of Australia's support for regional efforts to implement the UN Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in all its Aspects in the Pacific region.

### Key points

Australia has been an active participant in the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects on Small Arms and Light Weapons since its conception in 2001. The Australian Government aims to provide practical assistance to developing countries to access support and assistance to implement the PoA.

Australia promotes greater emphasis on the need to provide practical assistance to States at regional and country levels to implement the PoA. Dialogue and international cooperation need to be devolved from a global level and direct technical and practical assistance provided at regional and country levels to address States' specific needs. The recent series of regional meetings on Armed Violence and Development is a good example of this devolved approach. Australia's work in Samoa is a practical example of how donors can assist developing States at country-level.

The Samoa Policing Project also demonstrates the effectiveness of drawing on capacities available across donor governments in providing international assistance for PoA implementation. The

whole of government approach adopted by Australia under the Samoa Policing Project draws on financial and technical resources available in the defence, police, justice and development sectors, thereby providing integrated and comprehensive assistance to address the complex needs associated with PoA implementation.

### Key achievements

Australia's five-year \$15.6 million Samoa Police Project aims to strengthen the capacity of the Samoa Police Service to support stability, economic growth and access to policing services. The project improves core police skills by providing training in areas such as investigation and prosecution.

The Samoa Police Headquarters constructed under the project are designed to reflect the realities of Samoa's climate and modern policing practices. The building was designed in consultation with its users - the police and the community - to take into account local climatic conditions, operational needs of the police and the need to foster a strong link between the police and the community. Police officers have access to state-of-the-art equipment and resources and the building has been laid out to reflect the workflows and best practices of a modern police force. The building incorporates new public areas and space for community groups.

The complex also has a forensic laboratory and will allow the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Departments to be co-located. This is aimed at strengthening collaboration between these two critical work areas.

A new watchhouse will house prisoners who previously have often been kept six to a cell in crowded conditions. Exterior screens will regulate temperature and provide high-level cyclone protection.

The Headquarters complex includes a new armoury to house police weapons securely. The \$0.3m armoury was funded by the Australian Government's Defence Cooperation Program and was incorporated within the overall construction project. The armoury, along with training in the management and accounting of weapons and ammunition, will contribute to improved security in Samoa. The armoury supports weapons training for police officers participating in overseas deployments. The construction of a secure armoury and training to effectively staff the facility is a key outcome for PoA implementation. This work recognises the United Nations' focus on security of small arms in the Pacific and the need for training for the Samoan Police who are increasingly deployed in regional and global peacekeeping missions in places like East Timor and Solomon Islands.



# Third Biennial Meeting of States On Small Arms and Light Weapons

Australia is also providing training to improve core policing skills in investigation, prosecution, police ethics and integrity training and performance management. Support to improve public access to police services in Samoa is also a priority. This strengthened partnership and exchange of experience and training between Australia and Samoa has increased the capacity for Samoan Police to share its resources and information on the implementation of the PoA with other regional partners in the Pacific.

The Samoa Police Headquarters, Apia Police Station and the armoury were built by a local Samoan contractor in an effort to build local capacities for this type of work in the Pacific. This is the first time the Australian Government has joined with a local contractor for such a large scale construction project in Samoa.

The new Headquarters were opened in February 2008 by the Samoan Prime Minister, the Honorable Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoialong, with visiting Australian Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, Bob McMullan, and Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, Duncan Kerr.

## Rationale for support

Australia aims to focus on supporting practical implementation of the PoA in our region. In terms of international cooperation and assistance, Australia's efforts are focused on the provision of practical support for PoA implementation at the Asia Pacific regional level and in specific country contexts. This approach emphasises the need to draw on the full range of available financial and technical resources available across donor governments (including police, defence, law and justice and development organisations) to support effective PoA implementation in partner countries.

Australia's support for the Samoa Policing Project reflects the belief that a strong and effective justice sector supports a stable Samoa and that this stability is a key to investor confidence

and economic growth. Policing is a central part of the criminal justice system and the Samoa Police Service plays a vital role domestically and regionally to ensure Samoa's own security and to promote the security of the Pacific region. To protect the community and uphold law and order effectively, the police must work closely with other government ministries, non-government organisations and the local community. This broad view of effective policing is reflected in the activities and objectives of the Samoa Policing Project.

Australia is committed to supporting Samoa as it takes an integrated approach to the law and justice sector. In addition to policing, our support has extended to the judiciary, the Attorney-General's office and non-government organisations including the Samoan Law Society and victim support groups. Australia will continue to support capacity building and development of key structures in the justice system, in partnership with other donors, and in support of Samoa's own goals in the law and justice sector. The Samoa Police Project has helped prepare the police for engagement in this type of sector-wide approach.

Importantly, Australia's support will continue to recognise the importance of local traditional relationships and power structures. We recognise that the effectiveness of the justice system in Samoa depends on mutually supportive relationships between the formal and traditional systems of justice, community participation and local leadership.

Australia's support for the Samoan Policing Project recognises the instrumental role of the Samoa Police Service, not only in Samoa, but also with its partners across the region. Through our wider support of the justice sector, we will continue to ensure the vision of the Samoa Police Service to become, in the words of the new corporate plan, "a service to be proud of" and is one that all Samoans can share. ●

QUITE OFTEN, ANTI-GUN groups 'forget' to make the distinction between legally and illegally obtained firearms.

In this heavily pictorial book by the Control Arms Foundation of India, it is stated that there are more than 40 million firearms in India. Firstly, India has an approximate population of 1.1 billion people, so if the quoted 40-million firearm figure were true, it would actually equate to one in every 25 people having a firearm, which is actually a lot less by percentage than that in Australia.

Anti-gun groups also often make assumptions with few verifiable facts available to back up their statements. Are the 40 million firearms in India held by the military, police or civilians? What government records confirm that the 40 million is actually the correct figure? Are these firearms legally held by law-abiding Indians or are they illegal firearms? If they are illegal firearms, how have they been counted and tracked this?

A cynic may suggest that it is in the anti-gun groups' interest to exaggerate a 'firearm problem' to validate their own existence and to access national and international funding.



SOME GROUPS USE comic-style books to explain and educate their version of what is happening in some areas of the world to people who may have literacy problems. Quite often they are sponsored by governments and groups such as IANSA and the UN. This particular book was handed out by IANSA members to delegates at the UN meeting.





# World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities (WFSA)

presented by C Edward Rowe, President, WFSA

**G**ood Morning Mr President. I am Ted Rowe, the President of the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities and the Chair of the Manufacturers Advisory Group. The World Forum is an association of 35 associations representing the interests of 100 million sports shooters throughout the world. The World Forum has been directly involved from the very beginning in the Programme of Action to prevent the illicit trade in small arms. We have conducted many workshops covering marking and tracing, brokering, definitions and other matters concerning small arms. We have directly participated in and contributed to the works of the various Groups of Government Experts on Marking and Tracing; on Brokering; on Ammunition; and on the Arms trade treaty. The World Forum together with the United Nations believe in the prevention of illicit trade in small arms and together equally believe in the individual right to the legitimate ownership and possession of firearms in accordance with the laws of each Member State.

The World Forum looks forward to the Olympic Games hosted by China beginning August 8th in Beijing. We commend China for the excellent shooting facilities it has prepared for the

Games. There are 94 nations in the world that will be sending shooting teams to Beijing. It is important to note that the shooting sports are one of the highest participant events in the Olympic Games. 390 athletes from all over the world will take part in 15 shooting events. The athletes in these events will be using shotguns, rifles and handguns. The legitimate and legal use of firearms by individual citizens must be protected and not ignored in our quest to prevent the illicit and illegal use of small arms and light weapons.

The World Forum looks forward to working with you, Mr President, in furthering our common goals in the implementation of the Programme of Action on a regional basis throughout the world in accordance with each states laws and constitution.

Thank you. ●

## Guiding Principles of the WFSA

The Forum is global in character.

The Forum is a constructive, active organization that, in the spirit of good will and cooperation, offers decision makers worldwide information, solutions and alternatives to problems and questions of common interest.

The Forum is open and encourages the exchange of information and views among all interested parties.

The Forum is dependent on and draws upon the substance, expertise and wisdom of its member associations and organizations. Collectively, they represent a substantial portion of the sport shooting community.

The Forum's role is limited in scope and designed to complement the ongoing activities of its member associations and organizations.

The Forum devotes itself to addressing the problems and questions of common interest.

The Forum expresses itself in the consensus view of its members.

The Forum endeavors to involve as many groups as possible which are active in hunting and sport shooting activities.

The Forum seeks to be a respected, credible international organization conveying the views of all sectors of the sport shooting community.





# National Firearms Association (NFA) of Canada

presented by Gary Mauser

**M**r President, distinguished delegates. I am Gary Mauser, Professor Emeritus, of Simon Fraser University in Canada. I represent the National Firearms Association. For over 20 years, my academic research at SFU has involved studying firearms and crime. A study I did with constitutional lawyer and criminologist Don B Kates has been recently published in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*. I will briefly report on our findings.

We analysed publicly available data from United Nations studies and the Small Arms Survey to examine the link between civilian firearm ownership and rates of homicide and suicide. Our findings contradict claims that firearms availability is problematic.

Mr President, it is a myth that more civilian guns mean more murders. My analysis of a UN survey of 33 nations found no meaningful relationship between homicide rates and gun ownership. It is utterly false that most murderers are ordinary people who went wrong because they had guns. The overwhelming majority of murderers have life histories of violence, restraining orders, substance abuse problems or psychopathology. It is generally illegal for such people to have guns, but unlike good people, they ignore gun laws - just as they ignore laws against violence.

In Europe, there are very few instances of nations with high gun ownership having higher murder rates than neighbouring nations with lower gun ownership. If anything, the reverse tends to be true. For example, though Norway has one of the highest rates of firearm ownership per capita in Western Europe, it nevertheless has the lowest murder rate. And Luxembourg, despite its total handgun ban, has a higher murder rate than Norway or Austria.

Mr President, bans are rarely effective. In nations where guns are less available, criminals get them anyway. After decades of ever-stricter gun controls, Great Britain banned nearly all handguns in 1997 and forced permit holders to turn them in. Yet from 1997 to 2005, both total homicides and gun homicides had increased by more than 25 per cent. Despite the enforced collection and destruction of almost all legally owned handguns, the Metropolitan Police are reported as saying, "Gun crime is out of control."

Even if gun bans did work, many alternative weapons are available to would-be murderers. Eight decades of police-state enforcement of handgun prohibition have kept Russian gun ownership low, resulting in few gun murders. Yet Russia's murder rates have long been four times higher than those in the US and 20 times higher than rates in countries such as Norway.

The 'more guns mean more murders' mythology also flies in the face of history. Europe had low murder rates before World

War I despite high gun ownership and virtually no controls. Severe European gun laws appeared (for political reasons) in the tumultuous post-World War I era. Despite ever-stricter gun laws, both political and apolitical violence has increased apace in Europe.

A review of the European experience actually demonstrates more guns correlating with less murder. Nine European nations (including Germany, Austria, Denmark and Norway) have high rates of civilian firearm ownership. Nine others (including Luxembourg, Russian and Hungary) have virtually disarmed their civilians. But the aggregate murder rates of these nine low-gun-ownership nations are three times higher than those of the nine high-gun-ownership nations.

**They [gun bans] disarm the law-abiding, yet are ignored by the violent and the criminal. Nations with severe violence problems tend to have severe gun laws.**

The reason that nations (or regions) with more guns tend towards lower violence is political rather than criminological. Gun ownership generally has no effect on how much violent crime a society has. Politicians often think that banning guns will be a quick fix. But gun bans don't work; if anything, they make matters worse. They disarm the law-abiding, yet are ignored by the violent and the criminal. Nations with severe violence problems tend to have severe gun laws. For example, countries as diverse as Jamaica and the Republic of Ireland banned legal civilian possession of virtually all firearms in the 1970s, but homicide and gun homicide rates have more than tripled. By the same token, the murder rates in handgun-banning US cities including New York, Chicago and Washington DC are far higher than in states like Pennsylvania and Connecticut, where handguns are legal and widely owned.

In sum, Mr President, research shows that banning civilian guns increases people's vulnerability, fails to reduce violence and merely empowers criminals and terrorists at the expense of the innocent. These research studies are available on my website, [garymauser.net](http://garymauser.net)

Thank you. ●



# Canadian Institute for Legislative Action

## *Civil Society and Government: A Lesson in Cooperative Interaction*

presented by Tony Bernardo

**M**r President, I am Tony Bernardo, Executive Director of the Canadian Institute for Legislative Action and the Canadian Shooting Sports Association, Canada's principal organization representing the interests of lawful firearms owners and sport shooters. I want to thank you and the Conference for making it possible for NGOs to speak today.

I wish to discuss the interaction between governments and civil society regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action. Additionally, these comments will apply equally to any future initiatives this body may choose to undertake.

Mr President, few modern countries have a greater wealth of experience in firearms control than Canada. Canada has had civilian firearms controls for over 135 years. Throughout that time, a recurring lesson that has emerged speaks to the interaction between those that pass laws and ratify treaties and those who must obey them. Canada presents opportunities to learn about laws designed in a vacuum by individuals with little practical knowledge or experience. It is my desire to ensure that due attention is paid to what has occurred so the important work of this assembled body may bear fruit.

In an honest effort to fulfil Canada's obligations to the Programme of Action, the government of Canada passed into law requirements for the marking of firearms upon import. During the construction of this legislation, no meaningful consultation was undertaken with the interested stakeholders.

What emerged from this 'design in the dark' philosophy were laws that were totally impossible to comply with. Canada's civilian firearms industry is primarily importers, there is very little manufacturing of firearms and officials charged with the responsibility of drafting the new law were so misinformed about the physical properties of firearm marking that they believed that new markings could be applied to finished civilian firearms easily and cheaply.

Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. Canada's industry body engaged in large, comprehensive studies intended to develop a way to follow the directives written into the new law, but at the end of the day, no method could be found that did not entail monstrous costs to legitimate industry. The end result was that the industry was incapable of compliance. Most legitimate civilian firearms businesses would be forced to simply close their doors, eliminating the first line of defence against the illegal market.

Wisely, the government of Canada, not wishing to shut down legitimate, licensed businesses, delayed the implementation of the new provisions for a period of two years so the issue could be further studied and a practical solution to fulfilling Canada's obligations could be found. This was in addition to the previous one year extension that had already taken place for the same reason.

While I'm pleased to report that such studies are taking place, the fact remains that by poor design of the new law, implementation of this portion of the Programme of Action has been delayed by three years. To all, this is unacceptable.

While there are some that may wish for a total shutdown of civilian firearms ownership, I believe that most countries recognize that legitimate firearms owners and collectors of firearms do not contribute to crime, terrorism or war. Most countries recognize this simple fact through their own domestic laws. Canada already has very stringent legislation regulation firearms and few, if any, Canadian firearms contribute to the conflagrations this body is attempting to stop.

Mr President, the lesson to be learned here is an important one. Regulatory schemes, whether they are national or international, are doomed to failure if they cannot be complied with. Mr President, perhaps others will disagree with this assessment, but we believe the Canadian experience cannot be ignored. The UN must focus on illegal international trafficking and not be seduced into impractical new schemes.

**Most countries recognize this simple fact through their own domestic laws. Canada already has very stringent legislation regulation firearms and few, if any, Canadian firearms contribute to the conflagrations this body is attempting to stop.**

Mr President, I am pleased to report that the government of Canada has seen the wisdom of the preceding words and seems to have chosen the path of practical consultation. We look forward to a resolution of this highly contentious initiative and the fulfilment of Canada's commitment to a peaceful world. Three years have been wasted along that path and we implore the nations assembled here today not to repeat those mistakes. Opportunities exist for close interaction between civil society and government and the practical utilization of those opportunities benefits everyone.

On behalf of Canada's recreational firearms community, we ask the United Nations to consider these factors when striving for focus on these critical issues. With that comment, Mr President, thank you for your indulgence and patience. ●

# The FAIR Trade Group

presented by Mark Barnes, Esq.

**M**r Chairman, I am Mark Barnes, counsel for the Firearms Importers Roundtable of the FAIR Trade Group. Our members constitute the core of those companies, mostly in the US, which import and sell civilian firearms and military surplus firearms.

Before proceeding, I would like to thank both you Mr Chairman and the Meeting for allowing these NGO presentations today. The issue of small arms and light weapons is as complex as it is compelling. Much of that complexity comes from the fact that the stakeholders, involved with this issue, are diverse in their perspectives and the legitimate interests they represent.

Speaking for the FAIR Trade Group, I would like to bring to your attention a perspective on the disposal of surplus firearms which you may not be aware of. I am speaking of the legitimate and legal sale of surplus arms to civilians which you, Mr Chairman, requested that we speak about today.

Mr Chairman, the legal sale of military surplus firearms into the civilian market for collectors, while it is a less common practice than 40 years ago, nevertheless remains an old and respected practice. Some of these arms are collected for their historic value, while others are used for recreational target shooting or modified to provide economical hunting weapons. Such a trade is a well recognized and broadly practiced in the international community.

This is not the time or place for a technical discussion of what type of surplus firearms ends up in what role. Nevertheless, let me say that in the United States the imports of these firearms are heavily regulated. Under United States law, military surplus firearms are prohibited from import. There is a limited exception, however, for curio and relic firearms in their original military configuration.

There are three methods by which a person wishing to import a military surplus firearm may seek a permit to do so. The first is

that any firearm that is 50 years old is automatically under ATF regulations considered a curio and relic. The second is that a person may petition STF for a firearm to be considered a curio and relic if it has significant historical value and remains in its original military configuration. The third is to have a government museum certify to ATF that the firearm is indeed a curio and relic.

These requirements are heightened for the importation of curio and relic handguns. In order to import a handgun, a factoring criteria system is used. Under the system, specifications such as barrel length, weight, material and other factors are evaluated and given a point value. If the firearm achieves a sufficient score in points factors, it may be imported. The system can be difficult for curio and relic firearms to pass because they must retain their original military configuration. This creates a stringent control on the importation of military surplus handguns.

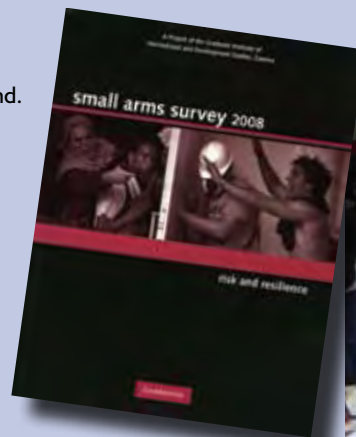
Additionally, surplus military firearms may be imported to the United States for official end users. The ATF requires that an official purchase order from the government agency wishing to import the items accompany the import license in order to affect the import. ATF has ruled that the statute allowing the importation of these items does not allow for these firearms to be introduced into ordinary commercial channels within the United States.

The legal and legitimate trade in surplus firearms exists and to be very frank, I have yet to hear compelling reason why it should be extinguished. Given that, Mr Chairman, I would ask that any discussion of surplus military firearm disposal keep such commerce in mind and, furthermore, that a recommendation on the matter be sufficiently tailored to avoid an adverse impact on a legal and legitimate trade.

Thank you Mr Chairman for the opportunity and privilege to make these remarks today. ●

THE SMALL ARMS Survey is a supposedly independent academic and research project based in Geneva, Switzerland. Established in 1999, the organisation receives funding from a variety of countries, including Australia, and other benefactors. We say 'supposedly independent' because in the past, its researchers and writers have tended to ignore the firearms industry and the shooting fraternity (ie, they just don't talk to us) and gather their information from those groups against personal firearm ownership. This would be similar to writing about the car manufacturing industry, but not talking with Holden or Ford or those that drive them. The SSAA have appealed to the Small Arms Survey group to broaden its information scope.

The book, titled *Small Arms Survey*, is produced on an annual basis and is distributed to researchers, academics and governments.







# Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI) Inc

## *Potential Issues Related to Implementation of UN Firearms Marking and Tracing Protocols*

presented by Richard Patterson, Managing Director, SAAMI

**T**he Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI) appreciates the opportunity to address the implementation of UN protocols for marking and tracing of firearms. Since its founding in 1926 at the request of the US Government, SAAMI has created the technical standards for safety and reliability in the design, manufacture, transportation, storage and use of firearms, ammunition and components.

We support legitimate law enforcement efforts to trace firearms used in crimes in a timely manner. SAAMI - and the major firearms manufacturers in the United States - are proud of the Access 2000 computer system we developed to allow the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) virtually instant, 24 hour a day/7 day a week tracing of a manufacturer's firearm sales. The key information required on a firearm to make this - or any - trace accurate and efficient is simple: you need the name of the manufacturer, a country of manufacture and the serial number. This information needs to be on a single part - the frame (also known as the receiver). Any other information is superfluous, inefficient and may inhibit or even prohibit effective tracing of

**The information required for rapid and effective law enforcement is already available on every firearm - and being used effectively every day to prosecute criminals.**



a firearm. For instance, putting a serial number on more than one part of the firearm is particularly problematic. The firearms industry was the pioneer in mass production techniques, which means parts are interchangeable (one of the 1926 charters of SAAMI was to ensure interchangeability). The frame, or receiver, is the part that every other part attaches to. This is the part that should be marked. Barrels, trigger groups and grips can be and are easily switched. Let's say you require marking of the frame, the barrel and the trigger group. Then these are switched - which is a common practice to get a replacement for a worn barrel or a more precise target trigger on the firearm. You now have a firearm with three different serial numbers that are traceable to three different purchasers. Which serial number is the right one? Similarly, if a firearm is marked with the country and year of import what happens when - that same year - a manufacturer or distributor transfers a firearm from a country with a weaker economy to one with a stronger economy where it will sell faster? The firearm now has two country codes with the same year of import. Which is the right one?

These are two examples of unintended consequences of well-intentioned but misinformed regulations. We applaud the efforts of the European Union to use a single serial number as the best way to implement the intent of the UN instrument on marking and tracing's import marking requirement. We feel this will best maintain the integrity of the marking and tracing system and allow the most efficient and effective use of law enforcement time and resources.

It's not just what is marked and with what information. It's how these regulations are implemented which will make or break any system. We have seen depth and width requirements proposed that are technologically unfeasible. Marking heat-treated metal is not easy to accomplish. It is not a simple case of striking a die with a hammer to transfer the mark to the metal. At the risk of boring you with technical details, I will try to explain the challenges. Based on our technical knowledge and practical experience, we see several potential roadblocks to effective marking - and therefore tracing - of firearms. These potential technical problems fall into four broad categories: technical challenges, aesthetic challenges, logistical challenges and actual benefits.

### **Technical challenges**

When a sporting firearm is manufactured, its destination is unknown. This means that markings or a specific destination must be put on the part that must be marked after heat-treatment

## Third Biennial Meeting of States On Small Arms and Light Weapons

and final finishing of the component part. This creates a potential safety issue. There are only a limited number of options that allow the creation of the required mark: roll stamping, die stamping, engraving, laser engraving, multiple pin impingement and electro-chemical etching. Of these, neither electro-chemical etching nor multiple pin impingement would make a mark deep enough to meet the requirements of the regulation.

Engraving is a physical process of removing metal to leave a mark. The traditional hand engraving is slow, imprecise, labor intensive and expensive. Laser engraving uses extreme heat to burn away metal, leaving a mark. Theoretically, this is a possible technique to comply with the regulation, but making a mark of sufficient depth would require a YAG (Yttrium, Aluminium Garnet) 2nd generation diode laser, with an initial cost of \$50,000. In addition to this option being cost-prohibitive, the heat generated would both destroy the finish surrounding the actual mark and would weaken the heat treating of the receiver and could thereby create a potential safety hazard.

There are two forms of stamping, roll stamping and die stamping. Roll stamping is when a pre-made die with a curved face is rolled, under pressure, across the surface of the part to be marked. The raised features along the face of the roll die are then transferred as an imprint. Die stamping is a similar process, but the die has a flat surface, rather than curved. The flat die is placed in position and pressure is applied to transfer the raised features of the die to make an imprint in the part to be marked. The die stamp is less expensive and easier to use, but requires more pressure to make the mark. The roll die uses slightly less force to make a similar imprint, since the rolling action concentrates pressure on a smaller area.

Stamping is the most feasible way to make the required marks. However, stamping - using either a roll or a die - has several significant shortcomings. The pressure required to make a mark of sufficient depth to comply with the regulation (which is greatly increased after the part is heat treated - as would be the case with firearms being imported into a country) could cause warping and cracking of the receiver. It would also cause noticeable cosmetic damage to the finish. A custom fixture would need to be created for each model that would help to support the receiver and minimize potential damage from warping or cracking. Even with the fixture, there would be a failure rate and some firearms would be destroyed by the process.

### Aesthetic challenges

A number of enthusiasts are collectors of firearms that are historically accurate reproductions. For example, there are many customers who participate in Cowboy Action shooting with replica antiques, lever-action rifles and double-barrel shotguns or who collect US Civil War, World War I or World War II reproduction firearms. These firearms are purchased for their precision and accurate detail and their role in history. They are appreciated for their artistry and sheer physical beauty. While there are often exemptions for rare firearms or those of 'unusually high' value, there are a number of historical replicas that are made in production quantities that are neither considered rare nor sold at an unusually high price. Additional incongruous marking would create an anachronism and adversely affect the historical accuracy of these firearms.



One of the most known statues at the UN Complex. The tone of the UN can at times be quite anti private firearm ownership.

### Logistical challenges

The logistics of implementing a mark-on-import regulation of the country code and year requires many steps: segmentation of the firearms, acquisition of the equipment and set-up, devotion of floor space to the process, out of line sequence in retrieval and shipping, unpacking the firearm, identification of the correct serial number to the label on the box, removal of the stock from the firearm, placing the firearm in a fixture - alignment issues, removal of rust inhibitor applied to the local area of mark application, applying the mark, cosmetic repair, application of rust inhibitor to effected area, reinstalling the stock, repacking of the firearm in plastic and paper rust inhibiting materials, placing the firearm back in the box, maintaining the same bolt with each individual rifle if applicable and confirmation that all packing literature is present, creation - and application - of a new label to the box while satisfying the necessity of relationship of box to firearm, stacking the firearms boxes onto pallets and scanning into the data base the appropriate designation of marking signifying completion of the process as set forth on the new label, and finally, re-wrapping of filled pallets.

Of perhaps greater concern to the manufacturer and/or importer is the notion that once a firearm is marked with the country and year of import, how does one account for re-importing the firearm to another country? There are many occasions when manufacturers and/or importer may find it desirable to realign inventory to match demand in a world market. Multiple markings for each country simply add to the confusion by law enforcement over which is the 'correct' serial number.

### Actual benefits

Any identification markings beyond the manufacturer, country of manufacture and serial number on the frame alone add nothing to governments' ability to trace a firearm. This information is already required on every firearm and, if the government of the





country of import has an appropriate system in place, is already available through current import records. If, for some reason, these records cannot be found, a process is in place for the government to contact the BATFE for trace information on firearms manufactured in the United States (Note: US law prohibits manufacturers from providing trace information to any organization except BATFE).

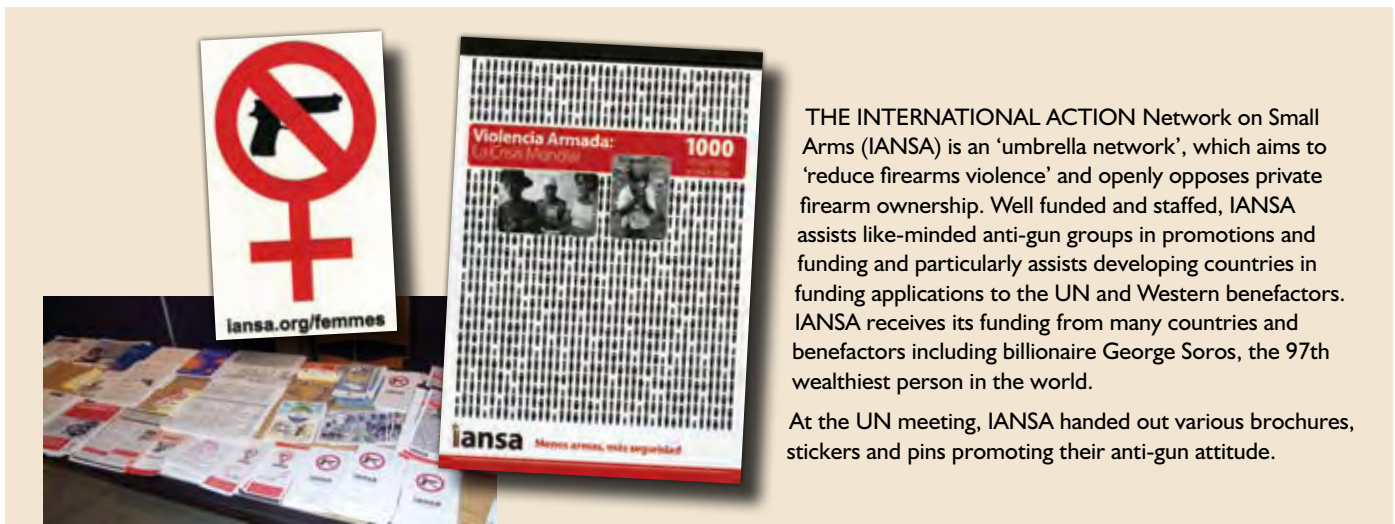
### Conclusion

Marking and tracing of firearms is an important law enforcement tool. We support efficient tracing via the existing unique serial number on every firearm's frame (receiver), per United States law since 1968. Regulations that require additional markings, or markings on multiple parts is irrelevant as a law enforcement tool - and may even create additional confusion that would hamper law enforcement efforts. The information required for rapid and

effective law enforcement is already available on every firearm - and being used effectively every day to prosecute criminals. Besides the ineffectiveness as a law enforcement tool, well-intentioned but misinformed additional marking regulations can add expense in time, handling and additional procedures. It also creates an anachronism for historical replicas. There is a hidden cost in terms of product losses from damage. The re-finishing will not be as perfect as the factory-applied finishes, meaning customers receive a product of lesser quality than customers in the rest of the world market.

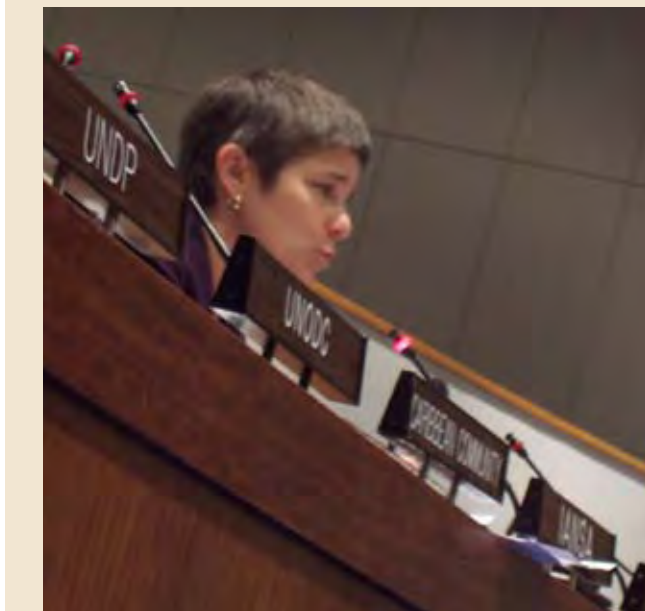
Any inappropriate additional marking requirement creates many negative unintended consequences and should therefore be avoided.

We gladly offer our information and expertise to any and every government to help with the effective and efficient tracing of firearms as a legitimate law enforcement tool. ●



THE INTERNATIONAL ACTION Network on Small Arms (IANSA) is an 'umbrella network', which aims to 'reduce firearms violence' and openly opposes private firearm ownership. Well funded and staffed, IANSA assists like-minded anti-gun groups in promotions and funding and particularly assists developing countries in funding applications to the UN and Western benefactors. IANSA receives its funding from many countries and benefactors including billionaire George Soros, the 97th wealthiest person in the world.

At the UN meeting, IANSA handed out various brochures, stickers and pins promoting their anti-gun attitude.



TALKING HEAD? REBECCA Peters is the director of IANSA. An Australian, she is based in New York on a permanent basis and cut her teeth on the topic of gun control during the 1996 Port Arthur mass murders. Former chair of the elusive National Coalition for Gun Control, Ms Peters delivered a speech to the UN meeting along with five or so other IANSA delegates.

NOTICE THE OXFAM logo here? Oxfam does a lot of positive charitable work throughout the world. However, the organisation, like others, can find itself inadvertently or otherwise caught up in political drives. World Vision Australia CEO Reverend Tim Costello, for instance, is also a former chairman of the National Coalition for Gun Control.





# The British Shooting Sports Council

presented by David Penn

**T**hank you Mr President. It is an honour for my organization to address this august body for the second time.

I am the Secretary of the British Shooting Sports Council (BSSC). The BSSC is an umbrella body, bringing together the major associations for target shooting and quarry shooting to achieve consensus positions on issues affecting the shooting sports. It is a member of the World Forum. The aim and objective of the BSSC are to promote and safeguard the lawful use of firearms and air weapons for sporting and recreational purposes in the United Kingdom amongst all sections of society.

In my 2006 address, I stressed that civilian shooting sports are safe and that their legitimacy was increasingly recognized politically, both within the UK and at an European Union level.

Today, I wish to illustrate how long-established the shooting sports have become and how well-embedded they are in the culture of the United Kingdom. This picture is mirrored widely across Europe, among many Commonwealth nations and in North America. While it is true that there were legislative attempts in England to restrict the use of firearms for sporting purposes to the upper reaches of society during the 16th and 17th centuries, nevertheless the rise of an educated and prosperous middle class soon saw hunting with firearms spread through society and a growing interest in target shooting.

Britain's National Rifle Association was founded in November 1859 with much support from the Royal Family and individuals of political influence. The highest honour in British target shooting continues to be to win the Queen's Prize, competed for annually. In 1900, the Prime Minister Lord Salisbury stated that his intention was that "a rifle should be kept in every cottage in the land". Today, there are 1000 target shooting clubs in the United Kingdom. 150,000 people shoot clay targets on a regular basis, while 250,000 people regularly enjoy target shooting with rifles, muzzleloading pistols and air weapons. The British are rather good at it. 23 of the UK's 116 medals in the 2006 Commonwealth Games were for shooting, the second highest medal-winning discipline for UK athletes, exceeded only by swimming with 24.

During the 19th century, the hunting of game also was becoming increasingly accessible to those with disposable incomes and deer stalking and shooting in Scotland were popularised by Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, the Prince Consort. By 1870, shooting was so popular that it became worth taxing, via a Gun Licence available from the Post Office. Game shooting, along with hunting on horseback with hounds, has shaped much of Britain's countryside and contributed to its beauty and wildlife diversity. Hunting with firearms is a £1.6 billion industry in the United Kingdom, supporting 70,000 jobs. 480,000 people shoot game, wildfowl, pigeon and rabbits, accounting for just under 19 million head of game in 2004.

Britain's largest shooting organisation, the British Association for Shooting & Conservation (BASC), had its beginnings one hundred years ago in 1908, with the founding of the Wildfowlers Association of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1981, this became

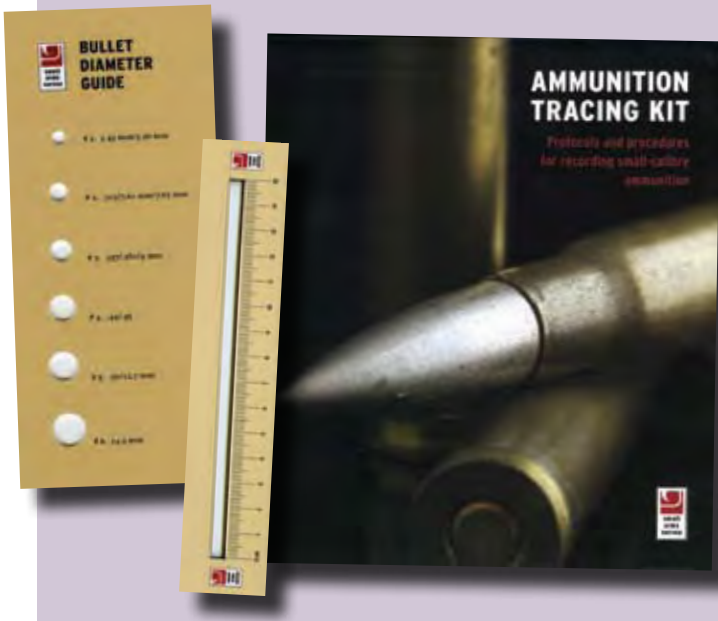
BASC. Still growing, in 2008, it has 127,000 members and 100 staff. Although its interests are much wider than field sports alone, the Countryside Alliance, founded in 1997 and with 407,000 members, has proved not only one of the strongest supporters of shooting, but also one of its most effective advocates, for instance through its 'Game to Eat' campaign, which has boosted the appreciation of the healthy virtues of game meat among the population at large.

There is little media interest in the legitimate, non-military use of firearms. Target shooting is not a spectator sport with a huge 'fan' base susceptible to economic exploitation. Shooting is, however, a major participation sport in many parts of the world and the reason it attracts so little media interest is because it is conducted so responsibly. The Swiss Small Arms Survey tells us that civilians own around 650 million firearms world-wide. The hunter or target shooter poses no threat. As a law-abiding citizen, he or she does deserve consideration by the state and by the United Nations. Any measure to control the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons should incorporate positive measures to ensure the continuing ability of the legitimate civilian firearms trade to supply its very significant customer base world-wide and the equally important right of the private citizen to travel internationally with his or her firearms for legitimate sporting and cultural purposes.

Civilian sport shooting and firearms collecting organisations were active during the European Parliament's 2007 consideration of Amendments to the 1991 EU Directive on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons. A number of proposed Amendments, particularly regarding marking and tracing, were neither proportionate nor practicable and were of doubtful utility. The experience and detailed technical knowledge of the shooting and collecting organizations assisted greatly in improving the proposals and I commend to you the consultation process incorporated within the European Parliamentary system. Shooting and collecting organizations stand ready to continue to contribute their knowledge, expertise and experience to the UN process.

Thank you. ●



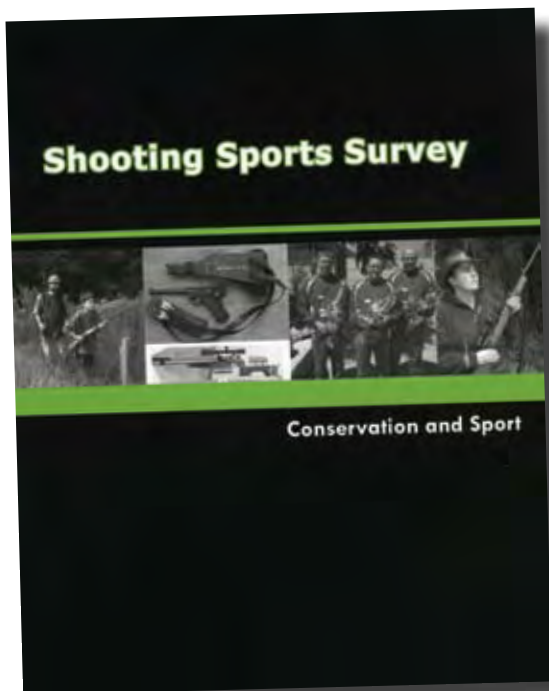


AMMUNITION TRACING IS an example of how the illegal small arms and light weapons treaty can be broadened by pressure groups. The Small Arms Survey group presented delegates with an *Ammunition Tracing Kit*. The idea is supposedly that if you can establish where the ammunition is coming from, then it can be stopped. Mass reloading appears not to have been taken into account.

The kit itself comes with a magnetic ruler and a 'bullet diameter guide', in which you place the bullet into the hole to work out what calibre it might be. Obviously, this can only be done with unfired ammunition. Still, one might wonder how exactly you would obtain and measure the illegal ammunition when presumably in a high conflict area or situation or when it is in the possession of rebels. The kit does, however, warn whoever is using this kit that they may be researching in a 'high-risk environment' that is 'potentially hazardous'. The practicalities of finding the ammunition, asking the holder of the ammunition where they obtained it from and the actual measuring and photographing the ammunition are quite ridiculous.

## Shooting Sports Survey

A collection of academics and recreational shooting organisations contributed articles to form the inaugural *Shooting Sports Survey* book, which was distributed at the UN meeting. The SSAA's Media & Publication unit submitted the article 'Australia's Gun Laws Since 1996'. ●



### Win 1 of 2 Shooting Sports Survey books

If you would like to have the opportunity to win one of two *Shooting Sports Survey* books, put your name, address and membership number on the back of an envelope and send to:

*Shooting Sports Survey* competition  
SSAA  
PO Box 2520  
Unley, SA 5061

Entries close November 1, 2008.