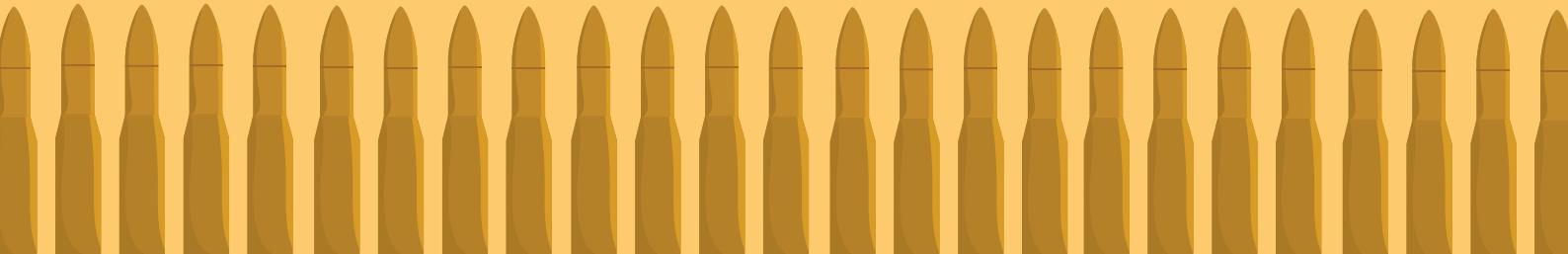


**KEY ISSUES AND PROCESSES
PERTINENT TO THE
MANAGEMENT OF
CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION
REPORT OF THE THIRD
THEMATIC SEMINAR**



UNIDIR



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About **UNIDIR**

UNIDIR is a voluntarily funded, autonomous institute within the United Nations. One of the few policy institutes worldwide focusing on disarmament, UNIDIR generates knowledge and promotes dialogue and action on disarmament and security. Based in Geneva, UNIDIR assists the international community to develop the practical, innovative ideas needed to find solutions to critical security problems.

Note

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List of acronyms & abbreviations

BLP	Blue Lantern Programme
EUC	end user certificate
IATGs	International Ammunition Technical Guidelines
ITI	International Tracing Instrument
LCMA	lifecycle management of ammunition
PSSM	physical security and stockpile management
SALW	small arms and light weapons
SSMA	safe and secure management of ammunition
UEMS	unplanned explosions at munitions sites
WAM	weapons and ammunition management



Key Findings

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An ammunition factory in Peru

- To reduce the risk of unplanned explosions and diversion of conventional ammunition to unauthorized users, there is a need to encourage a holistic approach to the safe, secure, and accountable management of conventional ammunition throughout its lifecycle that encompasses at least three interrelated areas:
 - pre-transfer risk assessments (conditions for export);
 - physical security and stockpile management measures (PSSM); and
 - monitoring and diagnostic activities (end use and end user).
- Elements, processes, and practices pertinent to each area merit further discussion and examination. Determination of these elements and how to integrate them in a comprehensive system should be the focus for further research and the work of the Group of Governmental Experts in 2020. Potential elements in each of the areas are:

- **Pre-transfer risk assessments:** checklists, registers, verification and authentication procedures for parties involved in a transfer, analysis of routes, information-exchange mechanisms between States and between licensing authorities and customs, assessing the end use and the end user, and mitigation measures.
- **PSSM:** national oversight, political buy-in, security plans, vetting of personnel, physical security interventions, accountancy, record-keeping, and surplus determination.
- **Monitoring and diagnostic activities:** development of techniques for ammunition identification, profiling, tracing and analysis, data collection mechanisms, recording information (databases), exchanges of practices, determination of timely, credible and reliable sources, implementation of tracing and profiling trainings and capacity-building.
- **Targeted approach:** Although stockpiles remain one of the key sources of safety and security risks and application of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs) remains essential, it is crucial to focus on reducing the highest risk/threat bearing in mind the capacity of the State in question.
- **Monitoring and diagnostic activities is the less developed area of the conventional ammunition management cycle and needs further analysis and attention.** Monitoring should be undertaken because it serves as an essential element for prevention and enforcement activities for both transfer and PSSM controls.
- **Consider the systemic aspects of ammunition control more carefully,** recognizing the linkages between supply-side controls, stockpile management, and the critical role of monitoring and reporting as a way to promote coordinated action at the national, regional, and international levels. It is important to understand better the linkages between areas. If one area of the cycle breaks, the entire system may fail—because it is an interdependent system. Risk reduction and mitigation was a leading theme across discussions of the transfer, stockpile and monitoring cycle

- Regional and subregional frameworks have gaps in scope and application, but they provide a foundation: some States utilize regional instruments to drive national requirements for ammunition management. Some States also have utilized regional approaches towards a wider political objective at multilateral level. Comprehensive roadmaps under existing regional frameworks provide a good basis for a regional approach model for ammunition, but the value of replicability may need to be explored by each subregion given the different contexts. Regional frameworks and approaches could facilitate entry points at the political level.
- Long-term relationships and national commitment are key to enabling capacity-building and knowledge strengthening including through training. The IATGs offer authoritative guidance and support to ammunition management operations, but alone are not enough to deliver sustainable solutions to ammunition mismanagement.



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An ammunition factory in Peru

1 Introduction

This report presents findings from the third of a series of seminars convened in 2018 and 2019 within the framework of UNIDIR's project Framing and Informing Key Issues and Processes Pertinent to the Management of Conventional Ammunition.

This project aims to facilitate dialogue and generate ideas to help frame key issues and inform States about processes pertinent to conventional ammunition management on which progress can be made at the national, regional, and multilateral levels. Elements and findings from this seminar series are relevant to States' preparations for the open, informal consultations organized within the framework of resolution 72/55,¹ as well as other relevant conventional ammunition management initiatives. Reports from the three seminars of the series are available on UNIDIR's website in English, French, and Spanish.² These three reports are

¹ General Assembly, UN document A/RES/72/55, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/55.

² Report of the First Thematic Seminar, <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/key-issues-and-processes-pertinent-to-the-management-of-conventional-ammunition-en-745.pdf>. Report of the Second Thematic Seminar, <http://www.unidir.ch/files/publications/pdfs/report-from-the-second-thematic-seminar-en-804.pdf>.

intended to serve as primers for government officials, diplomats and non-technical audiences to the key issues and processes of conventional ammunition management.

1.1 AIMS OF THE THIRD INFORMAL THEMATIC SEMINAR

The third thematic seminar took place on 20 May 2019 in New York. UNIDIR convened practitioners and policymakers to generate dialogue around all aspects of the management of conventional ammunition and explored substantive areas in which progress can be made. This informal meeting enabled participants, who included national and regional subject matter experts, diplomats, representatives of international organizations, and independent specialists, to raise and discuss issues in an informal setting. This seminar was open, and invitations were circulated to all Member States. Discussions complemented initial findings on key issues and processes identified during the first two thematic seminars, which took place in November 2018 and March 2019 in Geneva. This report does not present a particular position, but rather synthesizes the flow of discussions and the key issues that arose during the seminar.

The views presented here are best understood as a contribution to the international dialogue on conventional ammunition control measures—a stocktaking of existing issues, initiatives, instruments, and challenges. This discussion is broader than the framework outlined in General Assembly resolution 72/55 and may have relevance beyond the conclusion of that specific United Nations process.



© UN Photo/Sylvan Liechti

A member of the UNMACC team carries an explored mortar to be destroyed in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

2 Thematic focus areas

2.1 SETTING THE SCENE AND FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND SEMINARS

General Assembly resolution 72/55 emphasizes the importance of “the dangers posed by unplanned explosions at munitions sites and the diversion of materials from conventional ammunition stockpiles to the illicit market, including for the manufacture of improvised explosive devices”. It notes that:

thousands of people have died, and the livelihoods of entire communities have been disrupted as a result of accidental ammunition depot explosions and that diversion from ammunition stockpiles has contributed to the intensity and duration of armed conflict and sustained armed violence around the world.³

³ General Assembly, UN document A/RES/72/55, 2017, p. 1, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/72/55.

Participants during the two first thematic seminars emphasized the importance of resolution 72/55 and its request to the Secretary-General to convene a Group of Governmental Experts in 2020 to address the risks related to safety and security of conventional ammunition management. During the third seminar, UNIDIR presented key elements and findings from the first and second seminars to initiate discussion and set the scene for further examination.

1. The seminars identified two main issues:

- a. managing the risks related to the safety of ammunition to prevent unplanned explosions at munitions sites; and
- b. diversion of ammunition to unauthorized/unintended users as an enabling and contributing factor to insecurity and the escalation of armed violence and conflict.



**Figure 1: Lifecycle Management of Ammunition (LCMA) approach
(Small Arms Survey)⁴**

⁴ Carapic, Deschambault, Holtom, and King, "A Practical Guide to Life-cycle Management of Ammunition", Small Arms Survey, 2018, p. 41, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Q-Handbooks/HB-05-LCMA/SAS-HB05-LCMA.pdf>.

2. **Unsafe and unserviceable ammunition presents a high risk** to the safety of people and critical infrastructure due to unplanned explosions.
3. **Beyond stockpiles, ammunition diversion also happens by other means.** It can happen via false or fraudulent documentation, illicit brokering, unauthorized retransfer to non-State end users, diversion in-transit, etc.
4. **There is a lack of a dedicated international framework to address issues related to conventional ammunition management.** Ammunition has been described as the 'orphan' of conventional arms control frameworks. Experts, practitioners, and State representatives underscored that ammunition control measures are present in a certain number of international and regional instruments, but they are relatively fragmented and limited in scope. General Assembly resolution 72/55, and the request to the Secretary-General to convene a Group of Governmental Experts in 2020, might be an opportunity to fill this gap.
5. **The lack of dedicated frameworks at the global, regional, and subregional levels makes it difficult to mobilize political action and poses challenges for international cooperation and assistance.** In some regions, legal frameworks that encompass small arms ammunition exist, but their implementation remains uneven and challenging.
6. **A holistic approach to encourage the safe, secure, and accountable management of conventional ammunition throughout its lifecycle merits further examination** including potential overlaps and the relationship between the lifecycle management of ammunition (LCMA) approach and supply-chain management approaches.
7. **A responsibility and accountability cycle for safe and secure management of ammunition** takes into consideration and integrates the LCMA approach and would situate physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) within a wider framework with at least three interrelated areas:
 - pre-transfer risk assessments;
 - PSSM measures; and
 - monitoring and diagnostic activities.

8. The International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs) provide authoritative and validated technical guidance to States. Comprehensive use of the IATGs would address most of the ammunition safety issues that governments encounter, as well as some of the ammunition security problems. The IATGs are the main tool to support the safe and secure management of conventional ammunition stockpiles, but if they are applied in isolation, they will not address all dimensions related to the safety and security of conventional ammunition including the different sources of ammunition diversion, which result from a number of weaknesses along the ammunition supply chain.
9. It is essential to continue efforts to encourage uptake and use of the IATGs, with particular efforts placed on sensitization, long-term programming within national action frameworks, and the development of sustainable ammunition technical expertise. It is important to keep in mind the capacity of the State and to keep the focus on reducing the highest risk/threat by promoting targeted approaches.

2.2 RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CYCLE FOR SAFE AND SECURE MANAGEMENT OF AMMUNITION

To prevent unplanned explosions and diversion of ammunition to unauthorized users, conventional ammunition management approaches need to be comprehensive in order to respond to both safety and security risks. Conventional ammunition management is a multifaceted undertaking that goes beyond stockpile management measures. It requires placing national, regional, and international efforts within a wider supply chain framework to encourage the safe, secure, and accountable management of conventional ammunition throughout its lifecycle, including pre-transfer risk assessments, PSSM, and monitoring activities. The Group of Governmental Experts in 2008 focused on PSSM, but an effective ammunition management system or framework needs an exhaustive and multidimensional approach.

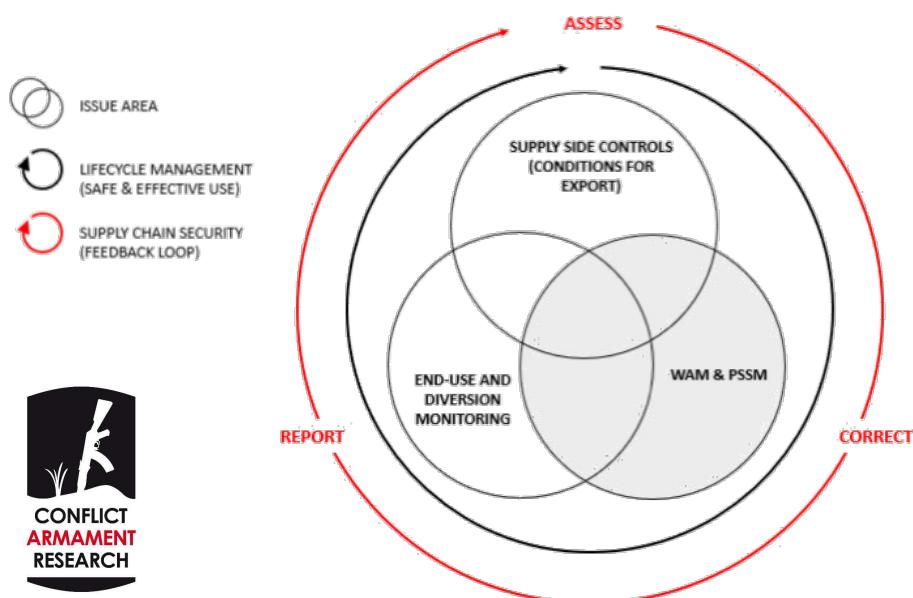


Figure 2: Responsibility and Accountability Cycle for Safe and Secure Management of Ammunition (Conflict Armament Research)⁵

⁵ Illustration provided by Conflict Armament Research and adapted from the working group on security in the first UNIDIR thematic seminar and open discussions during the second seminar. The circle representing PSSM is shaded to reflect that it was previously discussed by the 2008 Group of Governmental Experts, while monitoring and supply side controls were not (NB: WAM stands for weapons and ammunition management). The cycle also integrates the LCMA approach.

Such a multi-dimensional approach was identified as a cycle for safe and secure management of ammunition (SSMA). The cycle for SSMA should be an interconnected system where each piece (pre-transfer risk assessments/supply side controls, weapons and ammunition management (WAM) and PSSM, and end-use and diversion monitoring) complements and reinforces the others. Principles and elements of each area of the cycle will be analysed later in this report but it is important to note that if one piece of the cycle is not functioning, the entire system breaks thus increasing risks and threats to the management of conventional ammunition. In other words, if all areas are not encompassed, functioning together and reinforcing each other, the system will fail. There is a need to understand how all the elements and the areas interrelate and how to better integrate each area in the system. More focus should be placed in further research to understand the dynamics of the system and its linkages and intersections.

To provide a practical example of how the system should work, when pre-transfer risk assessments are thoroughly conducted, monitoring and diagnostic activities become less problematic because they are **interrelated**. Prior to the authorization of the transfer, the more information is made available about the supply chain and demand factors, the less risk of diversion. The linkages and intersections among the areas of the cycle could be enhanced by WAM programmes on the ground through coordination among actors (national institutions, project implementers, international specialized organizations, donors, monitoring organizations, etc.)

In addition to defining areas, principles and elements to the cycle for SSMA, it is essential to differentiate types of diversion (loss of national control, desertions, stockpile leakages, State sponsored-diversion, in-route diversion, etc.).⁶ A typology of diversion is important because some areas of diversion can be addressed nationally, and others require coordinated efforts among States. In addition, it is concerning that, based on observations in conflict-affected areas, methods to disguise diversion are getting more sophisticated (e.g. obliterated markings, fake packaging).

⁶ Typology of diversion developed by Conflict Armament Research; see <http://www.conflictarm.com/digests/diversion-digest-issue-1/>.

2.3 GOING BEYOND STOCKPILES: PRE-TRANSFER RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY

Effective national controls over the transfer of conventional ammunition are necessary to prevent diversion and illicit transfers. Effective pre-transfer risk assessments are a key security element to prevent diversion of ammunition throughout the lifecycle. The objective of pre-transfer risk assessments or supply side controls is to evaluate the risks of diversion along the supply chain and ensure that only authorized users have custody of the ammunition. During the seminar, participants discussed the means and methods to conduct an effective pre-transfer risk assessment with a view to identifying essential control steps and measures at the national level, including risk indicators, sources of information, roles and responsibilities, end-user control systems, verification, and information-exchange mechanisms and related documentation.⁷

Diversion can happen at any point in the lifecycle of ammunition and pre-transfer risk assessment is considered as a supply-side measure that complements PSSM and other actions. An effective pre-transfer risk assessment considers risks at different stages of the lifecycle, incorporates red flag risk indicators, relies on having credible and reliable information from different sources at the right time, and contributes towards an accountable system of ammunition management. Key elements to consider when conducting pre-transfer risk assessments are as follows.⁸

Access to information

- verifying the credibility and legitimacy of all parties—companies and individuals—involved in the transfer;
- maintaining a register/database of transfers (export, import, transit) and parties involved in the transfer (manufacturers, agents, brokers, freight forwarders, shippers, vessels and aircrafts and their operators, end users, etc.);
- examining the role of manufacturers, industry and other private actors involved in the supply chain, including cooperation between the State and private actors and improvement of compliance programmes through outreach programmes;

⁷ It is important to note that pre-transfer risk assessments usually address security aspects. However, there are safety considerations that could be taken into account when conducting pre-transfer risk assessments.

⁸ Presentation by Dumisani Dladla, Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat.

- accessing all information available in a timely and reliable manner, including open sources, government information and intelligence, police records, customs documentation, previous licenses, industry records, United Nations expert panel reports, information exchanges (bilateral, regional, and multilateral), and information from independent monitoring organizations;
- considering the diversion risks of a route and the status of controls in transit States and importing States; and
- understanding the political stability in the importing State and possible implications for regions and subregions with particular attention to international and internal sanctions and embargoes.

Documentation

- verifying and authenticating transfer documentation (end-user documentation, assurances, contracts, agreements, commitments, and technical specifications of goods);
- making use of pre-delivery verification (at the port of exit) and post-delivery verification systems (certificates, inspections, cooperation programmes, destruction certificates); and
- considering the elaboration of checklists for risk analysis.

Communication and cooperation

- ensuring a fluid communication between the exporting and importing States, and between customs and national licensing authorities;
- coordinating among ministries to prevent transport/transit diversion; and
- recognizing regional cooperation as an important factor when conducting pre-transfer risk assessments—not all States have the same level of control.

Technical assessment

- analysing the goods and their appropriateness for the end user (quantities in accordance with needs);
- understanding the nature of ammunition (small arms ammunition may pose a higher risk of diversion);
- considering risk mitigation measures (including marking requirements)

The seminar's discussions suggest that the risk of diversion can be effectively reduced and mitigated. Emphasis was made on assessing watch lists, unusual activity, unfamiliar intermediaries, unusual routings,

and unusual recipient locations. Additionally, participants highlighted the importance of finding evidence and proof of diversion to sustain denials of exports by licensing authorities (profit vs. evidence of diversion) and being mindful that, if a retransfer is being considered, the cycle starts again.

One of the most effective mitigating factors has been identified as restrictive clauses in end-user documentation clauses: written consent, prohibition, notification. Research shows that exporters are increasingly asking for assurances in end-user certificates. When you tie the assurance to a post-delivery verification measure, it becomes more effective. Thus, linking pre-transfer risk assessments with diversion monitoring activities will make the system more effective.

2.4 PHYSICAL SECURITY AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT

The diversion of conventional ammunition to illicit markets, groups and individuals poses a serious threat to peace and security. The diversion of conventional ammunition may occur due to leakage, theft or loss due to weakened stockpile management practices among other reasons. In addition, improperly managed ammunition poses a critical risk to safety due to unplanned explosions at munitions sites. Insecure national ammunition stockpiles also lead to ammunition and explosives being illicitly transferred across national borders and may drive regional instability. As an example, munitions from Libya have been encountered across northern Africa and as far afield as Syria. The seminar explored challenges and opportunities for preventing and addressing security and safety-related risks and threats associated with conventional ammunition in the context of PSSM.

The importance of national legislation, regulations, institutional structures and political buy-in at the highest level was acknowledged as essential to establishing effective PSSM strategies, policies, procedures, and practices. A top-down approach to ammunition security was deemed necessary to provide direction from the highest level of government to the personnel responsible for the delivery of military capability, operational units, and the stock holding ammunition storage areas.

In addition, it is essential that excess and unserviceable stockpiles are considered as liabilities rather than assets and that ammunition could not only be a danger but also a cost. As described in the previous

seminars, surplus is a by-product of a well-functioning ammunition management system and its determination is key to reducing safety and security risks⁹. Ammunition becomes more hazardous with age and the deterioration of energetic materials may take place with no discernible external evidence. Fires caused by the spontaneous combustion of military propellants remain a major cause of unplanned explosions.

In terms of security, conflict is a common cause of stockpile diversion—particularly the lack of security during and after operations. Recent examples include Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya where military high-explosive ammunition have been documented in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices. However, diversion from stockpiles could happen at the time of manufacture, during transportation, during operations, on the battlefield, during training, in storage, during disposal processes, and could be aggravated by factors such as poor physical security, poor ammunition management, poor control and oversight measures, and low morale or corruption.

Moreover, there is an economic aspect to consider in ammunition diversion. Ammunition is a valuable commodity and it has a tradeable value. Portable air defence systems in particular are a highly valued and sought-after commodity, and the scrap value of brass cartridge cases, copper driving bands, and aluminium components of projectiles should not be underestimated. On the other hand, there is an economic aspect to consider in ammunition counter-diversion. It is essential to maintain an appropriately remunerated and vetted personnel in charge of stockpiles.

⁹ The importance is in knowing what you need, what you have, in what conditions, and what to do with it.

Support to physical security projects and stockpile reduction measures. A little investment can bring long-term and sustainable benefits: invest in people rather than electronic security measures. Fences are good at marking boundaries, but they need to be monitored or patrolled. It was stated during discussion that "a well-trained man and a dog could do more than technology", reinforcing the idea that practical and simple security measures can be very effective and that education and knowledge transfer is important.

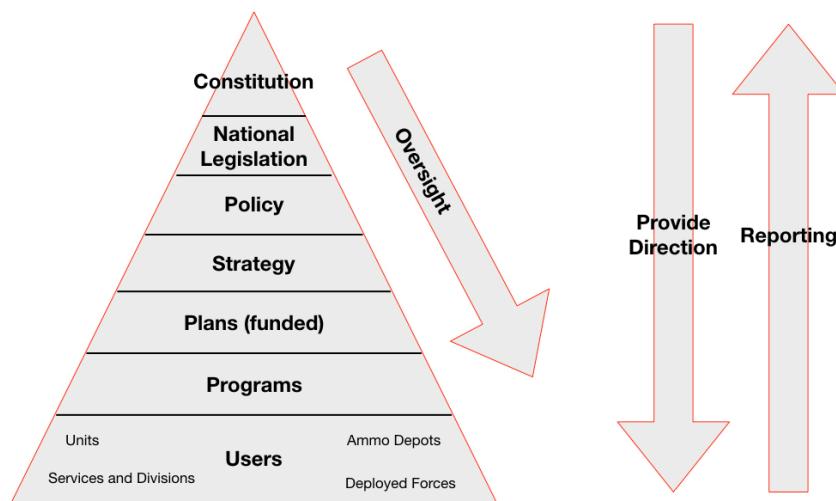


Figure 3: National PSSM oversight¹⁰

In terms of safety of conventional ammunition, there are two basic approaches that should be considered: 1) reduce the risk of an accidental explosion occurring in the first place; and 2) mitigate the effects of an accidental explosion should it occur. The utilization of the IATGs and good ammunition management practices are fundamental to ammunition safety. In particular, the careful management of the types and quantities of ammunition stored in specific locations could significantly mitigate the effects of an accidental explosion, should it occur. Experts stated that if there were only one thing that could be done, the most important thing to ensure safety would be understanding and applying explosive quantity distances, including in peace operations.

¹⁰ Illustration adapted by UNIDIR from presentation delivered by Col. Joe H. Palmer, South Africa, during UNIDIR's second thematic seminar.

Utilizing the IATGs is fundamental to achieving safe stockpiling of ammunition and reducing the prevalence of unplanned explosions at munitions sites. In this sense, United Nations agencies working on the ground, the UN SaferGuard Programme and the Ammunition Management Advisory Team (AMAT)¹¹ might be essential to supporting utilization of the IATGs and to face some of the challenges identified. Moving forward it will be important to focus on:

- transferring the IATGs into practice can be daunting, particularly in low-capacity and conflict affected settings;¹²
- reassessing the importance of explosive quantity and separation distances needs to be undertaken during the next review of the IATGs;
- taking steps to reduce the size of the potential maximum credible event through the application of explosive quantity distances¹³; and
- making use of the recently published guides by the UN SaferGuard Programme would be helpful.¹⁴

2.5 MONITORING AND DIAGNOSTIC ACTIVITIES

Accurately identifying the point of diversion is crucial to preventing future diversion. Most illicit ammunition is legally manufactured or imported and subsequently diverted to the illicit market. Systematic monitoring, tracking and reporting of ammunition through the lines of supply—in order to determine the point of diversion—is an essential element to the security of conventional ammunition. Experts examined the means and methods to monitor and report on diversion and illicit ammunition flows, with a view to identifying key control steps and

¹¹ <https://www.amat.org/>

¹² See UN SaferGuard Publication developed by UNIDIR, "Utilizing the IATGs in Conflict-Affected and Low-Capacity Environments", <http://www.unidir.ch/files/publications/pdfs/utilizing-the-international-ammunition-technical-guidelines-in-conflict-affected-and-low-capacity-environments-en-749.pdf>.

¹³ To know more about quantity distances, see IATG 02.20 Quantity and separation distances at <https://unoda-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/convarms/Ammunition/IATG/docs/IATG02.20.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.un.org/disarmament/un-saferguard/>.



Figure 4: Example of headstamp marking in small arms ammunition in the Dominican Republic.¹⁵



Figure 5: Examples of marked munitions and headstamp markings in small arms and light weapons ammunition found in terrorist attacks in Mali.¹⁶

measures at the national, regional and multilateral levels and invited the Group of Governmental Experts in 2020 to address issues of terminology and definitions for tracing, profiling, monitoring and related terms.

Ammunition tracing is possible, and it should inform preventive strategies. Lack of ammunition tracing/profiling is perpetuating armed conflict and armed violence. It is also contributing to unauthorized users remaining unaccounted for their unlawful acts which fuels the cycle of impunity. Ammunition tracing and profiling is technically feasible in both armed conflict and armed violence contexts, under certain conditions. Further research in this area would determine preconditions, requirements and contexts where ammunition tracing/profiling is more effective.

Even when SALW ammunition is unboxed, it is possible to establish lines of investigation and generate strategical and tactical intelligence from headstamps and other markings. In addition, experts in the seminar provided evidence that lot marking of individual rounds of small arms ammunition is technically and economically feasible both on the bottom of the cartridge (see figures 4 and 5 and in the extractor groove, as was illustrated in the case of small arms ammunition marked for law enforcement and armed forces in Brazil (see figure 6).

¹⁵ See study by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC): http://www.unlirec.org/Documents/Amm_Cntr_Prcs.pdf

¹⁶ Presentation by Nils Anders, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).



Figure 6: Example of laser markings in small arms ammunition by the Federal Police of Brazil.¹⁷

Cooperation remains essential to support the enforcement of diversion monitoring activities and tracing. Without monitoring and diagnostic activities, national governments conducting pre-transfer risk assessments do not know if their ammunition is going somewhere that it is not supposed to go. These activities happen around weapons and ammunition management processes, structures and programmes, and they are resource intensive. It was also noted that the International Tracing Instrument provides an effective mechanism for central bureaus of law enforcement at the State level and Interpol in contexts of crime, and that there is a need for more ammunition tracing studies.

In end-use/end-user monitoring, sometimes activities are randomized or based on risk assessments. The US Blue Lantern Programme, for example, provides an example of monitoring and diagnostic activities, and is interlinked with pre-transfer risk assessments conducted by the US Department of State. The programme verifies foreign consignees and end users, confirms receipt and disposition of exported articles, and confirms end use and compliance with assurances and requirements. Practical measures under the programme include basic risk indicators, physical checks, phone calls, and open source investigations.¹⁸ The

¹⁷ Photograph from Companhia Brasileira de Cartuchos shared in Presentation by Marcus Vinicius Da Silva Dantas, Federal Police Commissioner, Investigation and Organized Crime Combat Directorate, Brazil

¹⁸ Blue Lantern programme presentation, US Department of State.

programme monitors a small percentage of deliveries making a targeted use of resources based on risk analysis.

How do monitoring and tracing activities work in practice? The principles and practical elements to consider when conducting monitoring and diagnostic activities are as follows:

- when recording information, it is essential to identify who, what, where and when;
- identify technical details of the ammunition found: caliber, quantity per caliber, materials, markings;
- take photos and handwritten notes of the items to be analysed;
- establish a data collection system: it does not need to be sophisticated and data collectors could share information by email or message applications;
- maintain information centralized in a database for analysis: spreadsheets could suffice;
- be mindful that one piece of information could correlate to another piece: it is important to build a bigger picture with strategical and tactical intelligence;
- pay attention to specific ammunition that appears only in terrorists' attacks (not appearing in other crimes);
- look for potential linkages between a conflict or actor and ammunition found in crime scenes that have not been linked thus far to that conflict or actor; and
- transfer information to appropriate entities to support traceability and to inform pre-transfer risk assessments.

In addition to the principles and elements outlined, to establish solid lines of investigation it is necessary to monitor seizures in different States, and establish patterns of routes, quantities, makes, types of ammunition, origins and destinations. In addition, to conduct successful international illicit trafficking investigations, information-exchange mechanisms and international cooperation need to be in place and functioning and States—where diverted ammunition is found—need to be proactive to start the investigations.

2.6 REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND APPROACHES

Several regional instruments address conventional ammunition in their provisions, but they are relatively fragmented and vary in scope and application. Ammunition controls are a glaring omission from current conventional arms control frameworks and instruments at the

international and regional level. Current international and regional instruments either omit ammunition entirely or cover it only partially, in terms of scope and membership¹⁹. Resolution 72/55 offers various options for States to explore regional and subregional approaches to conventional ammunition management. During the seminar, regional, and sub regional experiences and possible regional avenues and approaches to strengthen safe, secure and accountable conventional ammunition management were examined. The seminar included presentations from representatives of Ghana and the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC).

Regional instruments could be useful for driving national requirements for ammunition management. A global, universal instrument could help in ensuring that a common language is set forth for all national governments, stipulating a ‘floor’ of minimal requirements, and serving as a catalyst—and monitor—for action, while regional approaches could support States’ efforts towards a wider political objective at the multilateral level. Regional and subregional instruments can indeed serve as potential cornerstones—or a collection of building blocks—to construct a robust response to the current omissions in regard to ammunition control in the collective international frameworks.

Comprehensive roadmaps under existing or future regional frameworks provide a good basis for regional approaches to ammunition, however the potential for replicability may need to be explored by each subregion given the different contexts. Best practices from regional approaches may help to plug the current global capability gaps. These approaches should include a regional implementation plan, a regional approach to stockpile reduction, and a roadmap to a sustainable solution. During the seminar, the roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the Western Balkans was presented as an initiative that integrates aspects of conventional ammunition management at the regional level. The

¹⁹ Not all States in a region are necessarily part of a regional instrument or agreement

initiative presented clearly defined goals and performance indicators to monitor progress (see figure 7).

Goals

1. By 2023, ensure that arms control legislation is in place, fully harmonized with the EU regulatory framework and standardized across the region.
2. By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led.
3. By 2024, significantly reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) within and beyond the Western Balkans.
4. By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, outreach and advocacy.
5. By 2024, substantially decrease the estimated number of firearms in illicit possession in the Western Balkans.
6. Systematically decrease the number of surplus and seized small arms and light weapons and ammunition
7. Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

Figure 7: Goals for SALW roadmap in the Western Balkans²⁰

2.7 GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING AMMUNITION MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The IATGs provide a comprehensive set of internationally developed measures to address the management of conventional ammunition stockpiles. Ongoing efforts to roll out the IATGs need to be advanced to facilitate ammunition management operations. In this respect, resolution 72/55 serves to reiterate the need for international action in areas that are already identified within the IATGs. Moreover, resolution 72/55 and Action 22 of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament²¹ encourage the widespread utilization of the IATGs.

²⁰ Presentation of roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW in the Western Balkans by 2024 by SEESAC with the support of the Governments of Germany, France and the European Union, Alain E. Lapon

²¹ See information on Action 22 of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/sq-agenda/en/action/22>

The role of the UN SaferGuard Programme and the newly established Ammunition Management Advisory Team seems crucial to providing sustainable and effective technical support to States developing and enhancing ammunition management operations. During the seminars, it was highlighted that only a portion of the assistance that is currently provided is based on the IATGs and not all international assistance and cooperation initiatives are addressing the main goal: sustainability.

To ensure sustainability, new guidance documentation has been published,²² translations of the IATGs and the UN SaferGuard toolkit into Spanish and French will be completed by the end of the year, and Ammunition Management Advisory Team and the UN SaferGuard Programme will conduct outreach activities through the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. Nonetheless, the effective utilization of the IATGs and their translation into national standard operating procedures and processes will not solve all the problems related to the diversion of conventional ammunition and additional international efforts are needed.

²² See the UN SaferGuard publications: "Critical Path Guide to the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines", "A Guide to Developing National Standards for Ammunition Management", and "Utilizing the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines in Conflict-Affected and Low-Capacity Environments", <https://www.un.org/disarmament/un-saferguard/>.



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An ammunition factory in Peru

3 Seminar conclusions

To effectively address the problems related to conventional ammunition management there are some factors that merit attention at the international, regional, and national levels:

- **The scope of the ammunition issue is global**, and safety and security challenges are faced by every State. The economic, social, and health costs of armed violence and armed conflict enabled by diverted, mismanaged and misused ammunition are acknowledged and documented but there is more work that needs to be done at every level.
- **The two main issues identified on conventional ammunition management are safety and security risks**. Efforts need to focus on reducing the likelihood and consequences of accidental explosions and ammunition diversion to unintended users. An emphasis on security and counter-diversion measures is needed.
- **The responsibility and accountability cycle for safe and secure management of ammunition was defined as a solution to cover the full ammunition cycle**. It would encompass three differentiated areas: pre-transfer risk assessments, WAM and PSSM, and monitoring and diagnostic activities.

- Elements for each of the three above-mentioned areas need to be identified and principles need to be defined, agreed, and implemented by States to achieve a successful outcome:
 - **pre-transfer risk assessments:** development of checklists, registers, verification and authentication procedures, diversion risk indicators, information-exchange mechanisms, and mitigation measures;
 - **WAM and PSSM:** WAM oversight, political buy-in, national ownership, security plans, vetting of personnel, physical security measures, accountancy, record-keeping, and surplus determination; and
 - **monitoring and diagnostics:** detection mechanisms, tracing, profiling, and reporting.
- The international nature of the issue transcends national borders (illicit transnational flows, transfers, re-transfers, need of information exchange mechanisms, etc.). Therefore, coordinated responses are essential.
- A cooperative international effort is needed to address the death toll caused by ammunition diversion and misuse. A dedicated framework at the international level could cascade down into regional, subregional and national actions and facilitate the establishment of adequate national systems.

REPORT OF THE THIRD THEMATIC SEMINAR

This report presents the findings from the third in a series of seminars convened within the framework of UNIDIR's project *Framing and Informing Key Issues and Processes Pertinent to the Management of Conventional Ammunition*. This seminar took place 20 May 2019 in New York.

This project aims to facilitate dialogue and generate ideas in order to help States to frame key issues and inform them about processes pertinent to conventional ammunition management on which progress can be made at the national, regional and multilateral levels. Elements and findings from this seminar series are relevant to States' preparations for the open, informal consultations organized within the framework of resolution 72/55, as well as other relevant conventional ammunition management initiatives.



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