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Insights from Reporting on Conventional Arms Control

Supporting Preparations for Reporting
on Implementation of the Global
Framework for Through-life Conventional
Ammunition Management

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

APMBC	Convention on the Prohibition on the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
IATG	International Ammunition Technical Guidelines
ISU	Implementation Support Unit
ITI	International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons
NPC	National point of contact
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
POA	Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
VTF	ATT Voluntary Trust Fund
WGETI	Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation of the ATT
WGTU	Working Group on Treaty Universalization of the ATT



SALW assessment and reporting workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal. Credit: © UNRCPD

Executive Summary

The Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2023, aims to mitigate the risks associated with the unsafe and insecure management of conventional ammunition. It calls on States to voluntarily report on their progress in implementation, as well as on their needs for – and offers of – international cooperation and assistance.

Drawing on lessons from reporting on the implementation of international instruments for arms control and humanitarian disarmament, this Insight identifies three persistent challenges for national reporting:

- ▶ Lack of political will to report
- ▶ Limited national capacity for reporting
- ▶ Inadequate inter-agency cooperation

These challenges have contributed to low levels of reporting, which are exacerbated by the following factors:

- ▶ The purpose and tangible benefits of reporting are not always clearly defined or communicated
- ▶ Limited use is often made of the information provided in national reports
- ▶ The reports and other relevant information are not always easily accessible

To support effective reporting on national implementation of the Global Framework and to help overcome reporting challenges observed in other international instruments, this Insight presents lessons learned and practical measures. It does this by addressing four guiding questions:

1. What could be the purposes and benefits of reporting on national implementation of the Global Framework?

- ▶ Informing Meetings of States and technical expert meetings
- ▶ Requesting or offering international cooperation and assistance
- ▶ Sharing effective practices for safe and secure through-life management of conventional ammunition
- ▶ Establishing adequate national inter-agency cooperation and coordination mechanisms

2. What could be the modalities for reporting on national implementation of the Global Framework?

- ▶ Aligning the reporting frequency and cycles with other reporting commitments and obligations
- ▶ Developing reporting guidelines and providing support for reporting
- ▶ Making reports accessible through a user-friendly reporting platform

3. How can States be supported in reporting on national implementation?

- ▶ Developing guidelines to support national self-reporting
- ▶ Conducting awareness-raising and capacity-building activities
- ▶ Designating reporting champions
- ▶ Strengthening the capacity of the national point of contact and inter-agency cooperation and coordination mechanisms

4. How could national reports be used to help achieve the Global Framework's goals and objectives?

- ▶ Analysing national reports to identify trends in implementation, practical measures and challenges
- ▶ Developing and updating voluntary guidance materials
- ▶ Identifying priority objectives for Meetings of States and technical expert meetings
- ▶ Demonstrating implementation progress
- ▶ Using the reports to identify options for strengthening national through-life management of conventional ammunition
- ▶ Linking reporting with the international cooperation-assistance mechanism

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MONUSCO clears Unexploded Ordnance in Eastern DRC. Credit: © MONUSCO/Sylvain Liechti

1. Introduction

The Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2023, is the first global agreement to address the risks posed by unsafe and insecure conventional ammunition. As underscored by the Vice-Chair of the Working Group that drafted the Global Framework, it has the potential to “reduce the dual risk of unplanned explosions at ammunition sites and the risk of diversion, thereby directly contributing to reducing the human costs of weapons and ammunition”.¹

Progress in achieving these ambitions will depend on the successful national implementation of the Global Framework’s 15 Objectives. At its first Preparatory Meeting of States, to be held in New York in June 2025, States “will explore possible options for the development of the process and modalities for the effective implementation of the Global Framework and prepare for a Meeting of States in 2027”.² This will include discussion of voluntary reporting on implementation, including a template to facilitate voluntary reporting, which will be further considered at

1 Ambassador Maritza Chan quoted in United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), “Unveiling the New Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management”, 14 November 2023, <https://disarmament.unoda.org/update/unveiling-the-new-global-framework-for-through-life-conventional-ammunition-management/>.

2 United Nations, General Assembly, “Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management”, A/78/111, 2023, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/78/111>, Annex, para. 28.

the first Meeting of States. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), which serves as the Secretariat of the Global Framework, has been mandated to draft this template for consideration by States. The Global Framework also encourages States to “provide a voluntary initial overview in 2026, which includes steps taken to implement [it]”.³

It is the norm for international instruments on conventional arms and ammunition control and humanitarian disarmament (the “international instruments” – see Box 1) to include provisions for States to report on the measures taken to implement them. Reporting under these instruments does not constitute a verification mechanism. Rather, national self-reporting has become an important tool for follow-up processes to track progress in implementation. It also enables the international community to identify common implementation challenges and to direct attention and resources towards overcoming them. At the same time, analysts have highlighted concerns that some national implementation reports do not provide useful information on implementation measures and challenges, or may contain contradictory, inaccurate or outdated information.⁴ Research on reporting indicates that officials perceive reporting as a burden for national systems, and there is a growing sense of reporting fatigue as new instruments introduce additional reporting commitments or obligations. Indeed, all international instruments studied for this Insight suffer from low levels of national reporting on implementation. Moreover, Meetings of States intended to review the implementation of a given instrument do not always systematically use national implementation reports to assess progress, identify common challenges, gather lessons learned or effectively respond to assistance needs.

1.1 Purpose of this Insight

The issue of national self-reporting on implementing international instruments has garnered considerable attention within the conventional arms control community over the past few decades. Research conducted by UNIDIR, other organizations, academia and civil society organizations has carefully documented common national reporting challenges. However, States, instruments’ secretariats and implementation support units (ISUs) (the “secretariats”),⁵ and other key stakeholders have developed and implemented practical measures to overcome such challenges. This Insight synthesizes and presents this knowledge. Drawing on lessons learned from other international instruments, it presents considerations to inform States’ deliberations on the Global Framework’s reporting modalities. It aims to ensure that national reports on implementation measures can be used to help achieve the Global Framework’s goals and objectives.

3 United Nations, “Global Framework”, Annex, para. 30.

4 Sarah Parker and Katherine Green, *The Programme of Action Implementation Monitor (Phase 1): Assessing Reported Progress* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2012), 7, <https://smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-OP30-PoAIM.pdf>.

5 For the sake of brevity, “secretariats” will hereinafter refer to both secretariats and ISUs of the international instruments reviewed. Where a specific secretariat or ISU is referred to, this is clearly indicated in the Insight.

1.2 Structure of this Insight

The remainder of this Insight is structured as follows: Section 2 provides an overview of national reporting on implementation, including benefits and long-term challenges. Section 3 introduces lessons learned from national challenges faced in preparing national reports on implementation, focusing on the issues of lack of political will, limited capacity to report and inadequate inter-agency cooperation. It also highlights practical measures used by States to address these challenges effectively. Section 4 examines the purpose and benefits of reporting, the use of reports, and access to information. Section 5 presents for consideration some proposals to support voluntary national reporting on measures to implement the Global Framework. These take into account how such reports could be used to make progress towards achieving the Global Framework's objectives of safe, secure, sustainable and effective through-life management of conventional ammunition.

BOX 1

International instruments on conventional arms control and humanitarian disarmament reviewed for this insight

This Insight mainly draws on findings derived from experiences in implementation of four international instruments on conventional arms and ammunition control and humanitarian disarmament and their reporting regimes:

- ▶ 1997 Convention on the Prohibition on the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC)
- ▶ 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)
- ▶ 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)
- ▶ 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) and the 2005 International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (ITI)

For the sake of brevity, this Insight collectively refers to these four instruments as “international instruments” and clearly states where this is not the case.



Children play next to a police station wall with bullet holes in Gao, Mali. Credit: © MINUSMA/Marco Dormino

2. Reporting on the implementation of international instruments

All international arms control instruments contain provisions for national self-reporting on their implementation. Reporting modalities for these instruments vary (as shown in Table 1). For example, legally binding instruments require States parties to provide reports on their implementation measures, while politically binding instruments request, invite or encourage States to report voluntarily.

In some cases, such national reports are the only source of government information on the status of implementation.⁶ Nonetheless, and irrespective of the nature of the instrument's reporting provisions, national reports on measures to implement these instruments do not constitute a verification mechanism. Rather, they rely on self-reporting by national officials to show which provisions are implemented and where national efforts are ongoing, and to indicate where States might require international cooperation and assistance.

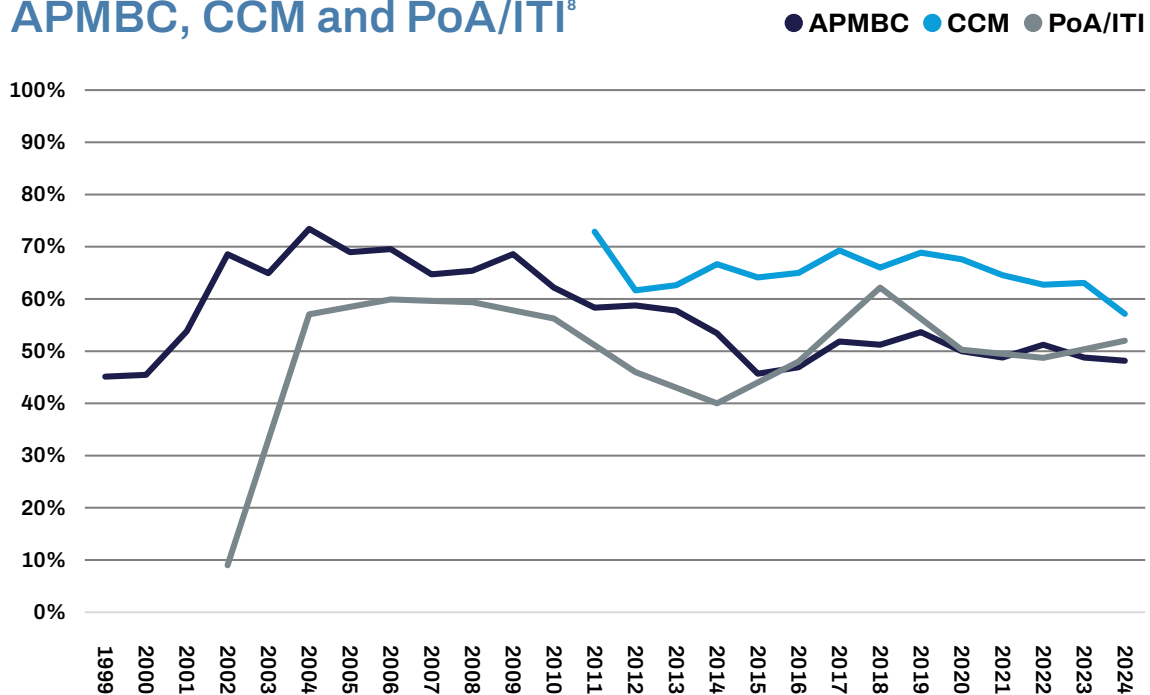
6 Sarah Parker and Katherine Green, *A Decade of Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons - Analysis of National Reports* (New York, Geneva: UNIDIR, 2012), 365, <https://unidir.org/publication/a-decade-of-implementing-the-united-nations-programme-of-action-on-small-arms-and-light-weapons-analysis-of-national-reports/>.

National implementation reports also contribute to transparency, trust and confidence-building between States on conventional arms and ammunition control, as well as efforts to address their illicit proliferation and misuse. Further, such reports can generate the following benefits for States:

- ▶ Highlight national and global progress in implementation
- ▶ Show how States use different approaches to implement agreed measures
- ▶ Facilitate the sharing of good practices, which can be used to inform implementation guidance
- ▶ Inform the international community of common implementation challenges
- ▶ Provide a platform for States to communicate their international cooperation and assistance needs⁷

FIGURE 1

Rate of reporting on the implementation of international arms control instruments: APMBC, CCM and PoA/ITI⁸

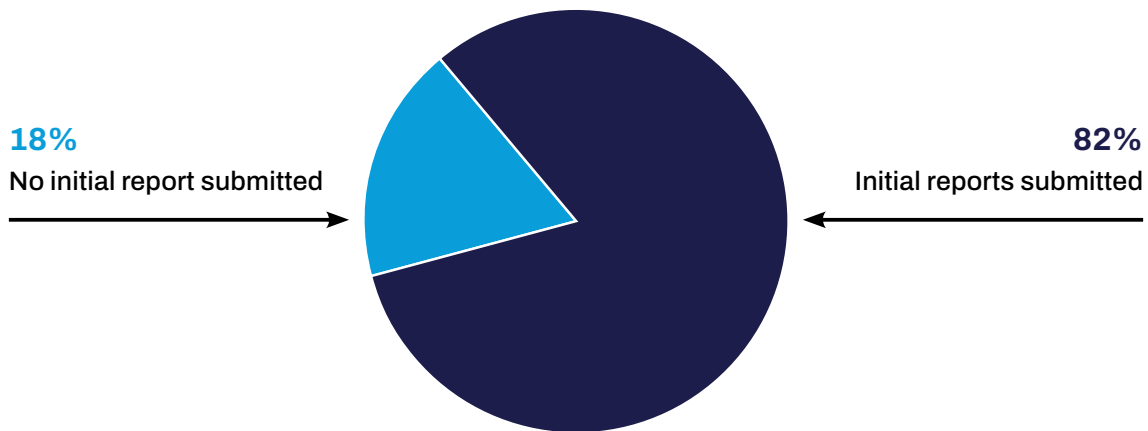


7 Rachel Stohl, Ryan Fletcher, and Shannon Dick, Taking Stock of ATT Initial Reports (Stimson Center, 2022), <https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Taking-Stock-of-ATT-Initial-Reports.pdf>; Glenn McDonald, 'Under the Spotlight: Monitoring Implementation of Small Arms Measures', in *Rights at Risk*, ed. Peter Batchelor and Keith Krause, Small Arms Survey 2004 (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004), 249.

8 Figure 1 shows the share (in percentage) of submitted reports due in a given year for instruments with regular reporting cycles (APMBC, CCM, PoA/ITI). For the PoA/ITI, reports are submitted biannually and are divided by the number of United Nations Member States at the end of each cycle. Additionally, a biannual reporting cycle was projected back to 2002 for the sake of data comparability. For cycles where a State submitted two PoA/ITI reports, thus following an annual reporting cycle, only one report was counted towards the reporting rate. For the APMBC and the CCM, reports submitted by States parties were divided by the number of reports due in that year. Under both conventions, initial reports are due 180 days after the date of ratification, with annual reports due annually thereafter. Voluntary reports submitted under the APMBC and CCM were not included in the count.

FIGURE 2

Rate of reporting on the implementation of international arms control instruments: ATT⁹



Source: ATT Secretariat

Despite the potential benefits of participating in regimes for reporting on national implementation, States can struggle to fulfil their reporting obligations and commitments. Key factors are often a lack of political will, limited capacity, and inadequate inter-agency cooperation and coordination mechanisms for collecting, compiling and sharing relevant data (see Section 3).¹⁰ This has resulted in only around half of States regularly reporting on implementation (see Figure 1) and the provision of incomplete, inconsistent or inaccurate information in national implementation reports.¹¹

Another factor contributing to low reporting levels is that the purpose of reporting is unclear for many international instruments. Key stakeholders do not clearly articulate the tangible benefits of reporting for States that collect and share information in implementation reports. In addition, the follow-up processes and review mechanisms of international instruments do not always make effective use of national reports (see Section 4).

9 Figure 2 shows the share (in percentage) of submitted initial reports due under the ATT at the time of writing. This does not reflect whether initial reports have been updated. ATT States parties are committed to updating their initial reports when new measures are undertaken to implement the ATT. However, only six States have so far done so. Therefore, this graph arguably overstates the degree to which ATT States parties fulfil their reporting obligations. Working Group on Transparency and Reporting Chair's Report to CSP11 (Draft), ATT/CSP11.WGTR/2025/CHAIR/812/PM.DrConf.Rep, 25 April 2025, para. 6, https://www.thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_CSP11_Informal%20Prep%20Meeting_WGTR_Chair_Draft%20Report%20to%20CSP11_EN/ATT_CSP11_Informal%20Prep%20Meeting_WGTR_Chair_Draft%20Report%20to%20CSP11_EN.pdf.

10 See also the key reporting challenges for reporting under the ATT identified by the ATT Baseline Assessment Project, which includes: 1) Awareness and understanding of ATT obligations; 2) capacity and resource challenges; 3) internal and bureaucratic challenges; and 4) political and security challenges. Stimson Center. ATT Reporting Challenges: December 2024 Factsheet (Stimson Center, 2024), <https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/ATT-Reporting-Challenges-Dec-2024.pdf>.

11 Silvia Cattaneo and Sarah Parker, *Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Analysis of the National Reports Submitted by States from 2002 to 2008* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 2008), xix, https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Implementing_the_UN_Programme_of_action_on_SALW-2008.pdf; Parker and Green, *A Decade of Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action*, 365.

TABLE 1

Comparison of reporting modalities for international arms control instruments

INSTRUMENT	APMBC	ATT INITIAL REPORT	CCM	POA/ITI
Legal obligation or political commitment	Obligation	Obligation	Obligation	Commitment
Frequency	Annual	Initial, with ad hoc updates	Annual	Biannual
Template provided	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guidance for reporting	Yes	No	No	No
Availability (website)	Public (UNODA)	Public or restricted (ATT Secretariat)	Public (UNODA)	Public (UNODA)
Review in meeting	Yes	No	Yes	No
Use made of reports at instrument level	Progress indicator	Guidance, international cooperation and assistance	Progress indicator	International cooperation and assistance



3. Lessons learned from national experiences in preparing implementation reports

This section summarizes common challenges that States experience when preparing national reports on their measures to implement various international arms and ammunition control and humanitarian disarmament instruments. It focuses on three key common reporting challenges:

- ▶ Lack of political will
- ▶ Limited national capacity
- ▶ Inadequate inter-agency cooperation

Some States are also likely to face these familiar challenges when preparing their national reports on the implementation of the Global Framework. This section not only describes these challenges but also highlights the practical measures that States have used to fulfill their reporting commitments and obligations. These measures could also be used to support effective reporting for the Global Framework.

3.1 Lack of political will

A lack of political will to report is a frequently cited factor in explaining low reporting rates. This issue is often linked to a lack of awareness among senior government officials that international instruments include an obligation or commitment to report on implementation measures and a lack of awareness of the benefits of such reports.¹² Thus, senior government officials are not always convinced of the necessity or benefit of dedicating limited financial and human resources to prepare national implementation reports – especially when confronted with other competing priorities, such as more immediate political and security issues, domestic crises or armed conflict.¹³

Some States may also fear that, if there has been a lack of progress, then publicly disclosing such information could prompt unwanted scrutiny or negative repercussions at the national or international level. Not all States are willing to publicly report on implementation challenges, even if reporting can be an effective way to highlight a need for international assistance. Such perceptions can lead key government officials to regard such reporting as a lose–lose situation, resulting in a decision not to report.¹⁴

Measures to increase political will to report

The secretariats of international arms control instruments conduct activities to raise awareness and generate the necessary political will to ensure that governments allocate sufficient resources for reporting. In addition, States can encourage their peers to prepare and submit national implementation reports. Regional and subregional organizations also promote reporting, while civil society organizations conduct activities to raise awareness of national reporting commitments and obligations.

Unfortunately, the success of such awareness-raising activities in terms of securing political will for reporting has been mixed. A key lesson is that awareness-raising efforts need to be targeted at the right stakeholders. They should not only focus on the “working level” (i.e., national points of contact), but should also carefully consider the engagement of senior government officials and parliamentarians. This point is especially pertinent if the international instrument requires changes to national legislation or new funding and resources to support implementation efforts. Therefore, awareness-raising about reporting for a given State needs to be tailored to the particular context. Generic, one-size-fits-all approaches to promoting reporting have not consistently yielded positive results. An engagement strategy needs to clearly and concisely explain the benefits of reporting for reluctant or sceptical government officials and politicians.

Experience shows that awareness-raising efforts tend to emphasize the nature of the reporting commitment or obligation, but do not always clearly elaborate on the purpose and potential

12 Rachel Stohl et al., *Reporting on Conventional Arms Trade: Synthesis Handbook* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 2018), <https://unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/reporting-on-conventional-arms-trade-synthesis-handbook-en-699.pdf>.

13 Anna Mensah-Sackey and Paul Holtom, *Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty in Africa: Lessons Learned from the 2024 Monrovia Workshop* (UNIDIR, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.37559/CAAP/25/ASC/02>.

14 Mensah-Sackey and Holtom, 15.

benefits of reporting. The following three benefits have been well-documented and could be featured more prominently in awareness-raising activities.

1. The preparation and sharing of a national report on implementation measures can help build confidence among States by demonstrating a commitment to realizing the objectives of an instrument. Indeed, sharing information on the measures a State is taking to implement an international instrument could establish them as “good practices” to be highlighted as inspiration for other States.
2. The process of preparing a national implementation report can yield broader benefits for inter-agency cooperation and coordination within a State (see Section 3.3). For example, the process of compiling a report can help States to establish or strengthen inter-agency processes and mechanisms for cooperation and coordination on conventional arms control.
3. If a State approaches the preparation of a national implementation report as an assessment process, then the outcome of the exercise can be a report that helps the government identify practical measures and gaps to address for strengthening the national system. The process of compiling a report can thus help to determine a State’s need for international cooperation and assistance, as defined by national experts. This can strengthen national ownership of international cooperation and assistance. It also helps assistance providers to tailor their support to national needs. In some cases, submitting an implementation report has been considered a factor in accessing assistance opportunities facilitated by assistance mechanisms.

3.2 Limited capacity

Limited capacity is a key reason to help explain why a State has not reported or why its report is incomplete or lacking detailed information. It can include a lack of necessary personnel, time or financial resources to fulfil reporting commitments.¹⁵ These factors help to explain why rates of reporting by low-income countries are consistently among the lowest for international arms control instruments. Any increase in the number of reporting commitments and obligations for these States adds to their reporting burden and further impedes reporting efforts.¹⁶

Under the heading of “capacity”, a key role in reporting is often played by the national point of contact (NPC) for an international instrument. Most international arms control instruments require or recommend that each State establish or designate an individual, department, or agency to be the NPC. The NPC typically serves as the primary point of contact at the national level for communication and information sharing with other States and the secretariat.¹⁷ The NPC can also be tasked with preparing and submitting national implementation reports. Yet, in some cases, the NPC may not know:

15 Stohl, Fletcher, and Dick, *Taking Stock of ATT Initial Reports*; Paul Holtom and Mark Bromley, *Implementing an Arms Trade Treaty: Lessons on Reporting and Monitoring from Existing Mechanisms*, SIPRI Policy Paper 28 (Solna: Stockholm Intern. Peace Research Inst, 2011); Cattaneo and Parker, *Analysis of the National Reports Submitted by States from 2002 to 2008*.

16 Mark Bromley and José Francisco Alvarado Cobar, *Reporting on Conventional Arms Transfers and Transfer Controls: Improving Coordination and Increasing Engagement* (Stockholm: SIPRI, 2020), https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/2007_reporting_on_conventional_arms.pdf.

17 United Nations, “Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium: National Coordinating Mechanisms on Small Arms and Light Weapons Control” (MOSAIC 03.40:2014(E)V1.0), 2014, Clause 6.1.

- ▶ how or when to submit or update a report
- ▶ the type of information to include in a report
- ▶ how to use reporting tools and platforms
- ▶ and the specific processes and options for each instrument¹⁸

In addition, frequent staff turnover or inadequate handover procedures often mean that, for many States, the necessary knowledge for reporting is not shared, resulting in a loss of expertise on reporting processes and a lack of institutional memory.¹⁹

Measures to address limited capacity for reporting

Measures at both the national and international levels have proven effective in addressing national capacity challenges related to reporting on the implementation of international arms control instruments. At the national level, the following two key measures have helped States to meet their reporting commitments or obligations:

1. A first step in enabling reporting is for a State to establish or designate **an NPC with the responsibility and capacity** to coordinate the reporting process for a new instrument. This has helped States institutionalize expertise in reporting processes.²⁰ Ideally, to ensure institutionalization, the NPC should be an office, rather than an individual. States have taken different approaches, including:
 - a. Designating an existing national small arms commission or arms commission
 - b. Designating an existing small arms or arms focal point
 - c. Designating an existing desk or section within a department or ministry for foreign affairs on, for example, international organizations, conventional arms control or humanitarian disarmament
2. States have found it helpful to **create a national reporting procedures document** to institutionalize reporting.²¹ This typically involves listing various related reporting commitments and obligations, including their deadlines, the required information for each report, identifying “reporting tasks and responsibilities to specific authorities and positions”, and detailing the data collection and sharing processes. This approach has enabled some States to make more efficient use of their limited capacity for reporting and make use of reporting synergies (i.e., when multiple instruments request the same or similar information and where collected

18 Cattaneo and Parker, Analysis of the National Reports Submitted by States from 2002 to 2008, 158; Ryan Fletcher, Rachel Stohl, and Elias Yousif, Taking Stock of ATT Reporting (Stimson Center, 2022), <https://www.stimson.org/2022/taking-stock-of-att-reporting/>.

19 Arms Trade Treaty, Working Group on Transparency and Reporting, Chair’s Report to the Tenth Conference of States Parties, ATT/CSP10.WGTR/2024/CHAIR/800/Conf.Rep, 2024, https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_CSP10_WGTR_Chair_Report_to_CSP10_EN/ATT_CSP10_WGTR_Chair_Report_to_CSP10_EN.pdf.

20 Arms Trade Treaty, ATT/CSP10.WGTR/2024/CHAIR/800/Conf.Rep.

21 Arms Trade Treaty, Working Group on Transparency and Reporting, Working Paper On National-Level Measures To Facilitate Compliance With International Reporting Obligations And Commitments, Annex B to the ATT Working Group on Transparency and Reporting Co-chairs’ Draft Report to CSP3, ATT/CSP3.WGTR/2017/CHAIR/159/Conf.Rep, 2017, https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/WGTR_Draft_Report_to_CSP3_EN/WGTR_Draft_Report_to_CSP3_EN.pdf.

data can therefore be reused). Documents describing national reporting procedures have also helped build an institutional memory on reporting.

At the international level, the international community has contributed to the building of state reporting capacity in the following three ways:

1. **The secretariats of international instruments provide presentations, training workshops, training videos, guidance materials or training of trainers to increase knowledge on reporting commitments, good practices and reporting procedures.** For example, the ATT Secretariat maintains a “Capacity-building for ATT Reporting Project”, funded by the European Union, which has developed reporting guidance and provides regional workshops to bridge NPCs’ knowledge gaps on reporting procedures.²² Other secretariats, as well as civil society organizations, also provide online training workshops and guidance to support the preparation and submission of reports.
2. **States have directly cooperated to build capacity by exchanging information on their national reporting procedures, including lessons on mistakes and what has worked well.** States have also provided funding and in-kind contributions for secretariats and civil society organizations to deliver programmes and projects that build state capacity for reporting for particular international instruments. These efforts include providing experts for training and national workshops to compile implementation reports.
3. **States have taken measures to reduce the overall reporting burden.** This has entailed steps to adjust reporting modalities, such as:
 - a. **Reducing the frequency of reporting.** For some international instruments, States have collectively concluded that annual reporting on measures to implement an instrument is not always needed.
 - i. **Biannual reporting:** The PoA and ITI adopted a biannual reporting cycle, recognizing that reports were mainly relevant during and leading up to the Biannual Meetings of States. This reduced the reporting frequency while maintaining regular reporting cycles.
 - ii. **Initial report and update as necessary:** ATT States parties decided that each party should submit an implementation report after the treaty enters into force for it and should update it only when necessary. This reduced reporting to a minimum, recognizing that national regulatory frameworks change slowly. However, without regular reporting cycles and precise due dates beyond the initial ATT report, only six States have so far provided an update. In contrast, many oral statements by States at ATT Conferences of States Parties indicate that other States parties have made progress and changes in their implementation of the Treaty.
 - b. **Harmonizing reporting under different instruments for which similar information is provided.** States have recommended that secretariats for different instruments take steps to harmonize reporting requirements between different instruments that contain comparable elements, enabling a State to compile one report and fulfil multiple reporting requirements.

22 European Union, Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2296 of 23 October 2023 on European Union support for activities of the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, *Official Journal*, L 2296, 2023, 1, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023D2296>.

Standardized reporting templates and forms

While specific recommendations for the Global Framework's reporting template are beyond the scope of this Insight, a few general lessons learned can be highlighted.

Reporting templates have become a standard measure across international instruments to help guide those tasked with preparing a national implementation report on what information to gather and include. Such templates can help improve the comparability of reports over time, allowing an individual State to see where progress has been made. They also enable comparisons between States and regions to determine trends and patterns. Thus, some analysts highlight how the use of templates has improved the consistency and quality of data and information provided by States on their implementation measures.²³

At the same time, in some cases, design issues with reporting templates have prevented submitted reports from being used effectively (see Section 4.2). Some of the shortcomings of reporting templates include:

- ▶ Unclearly phrased or vague questions that tend to lead to answers that make it hard to understand whether a State has implemented a particular provision of an instrument
- ▶ Closed or “yes/no” questions that can be seen as being easier to complete but introduce several problems, such as:
 - ▷ Omitting important information, whereas open questions generally elicit more detailed and nuanced information²⁴
 - ▷ Introducing a reporting bias as state officials are more likely to reply “yes” to a binary “yes/no” question, even if a provision is only partially implemented²⁵
- ▶ An overwhelming number of questions that can make State officials feel as if they are under severe scrutiny, especially if the form is not accompanied by a clear explanation of its purpose and the benefits of completing the form

Therefore, those designing reporting templates usually take a balanced approach, providing options for a State to answer “yes/no” questions or questions with multiple-choice responses, while also inviting it to provide additional detail on specific measures used to implement the international instrument's provisions.

23 Parker and Green, *The Programme of Action Implementation Monitor (Phase 1)*, 18; Fletcher, Stohl, and Yousif, *Taking Stock of ATT Reporting*.

24 Stohl, Fletcher and Dick, *Taking Stock of ATT Initial Reports*.

25 Sarah Parker and Christelle Rigual, *What the National Reports Reveal: Trends in UN PoA and ITI Reporting* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2015), <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-IB13-PoA-ITI.pdf>; Paul Holtom and Moshe Ben Hamo Yeger, *Implementing the Programme of Action and International Tracing Instrument: An Assessment of National Reports, 2012–17* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2018), 11, <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/resource/implementing-programme-action-and-international-tracing-instrument-assessment-national>.

- i. **One report submitted for multiple instruments:** In cases where there are significant similarities in the information to be provided to two secretariats for different instruments, States can submit a single report to one secretariat that will also be passed on to the secretariat of the other instrument, thereby leveraging overlaps to reduce the reporting burden. For example, participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) can request that their submission on measures to implement the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons be automatically supplied to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for use as their biennial report on measures to implement the PoA and the ITI.
- ii. **Merged reporting templates:** The PoA and the ITI share a single reporting template and reporting mechanism, ensuring that States only need to submit one national report covering the implementation of the two instruments. (See Box 2 for more information on standardized reporting templates and forms.)
- iii. **Common core documents:** To reduce the reporting burden, the United Nations human rights treaty bodies harmonized reporting by introducing the so-called common core document. States use this to report on implementation measures that are relevant to more than one instrument.²⁶
- iv. **Harmonized reporting guidelines:** Similarly, the United Nations has harmonized the reporting guidelines for human rights instruments, avoiding the need for separate guidance for each reporting mechanism.²⁷

3.3 Inadequate inter-agency cooperation

A frequent barrier to reporting shared across reporting regimes is a lack of information- and data-sharing within governments. For many States, fulfilling the objectives of international instruments requires a range of government agencies, departments and ministries to take responsibility for implementing different aspects of through-life management of conventional arms or ammunition. Consequently, the necessary data for reporting is distributed across the government.

Mechanisms for inter-agency cooperation and information-sharing on conventional arms and ammunition are crucial for enabling NPCs to gather the data and information needed for national implementation reports. Unfortunately, these mechanisms are often inadequate or absent. Even when such systems exist, they are frequently underutilized to provide the necessary data to NPCs for effective reporting.²⁸ As a result, national reports may be incomplete, inconsistent or inaccurate, placing a disproportionate burden on NPCs to gather information independently. This challenge can also be caused, at least in part, by a culture of secrecy within governments,

26 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Reporting to the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies: Training Guide, Part I – Manual” (HR/P/PT/20/Rev.1), 2014, 35.

27 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Reporting to the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies”, p. 35.

28 Arms Trade Treaty, Working Group on Transparency and Reporting, Co-Chairs’ Draft Report to the Seventh Conference of States Parties, ATT/CSP7.WGTR/2021/CHAIR/676/Conf.Rep, 2021, https://portal.thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_WGTR_Co-Chairs_Draft_Report_to_CSP7_with_all_Annexes_EN/ATT_WGTR_Co-Chairs_Draft_Report_to_CSP7_with_all_Annexes_EN.pdf; Mensah-Sackey and Holtom, *Lessons Learned from the 2024 Monrovia Workshop*, 15.

where ministries either do not share information and data or are not permitted to do so. This leaves NPCs unaware of or unable to access existing information.²⁹

Measures to strengthen inter-agency cooperation

States with established inter-agency cooperation mechanisms have found them instrumental in facilitating intergovernmental sharing of information and data, as well as improving the efficiency of reporting processes. Approaches vary from ad hoc inter-agency meetings to formal coordination bodies and inter-agency national commissions on SALW or arms control. Existing arrangements have helped States identify relevant stakeholders and develop processes for efficiently collecting information.³⁰ Furthermore, reporting commitments can catalyse the establishment or strengthening of inter-agency cooperation mechanisms. In the past, reporting has encouraged cooperation among government ministries, departments and agencies that previously operated in isolation.³¹

Inter-agency data-sharing can have other positive benefits, beyond national reporting. Strengthening data-sharing improves the availability of data and can contribute to more informed policymaking and better implementation of arms control measures.

The international community has supported States in strengthening inter-agency cooperation, particularly through international cooperation and assistance. For instance, States and other stakeholders have shared practical measures at multilateral meetings, aided States in conducting national assessments that brought together diverse stakeholders, and contributed to setting up inter-agency cooperation mechanisms and implementing targeted assistance projects to enhance data collection and information sharing capacities.

29 Ruben Nicolin, *Inputs for Action on Small Arms: Conclusions and Recommendations from the Thematic Expert Seminars* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 2024), 34, <https://doi.org/10.37559/CAAP/24/ASC/03>; Holtom and Bromley, *Implementing an Arms Trade Treaty*.

30 Arms Trade Treaty, “The Role of Interagency Cooperation in the Effective Implementation of Arms Trade Treaty Provisions”, Working Paper submitted by the President of the Tenth Conference of States Parties ATT/CSP10/2024/PRES/798/Conf.WP.IAC, 2024, https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_CSP10_President_Working_Paper_The_Role_of_Interagency_Cooperation_in_the_Effective_Implementation_of_ATT_Provisions_EN/ATT_CSP10_President_Working_Paper_The_Role_of_Interagency_Cooperation_in_the_Effective_Implementation_of_ATT_Provisions_EN.pdf.

31 David Atwood and Paul Holtom, *Lessons Learned Document on the Republic of Zambia’s Experience of Compiling an Initial Report* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, 2020), <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/FINAL-Lessons%20learned%20document%20on%20Zambias%20initial%20report.pdf>.



MINUGUA transports mortar rounds to a destruction site. Credit: © John Olsson / United Nations Photo

4. Lessons learned from using national reports on implementation

This section addresses common challenges associated with using national reports to support the implementation of international instruments. As outlined in the introduction, submitting a national report should not be the end point – the report should be used to strengthen implementation. Although reporting has intrinsic benefits for the reporting States (see Section 2), a reporting regime cannot be regarded as effective or efficient if submitted reports are not used.

This section focuses on how national reports have been used to support implementation. It examines three key challenges as well as ways to address them:

- ▶ Unclear purpose of reporting
- ▶ Limited use of national reports
- ▶ Restricted accessibility of national reports

4.1 Unclear purpose of reporting

The purpose of reporting on measures to implement an international instrument is often only vaguely defined. For instance, the PoA includes a reporting commitment but does not explicitly

explain the purpose or benefits of reporting.³² The ITI contains a provision for biennial reporting on its implementation and another that explains that States “will meet on a biennial basis to consider the reports”.³³ Yet, it does not explain the purpose and benefits of reporting.³⁴ A lack of clarity on the benefits that a reporting State can reasonably expect makes it more difficult for stakeholders to generate political will to report (see Section 3.1).

Measures to clarify the purpose of reporting

Clarifying the purpose of reporting is crucial for achieving high reporting rates. States are more likely to report if decision makers understand the purpose of reporting. Clarity of purpose can also aid in the design of new reporting regimes and can guide the review of existing instruments. Such clarity can also support awareness-raising efforts among States on the important role that reporting plays in helping to achieve the goals and objectives of these instruments.

Secretariats, along with States involved as office holders for several instruments, have provided some practical approaches to clarifying and communicating the purpose and benefits of reporting:

1. **Introductory and explanatory materials to introduce purpose and benefits:** Even when the text of an instrument does not explain the purpose and benefits of reporting, the secretariat, in cooperation with States and other interested stakeholders, can provide introductory and explanatory materials that clearly explain why States are required, requested, invited or encouraged to report. For example, the ATT Universalization Toolkit, developed by the Working Group on Treaty Universalization (WGTU) with the support of the ATT Secretariat, explains that the initial report “help[s] to track States’ implementation of their commitments under the Treaty”.³⁵
2. **Show progress in instrument implementation:** Under the APMBC and the CCM, States parties have adopted action plans that use the contents of reports on national implementation (under Article 7 of each convention) to monitor progress made for several specific indicators. APMBC and CCM States parties have mandated the respective meeting of states’ president, coordinating committee and the ISU to analyse these reports, establish baselines and track progress. While reporting under the APMBC and the CCM serves broader purposes beyond monitoring indicators, this approach illustrates one way in which national reporting on implementation can help demonstrate progress towards fulfilling an instrument’s goals and objectives.

32 United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, A/CONF.192/15, 2001, [https://docs.un.org/A/CONF.192/15\(SUPP\)](https://docs.un.org/A/CONF.192/15(SUPP)), Annex, para. 23 and 33.

33 United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, A/60/88, 2005, <https://docs.un.org/A/60/88>, Annex, para. 36 and 37.

34 The outcome documents of PoA/ITI Meetings of States and Review Conferences have included paragraphs on the purpose of reporting. However, these references have been made long after reporting modalities, including the voluntary reporting template, were introduced. The argument here is that guidance is most valuable and timely when provided before or while reporting modalities are being developed or at stages when they are under review with an explicit intention of making changes.

35 Arms Trade Treaty, Working Group on Treaty Universalization, ATT Universalization Toolkit ATT/CSP5.WGTU/2019/CHAIR/532/Conf.Rep, 2019, https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_CSP5_WGTU_Draft_Report_EN/ATT_CSP5_WGTU_Draft_Report_EN.pdf.

3. **Facilitate international cooperation and assistance:** Although Article 7 of the CCM obliges States parties to report on “the amounts, types and destinations of international cooperation and assistance provided”, it does not explicitly require information on assistance needs.³⁶ Yet the template of the annual CCM Article 7 report asks States to provide information on implementation challenges and international cooperation and assistance needs.³⁷ A similar approach can be found in the template for the national report on implementation of the PoA and the ITI, which invites States to provide information on their assistance needs to support implementation, as well as on international cooperation and assistance received or provided.³⁸ (See also Section 4.2.)

4.2 Limited use of national reports

Connected to the lack of clarity on the purpose and benefits of reporting, the text of international instruments and the outcome documents of their meetings rarely define how submitted reports should or will be used. In contrast to the United Nations’ processes on human rights or climate change, as well as the APMBC and the CCM, States have rarely agreed on establishing follow-up mechanisms to examine the contents of national reports on the implementation of conventional arms control instruments, including the PoA, the ITI and the ATT. Instead, States and other stakeholders are encouraged to review and engage in bilateral discussions on the contents of submitted national implementation reports. Such efforts remain ad hoc, often limited to States with sufficient capacity and resources to monitor reports, and they are not usually discussed at meetings of States.

The lack of use of information contained in national implementation reports can also lead to frustrations among States that request international cooperation and assistance through an instrument’s reporting process. It can be challenging for the requesting State to see whether its request has been acted upon or considered, e.g., if assistance providers, funders, or secretariats do not inform the requesting State of the use of its reports.³⁹

Measures to strengthen the use of national reports

While only limited use is made of national implementation reports under conventional arms control instruments, some practical methods for using reports exist, especially under the APMBC and the CCM. Secretariats, States and other interested stakeholders have used submitted national reports in six ways:

1. **There are dedicated sessions for the review of national implementation reports in meetings of States within the framework of an instrument** or a review is an integral part of

36 Convention on Cluster Munitions, *United Nations Treaty Series*, vol. 2688, https://treaties.unoda.org/tt/cluster_munitions, p. 39, Article 7.

37 Reporting formats for transparency reports under Article 7 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, accessible via CCM Implementation Support Unit, “Reporting”, <https://www.clusterconvention.org/reporting-forms/>.

38 The online portal for national reporting on implementation of the PoA and ITI is accessible via “UN Programme of Action: National Reporting”, <https://poa.un-arm.org/login>.

39 This can also entail procedural clarity, i.e., the steps that will be taken (or not taken) when a request for assistance is made. Nicolin, *Inputs for Action on Small Arms*, 25.

sessions on national implementation. For some instruments, meetings of States have an established constructive platform to discuss national reports. Under the APMBC and the CCM, Article 7 reports are discussed at Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences under multiple agenda items. States use these sessions to provide updates on their progress in implementing the treaty, based on their national reports.⁴⁰ International organizations and civil society complement such discussions by providing reflections on national implementation based on their “on the ground” experience. Stakeholders view these discussions as constructive opportunities to strengthen dialogue on implementation efforts and identify areas that require international cooperation and assistance.

2. **National implementation reports inform a thematic focus for meetings of States within the framework of an instrument.** While the contents of national implementation reports may not be the only reason for selecting a thematic focus, they can still inform the selection in two ways. First, an issue highlighted as a common challenge in a number of national implementation reports can be selected or highlighted by the secretariat or by the chair or president of the meeting of States to serve as a thematic focus. This has been the case with the selection of issues for focus within the ATT’s Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation (WGETI). Second, the ATT Secretariat and researchers have used ATT initial reports to provide information on trends in challenges and practices during WGETI sessions.
3. **National implementation reports help to direct international cooperation and assistance to where it is needed.** Some mechanisms at the international level respond to assistance requests submitted by States in their national implementation reports. For instance, priority has been given in the past to project proposals to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) that match assistance needs flagged in a State’s PoA/ITI national report. Furthermore, States have requested UNODA to set up a mechanism to “process offers and requests for assistance submitted under the [PoA] and the [ITI]”.⁴¹ The ATT Secretariat and the selection committee for the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) also examine initial reports on ATT implementation when examining applications for project funding.
4. **States and other stakeholders use information shared in national implementation reports to inform their bilateral engagements with States.** In relation to the point above on international cooperation and assistance, States use national implementation reports to inform their bilateral cooperation and assistance programmes with other States. United Nations entities, regional organizations and civil society organizations also use the reports to inform their assistance and cooperation programming. For example, when a State requests UNIDIR’s support to facilitate a baseline assessment of national weapons and ammunition management, UNIDIR reviews relevant national implementation reports as part of its preparations.
5. **The information contained in national implementation reports indicates progress in implementing an international instrument.** As outlined above (see Section 4.1), reports have been used as a baseline for progress indicators under the APMBC and the CCM.

40 James Revill, Victoria Viana Souza Guimarães and Luiza Delaflora Cassol, *Exploring Reporting and Interactive Dialogue Options for NPT Disarmament Obligations* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 25 April 2025), <https://doi.org/10.37559/WMD/25/NDV/02>.

41 United Nations, General Assembly, Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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, A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3, 2024, <https://docs.un.org/A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3>, Annex, para. 212.

6. **The information contained in national implementation reports informs the voluntary guidelines on implementation.** For instance, the Voluntary Basic Guide to Establishing a National Control System of the ATT incorporates information shared by States in their initial reports. This enabled the creation of an updated list of possible reference documents to be considered by States parties in their implementation of Article 5 of the ATT.⁴² However, national implementation reports do not always include sufficient detailed information to be used when drafting voluntary guidelines for implementing an instrument. Nonetheless, the reports provide an indicator for follow-up with States to discuss useful practices as well as providing an overview of common approaches.

4.3 Restricted accessibility of national reports

The usefulness of national reports depends heavily on their accessibility. Civil society organizations and research institutions often play a crucial role in analysing these reports and synthesizing trends, challenges and good practices for the international community.⁴³ However, this depends on access to the reports.

In recent years, there has been a growing trend, particularly under the ATT, to limit public access to national implementation reports by sharing them only with the secretariat and other States. Additionally, the fragmentation of reporting platforms across various websites and organizations complicates efforts to compare and complement data across instruments with overlapping scopes. For reporting to inform instrument processes effectively, the data collected must not only be available but must also be easily accessible and presented in a way that facilitates its use.⁴⁴

Measures to make national reports accessible

Effective steps have been taken under most instruments to improve access to national reports, including the development of well-structured websites and databases. Platforms such as the PoA/ITI reporting site, maintained by UNODA, provide user-friendly access to national reports, featuring data dashboards and country profiles that enable quick and comparable overviews.⁴⁵ These tools have been central in making reports more accessible to stakeholders.

In parallel, secretariats, States, and civil society organizations have actively raised awareness about the benefits of public reporting. While legitimate security concerns do exist, such awareness-raising efforts help States make informed decisions based on the value of transparency, rather than withholding reports due to a lack of understanding or a culture of secrecy that can hinder trust and effective international cooperation.

42 Correspondence with the author.

43 See, e.g., Cattaneo and Parker, *Analysis of the National Reports Submitted by States from 2002 to 2008*.

44 McDonald, 'Monitoring Implementation of Small Arms Measures', 253.

45 United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons", <https://smallarms.un-arm.org/>.



5. Considerations for reporting on national implementation of the Global Framework

As States discuss the modalities of the process for voluntary national reporting on implementation of the Global Framework, the design of the reporting regime – and the support provided to help States supply relevant information – will be crucial for its success. The lessons highlighted in Sections 3 and 4 can provide a valuable starting point for stakeholders involved in discussions on reporting. This section draws conclusions from the challenges and effective measures outlined above, addressing four key questions to provide food for thought for those involved in preparing for effective and efficient reporting on implementation of the Global Framework:

1. **What could be the purposes and benefits of reporting on national implementation of the Global Framework?**
2. **What could be the modalities for reporting on the implementation of the Global Framework?**
3. **How could States be supported in reporting on the implementation of the Global Framework?**
4. **How could national reports on the implementation of the Global Framework be used to help achieve the Global Framework's goals and objectives?**

5.1 Considerations for clarifying and communicating the purpose of reporting on implementation

While the Global Framework foresees reporting as part of its follow-up process, only one reason for reporting is identified: to inform the discussions of the 2027 Meeting of States.⁴⁶ This is a clear statement of purpose, but it only refers to the initial overviews submitted in 2026. Furthermore, it might not be sufficient to address the challenge of a lack of political will to report.

Therefore, there is a need to communicate the purpose and benefits of reporting. States, under the leadership of the Chair of the Preparatory Meeting of States and with support from the Secretariat, should specify the purpose and benefits of reporting on the implementation of the Global Framework. Arriving at a clear and straightforward message about the purpose and benefits of reporting will support outreach activities, the raising of awareness and encouraging national reporting. Clear messaging can also help NPCs and relevant government bodies persuade senior officials to provide the resources necessary for effective inter-agency cooperation and information-sharing processes, which are essential for meaningful reporting.

One typical and important purpose for reporting is to request or offer international cooperation and assistance. Reporting can therefore provide a benefit for requesting States if they receive assistance that helps them to strengthen their national through-life management of conventional ammunition. The Global Framework indicates that the reporting template should link to “needs and priorities of States, including in relation to international cooperation and assistance”.⁴⁷ Further elaborating on this link could help to encourage States to report openly on challenges and needs, as well as effective measures and progress. For instance, the Preparatory Meeting of States could suggest that those that have submitted national implementation reports that show gaps and articulate needs will be positively considered when applying for international cooperation and assistance.

Reporting could also be used to share effective practices for safe and secure through-life management of conventional ammunition. These could be included in guidance documents, such as updated International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), which could also be considered as a specific purpose and benefit when outlining and communicating why to report.

Finally, outreach efforts to encourage reporting should emphasize the value of reporting in establishing adequate inter-agency cooperation and coordination mechanisms. For States that do not currently have mechanisms for the through-life management of conventional ammunition, compiling the information and data for a report could help foster new connections and cooperation. This, in turn, could support the implementation of the Global Framework and help make progress towards achieving its goals and objectives.

46 United Nations, “Global Framework”, Annex, para. 30.

47 United Nations, “Global Framework”, Annex, para. 29.

5.2 Considerations for reporting modalities

Determining the modalities for reporting under the Global Framework – that is, what information is needed, at what level of detail and when – should be guided by the purpose of reporting and its follow-up mechanisms. States should also balance the utility of reporting with the effort required; a key consideration should be to limit the reporting burden for States. Using Table 1 for guidance, some considerations for reporting modalities could include:

1. **Frequency of reporting:** The text of the Global Framework encourages States to provide a voluntary initial overview in 2026 on steps taken to implement it and to inform the first Meeting of States in 2027. Several options could be selected regarding the frequency of reporting, not all mutually exclusive:
 - a. The PoA/ITI approach: An updated report in advance of each Meeting of States and Review Conference
 - b. The ATT approach: An initial report and subsequent updates only to reflect new developments
 - c. A “thematic” approach: A report that contains detailed information for a specific theme to be addressed at a Meeting of States or technical expert meeting (e.g., only for one objective), which is made available in advance of the meeting
2. **Platform for sharing information contained in reports:** All the international instruments reviewed for this Insight have online platforms that make submitted national implementation reports available to States and, in most cases, other interested stakeholders. The presentation of the information contained in reports and the ability to analyse the contents of submitted reports will have an impact on the use of information. Several options exist:
 - a. Post the submitted reports directly on the Secretariat’s website
 - b. Present disaggregated data and information from each State’s report via an accessible online portal that provides data-analysis tools to identify trends across different States regarding implementation
 - c. Establish a central data hub for reporting across international arms and ammunition control and humanitarian disarmament instruments
3. **Guidance and support for reporting:** The Global Framework already mandates the Secretariat to develop a reporting template to be discussed and considered by States. But experience shows that additional guidance and support are also helpful. Such guidance can highlight where there are synergies with other reporting commitments and obligations. This could include:
 - a. Guidelines for how to complete a national report on implementation measures
 - b. Training workshops for NPCs on how to complete a report, provided online or in-person by the Secretariat
 - c. Assistance and cooperation for a State to hold a national workshop to compile its report on Global Framework national implementation measures
4. **Use of reports:** See Section 5.4 for considerations and suggestions

5.3 Considerations for supporting States to prepare reports

As Section 3 highlights, experience from other instruments shows that some States will struggle to meet their reporting commitments due to a lack of political will, limited capacity or inadequate inter-agency cooperation. The Preparatory Meeting of States should anticipate these challenges and discuss measures to be put in place that enable reporting on the national implementation of the Global Framework. Given that some States have already highlighted their strained capacities due to reporting on the implementation of multiple international instruments, the Preparatory Meeting of States should seek to identify and agree upon pathways to make reporting more efficient.

Some of the options for guidance and support for States in addressing these challenges are outlined in Section 5.2 above. For example, the Secretariat could be mandated and provided with the necessary resources to support national reporting by drafting guidance material and conducting awareness-raising or capacity-building activities. In addition, the Global Framework could follow the approach recently adopted by the ATT and consider requesting volunteers to be “reporting champions”. These champions share their experiences and support other States in their region or with which they share legal and bureaucratic traditions, language or other common elements.

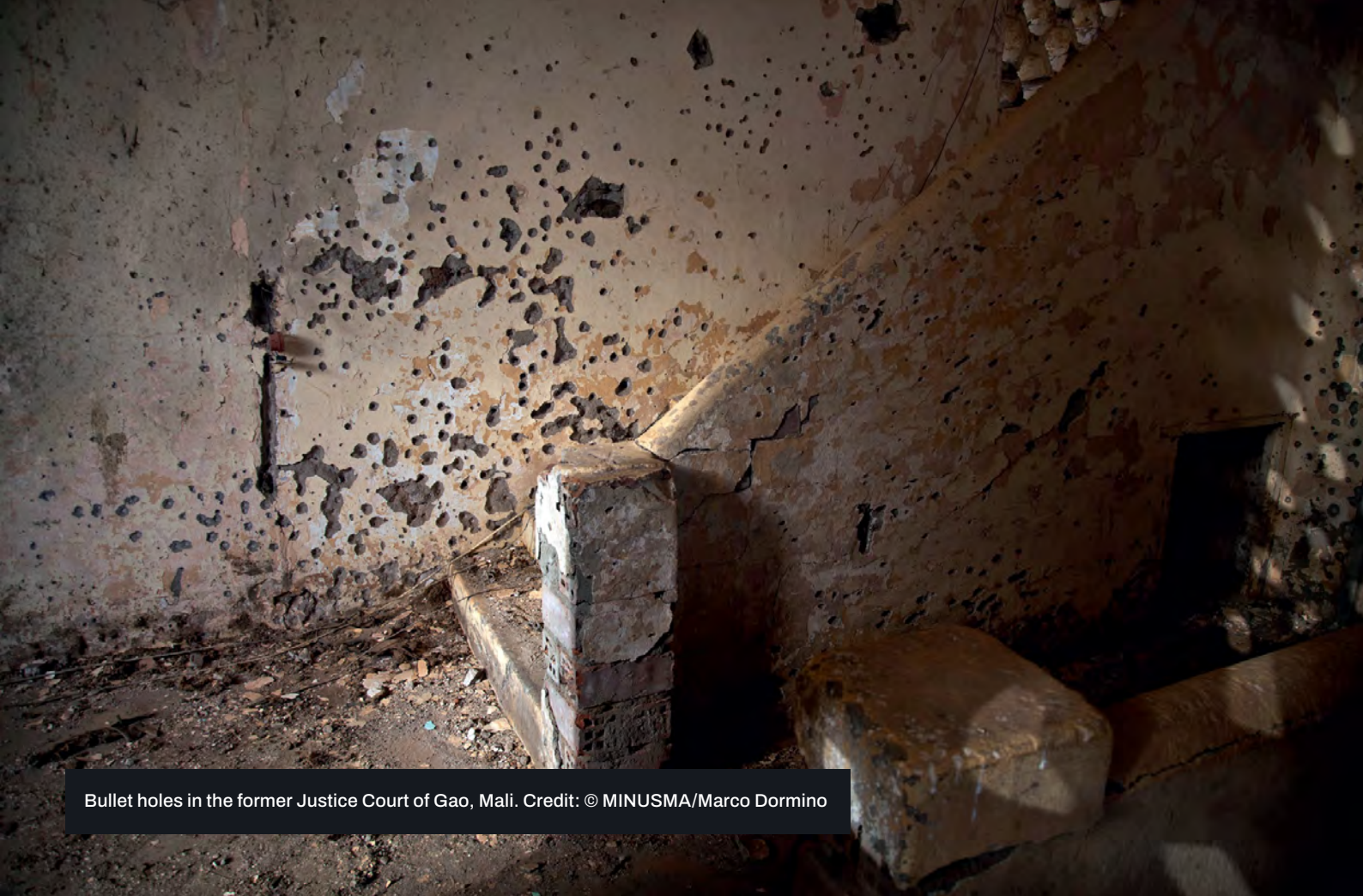
Experience from reporting for other instruments has shown that some States will benefit significantly from the provision of international cooperation and assistance to gather relevant information and data, with potential benefits for inter-agency cooperation and coordination (as highlighted in Section 5.1).

5.4 Considerations for using reports for follow-up and implementation

As highlighted throughout this Insight, when national implementation reports are used at the instrument level it can help stimulate reporting by States and thus have a positive impact on reporting rates. It is worth considering how reports on national implementation of the Global Framework can be used to support implementation and efforts to achieve the goals and objectives of the Framework. This Insight indicates several ways in which national implementation reports are used. The following options for using Global Framework implementation reports are presented for consideration by States:

1. **Analyse trends in implementation, effective measures and challenges:** UNIDIR, other research institutes and civil society organizations analyse the national implementation reports of various international instruments. It is expected that such efforts will continue when reports on the implementation of the Global Framework are made available. These research efforts help to identify trends in implementation at the global and regional levels, help to identify common and effective practices for the safe and secure through-life management of conventional ammunition, and help to identify challenges – both those that are common to many States and those that are new and emerging. This type of information can then be used for several other options below.

2. **Provide effective measures for voluntary guidance materials:** As mentioned in Section 5.1, national reports can be used to share effective practices for safe and secure through-life conventional ammunition management. One option could be to collect such practical measures and use the information contained in reports to develop and update guidance documents, such as the IATG.
3. **Inform the agenda for Meetings of States and technical expert meetings:** National reports on implementation of the Global Framework should be one of the primary sources of information on the measures taken by States, as well as highlighting challenges and implementation gaps. The results of the analysis of reports can help to identify priority areas or objectives for Meetings of States and for governmental technical expert meetings under the Global Framework. At these meetings, States could use their national reports to prepare their interventions. States could also use their interventions in these meetings to provide an update on measures taken to implement the Global Framework that have been implemented since submission of the voluntary initial overview on Global Framework implementation.
4. **Show progress in implementation:** Analyzing national implementation reports can help demonstrate progress over time in implementing the Global Framework, showing both national and global progress toward achieving the Global Framework's goals and objectives. Meetings of States could consider the approach taken by States parties to the APMBC and CCM, whereby national reports are used to inform the development of indicators that measure progress and identify areas where further efforts are needed.
5. **Inform voluntary peer review:** The Global Framework could consider facilitating offers to support States, upon request, with reviewing national implementation of the Global Framework. States could be given the option to request a follow-up by the Secretariat or a peer review by another State. National reports on implementation would provide official information and data to serve as the basis for conducting a review. The aim would be to help the requesting State with identifying areas and options for strengthening the through-life management of conventional ammunition. This could also help to enhance inter-agency cooperation for implementation.
6. **Facilitate requests for and offers of international cooperation and assistance:** National reports on the implementation of the Global Framework could be an important method for States to communicate their requests for and offers of international cooperation and assistance to implement the Global Framework. Its global assistance mechanism should follow up on assistance requests and offers flagged by States in national implementation reports. This could include:
 - a. Support to develop assistance requests into a project proposal of sufficient quality to enable funding mechanisms, donors or implementers to engage
 - b. Matching requests with existing offers and resources at the regional and global levels
 - c. Facilitating baseline assessments for States wishing to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement



Bullet holes in the former Justice Court of Gao, Mali. Credit: © MINUSMA/Marco Dormino

6. Conclusions

The 2025 Preparatory Meeting of States and the 2027 Meeting of States will be crucial in shaping the Global Framework's follow-up process, including expectations for national reporting on implementation. This Insight highlights not only the importance of reporting for the follow-up process but also underscores the likely challenges associated with national reporting. Lessons from other international conventional arms control and humanitarian disarmament instruments indicate that several common reporting challenges can result in low levels of reporting and submitted reports containing only limited information. This includes cases where there is a lack of political will, limited capacity or inadequate inter-agency cooperation for reporting, or where the purpose and benefits of compiling and submitting such reports are unclear and not evident. This Insight provides stakeholders with actionable guidance to learn from past challenges and apply proven approaches to reporting.

Setting up an effective and efficient reporting regime under the Global Framework will depend on two key dimensions: (a) enabling States to report; and (b) ensuring that submitted reports are used to support efforts to achieve the Global Framework's goals and objectives. The former requires careful balancing of reporting modalities to ensure a reporting burden that is proportionate to the expected benefits of reporting, and support for States struggling to meet their reporting commitments. The latter implies creating clarity on how submitted Global Framework reports will be used and for what purpose. At a time when States are under increasing pressure to

improve the efficiency of international processes, and reporting in particular is seen as a burden rather than a valuable measure for implementing international instruments, it is important to ensure that the reporting regime of the Global Framework can help promote safe, secure and sustainable through-life management of conventional ammunition.



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