

## 30. Small arms

### Overview

On 26 September 2013, the Security Council held a high-level meeting and adopted its first resolution in connection with small arms. The resolution was adopted by 14 votes in favour, none against and one abstention (Russian Federation).

### Briefing and decision on small arms

During the meeting, the Secretary-General introduced his biennial report on small arms,<sup>968</sup> underscoring how the absence of regulation, the ease of access to arms and the great profitability of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons fuelled insecurity and conflict, leading to a vast range of human rights violations.<sup>969</sup> The Council also heard a briefing by the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who stated that the Committee was a first-hand witness to the devastating costs to civilians of the easy access to, and misuse of, small arms and light weapons.<sup>970</sup>

Speaking prior to the vote, the representative of the Russian Federation maintained that the draft resolution lacked a provision on the supply of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. He affirmed that the root of the problem of small arms and light weapons was illicit trafficking and stated that imposing universal prohibitions on the transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors and unauthorized State recipients and users was of particular importance. A salient example was the recent events in Mali, where the weapons used, initially transferred to Libyan groups for humanitarian reasons, became instruments for the violation of fundamental human rights and the source of suffering for the civilian population.<sup>971</sup>

In the resolution, the Council, *inter alia*, encouraged the establishment or strengthening, where appropriate, of subregional and regional cooperation, coordination and information-sharing mechanisms with

a view to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.<sup>972</sup> The Council also encouraged information-sharing on possible arms embargo violations between groups of experts, peacekeeping missions within their mandates and other relevant United Nations entities. In addition, the Council urged States to consider signing and ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty<sup>973</sup> as soon as possible, and encouraged States, intergovernmental, regional and subregional organizations that were in a position to do so to render assistance in capacity-building to enable States parties to fulfil and implement the Treaty's obligations.

During the debate that followed the adoption of resolution [2117 \(2013\)](#), speakers welcomed the resolution and the recommendations proposed by the Secretary-General in his report, concurring on ways in which international cooperation could be strengthened to better tackle the issue through existing mechanisms. Several delegations also expressed their support for the recently adopted Arms Trade Treaty, which for the first time regulated international trade in conventional weapons, and vowed to work towards its rapid entry into force and implementation.

Speakers emphasized the impact of illicit small arms and light weapons on international peace and security, stating that they exacerbated conflict and posed a threat to civilians, especially women and children.<sup>974</sup> In that regard, several speakers stressed the importance of the role of the Council in regard to the issue of illicit small arms and light weapons in conflict and post-conflict situations.<sup>975</sup> The representative of the Republic of Korea outlined an enhanced role for the Council that could be achieved, *inter alia*, by assisting and supporting Member States in

<sup>968</sup> [S/2013/503](#). In 2007, the Council requested that the Secretary-General submit to it on a biennial basis, beginning in 2008, a report on the issue of small arms (see [S/PRST/2007/24](#)).

<sup>969</sup> [S/PV.7036](#), pp. 2-3.

<sup>970</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

<sup>971</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>972</sup> Resolution [2117 \(2013\)](#).

<sup>973</sup> See General Assembly resolution [67/234 B](#) of 2 April 2013.

<sup>974</sup> [S/PV.7036](#), p. 6 (Australia); p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 8 (Luxembourg); pp. 11-12 (Morocco); p. 13 (Rwanda); pp. 18-19 (Togo); and p. 19 (Argentina).

<sup>975</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Australia); p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 8 (Luxembourg); p. 9 (United Kingdom); p. 10 (Republic of Korea); p. 15 (Azerbaijan); p. 16 (United States); pp. 18-19 (Togo); and p. 19 (Argentina).

implementing arms embargoes, giving effective mandates and sufficient resources to peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions as well as special political missions and enhancing coordination and information-sharing across the United Nations system. In addition,

he suggested that the Council establish a follow-up mechanism to the biennial reports of the Secretary-General and maintain momentum by continually assessing the process.<sup>976</sup>

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<sup>976</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

## Meeting: small arms

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
<a href="#">S/PV.7036</a> 26 September 2013	The impact of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on international peace and security  Report of the Secretary-General on small arms ( <a href="#">S/2013/503</a> )  Letter dated 6 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2013/536</a> )	Draft resolution submitted by 26 Member States <sup>a</sup> ( <a href="#">S/2013/570</a> )	15 Member States <sup>b</sup>	Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross	Secretary-General, all Council members, <sup>c</sup> Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross	Resolution <a href="#">2117 (2013)</a> 14-0-1 <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Guatemala, Japan, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom and United States.

<sup>b</sup> Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Germany, Japan, Liberia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago.

<sup>c</sup> Guatemala was represented by its President; Luxembourg and the United Kingdom by their Deputy Prime Ministers; Australia, Azerbaijan, France and the Republic of Korea by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs; Morocco and Rwanda by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; Pakistan by its Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs; and the United States by its Permanent Representative and member of the President's Cabinet.

<sup>d</sup> *For:* Argentina, Azerbaijan, Australia, China, France, Guatemala, Luxembourg, Morocco, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Togo, United Kingdom, United States;

*Abstaining:* Russian Federation.

## 31. Women and peace and security

### Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held seven meetings, including one high-level meeting, and adopted two resolutions and two presidential statements in connection with women and peace and security.

In its deliberations, the Council primarily focused on sexual violence in armed conflict and on ways to strengthen accountability for perpetrators as it considered the first and second reports of the Secretary-General on the issue. In addition, Council members discussed progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), with a particular focus on ways to enhance women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding and improve access to justice and reparations for victims.

In 2012 and 2013, the Council continued to include provisions relating to women and peace and security in its country-specific decisions as well as in decisions relating to other thematic issues.<sup>977</sup>

Table 1 lists the meetings at which the item was considered and gives information on, inter alia, invitees, speakers and decisions adopted. Tables 2 and 3 list relevant provisions in decisions adopted under country-specific and thematic items, respectively

### Sexual violence in armed conflict

On 23 February 2012, the Council considered the first report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in armed conflict.<sup>978</sup> In her briefing, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict underlined the leadership role of the Council on the issue. She noted that the report of the Secretary-General was one of the tools available to combat impunity as it provided political leaders with verified information to track and address sexual violence that was linked to insecurity. It served as a record of best practices and provided a baseline for systematic engagement with parties to armed conflict. She also highlighted the value of listing, in the context

of sanctions regimes, as a deterrent against sexual violence.<sup>979</sup>

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations stated that the mandate related to sexual violence in armed conflict was one of the most demanding in peacekeeping. He welcomed the strengthened partnership between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Representative and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and mentioned examples of concrete progress, including the finalization of the terms of reference of the women's protection advisers and guidance on the implementation of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements.<sup>980</sup>

The Council was also briefed by the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, who said that addressing sexual violence required powerful and urgent leadership at the national, regional and international levels. She added that leadership was essential, in particular in relation to prioritizing prevention, ensuring a survivor-centric approach and strengthening justice and accountability.<sup>981</sup>

Speakers expressed contrasting views on the report and on the mandate of the Special Representative. While most speakers welcomed the availability and use of the data produced through the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements, several Member States questioned the reliability and impartiality of the information provided in the report and expressed concerns about the scope and definition of the mandate of the Special Representative. The representative of the Russian Federation argued that attempts to artificially impose on the Council the duty to address sexual violence in all its aspects would lead to imbalances in system-wide coherence and to an erosion of the legitimacy and importance of Council's decisions on grave, complex and urgent issues.<sup>982</sup> He disagreed with the broad interpretation of the mandate of the Special Representative and warned that unilateral change in the scope of an issue addressed through a special mechanism established as a result of

<sup>977</sup> For information on other cross-cutting issues before the Council, see part I, sect. 28, "Children and armed conflict", and sect. 29, "Protection of civilians in armed conflict".

<sup>978</sup> S/2012/33.

<sup>979</sup> S/PV.6722, p. 3-4.

<sup>980</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>981</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-10.

<sup>982</sup> Ibid., p. 15.