

Position Paper for the United Nations General Assembly

The topics before the General Assembly are: (1) Controlling and Limiting the Use and Impacts of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) and (2) Addressing the Rampant Issue of Transnational Crime through Intergovernmental Cooperation. The Kingdom of Sweden commits itself in formulating strategies that shall contribute to the diminishing and eradication of crime, terrorism, and other threats to humanity. Sweden pledges Member States that upholding the values of discipline and security is a vital action towards a more peaceful and progressive world.

I. Controlling and Limiting the Use and Impacts of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs)

Small arms and light weapons (SALWs) have become a humanitarian burden in many regions as well as in crime-ridden places outside conflict areas. These dangerous items often proliferate in without restriction and are used or kept by criminals, rebels, regular armies, or civilians. The causes and consequences of small arms proliferation and misuse are multifaceted and wide-ranging. Controlling and limiting the use and impacts of illicit SALWs has always been a priority of the Swedish government.

Sweden, through the statement of H.E. Per Thöresson to the Security Council in 2015, recognizes that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a “huge contribution to the regulation of conventional arms and to the combat against illicit small arms. Sweden has always actively participated in the ATT process and shall remain as a dynamic partner in supporting the Treaty’s effective universalization and implementation. At the local level, the national government has ratified two important arms laws: the Weapons Act and the Military Equipment Act. The Weapons Act regulates the possession of firearms by civilians, the imports of firearms and ammunition, and the licensing of arms brokers. Under the Military Equipment Act, “Swedish authorities, Swedish companies, and persons who are resident or permanently domiciled in Sweden” are forbidden from brokering arms abroad without a permit. The aforementioned acts are in place to ensure that weapons are used for lawful purposes as well as that the misuse of and demand for these weapons are curbed. To supplement its disarmament and non-proliferation policies, Swedish customs and police services have organized training on weapons legislation, weapons technique, and handling for customs officers involved in operations control activities. Increased interstate coordination is also necessary for effective results. This has been witnessed in successful projects in, for example, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and Kenya, where Sweden and other donors and partner countries have worked in close collaboration. Amplifying the goals of A/RES70/29, Sweden continues to provide substantial financial support and aid to other countries for the securing of small arms stockpiles and the destruction of surplus and obsolete weapons.

To address the issues surrounding the use and impacts of illicit small arms and light weapons, Sweden would like to elevate the following suggestions to the international community: (1) that there be a greater focus on ammunitions in small arms issues and that this agenda be included in the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons; (2) that efforts against the misuse and illicit transfer of SALWs be intensified together with the better implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty; and (3) that male social roles, which, in many cases shape armed violence, be tackled. The Kingdom of Sweden shall advance its efforts in promoting the responsible and controlled use of arms to prevent their harmful impacts produced by actions that are contrary to their intended use.

II. Addressing the Rampant Issue of Transnational Crime through Intergovernmental Cooperation

With the development and increasing availability of technology and easier mobilization between states, transnational crime has also evolved and worsened. Transnational crime challenges the lives of those that

are affected but also the democratic principles and the rule of law by which states abide. The Kingdom of Sweden has been actively pursuing the elimination of cross-border crime, human trafficking in particular, within and outside the country. Acknowledging that crime and issues of criminal justice cannot be addressed solely at the national level, the Swedish government also intends to act to develop and improve the effectiveness of international cooperation to combat and prevent crime, both in the Baltic Sea region and internationally.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), Europol, and other organizations estimate that transnational crime in the form of human trafficking has been the fastest growing source of income for organized crime, comparable in extent to the illegal drug and arms trade. Echoing the words of Swedish Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson at the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Sweden “resolve(s) to do more, to increase our efforts to contribute to peace, security, development, and the respect for human rights.” At present, Sweden is focusing on crime-fighting measures aimed at reducing the demand for sexual services. Sweden has implemented successful domestic measures to combat human trafficking, notably in its purpose of sexual exploitation. In 1999, Sweden became the first country to criminalize the purchase of sex with the Swedish Sex Purchase Act. The ban’s criminalization of the purchase of sexual services targets the demand, the sex-buyer and the prospective sex-buyer. This law has proven to be a successful strategy and an effective tool to counteract prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. Outside the country, the ban has become known as the “Swedish Model” and is already gaining steady support across Europe. Sweden also provides assistance to other states to confront transnational crime, a recent example being its provision of mutual legal assistance to Kenya entered in March 2016.

To contribute to the reduction and prevention of transnational crime as manifested by human trafficking, Sweden would like to recommend to its fellow Member States the following plans of action: (1) that legislation similar but not limited to the 1999 Sex Purchase Act be adopted and ratified; and (2) that penalties for the purchase of sexual services linked to human trafficking include imprisonment and increased fines; and (3) that national governments increase efforts to reduce the risk of re-offending and facilitate the re-integration of human trafficking offenders into the society. Upholding human life and justice through international cooperation shall remain a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy.

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