



**Working meeting of the Parliamentary Confederation of
the Americas (COPA) Committee on Democracy and Peace**

Asunción, Paraguay

November 4, 2014

**RESOLUTION ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY AND THE PROTOCOL
AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN
FIREARMS, THEIR PARTS AND COMPONENTS AND AMMUNITION**

CONSIDERING that the international arms trade, when undertaken irresponsibly or diverted to illicit markets, contributes to armed conflict and thus to an increased rate of violence and crime, and this often results in serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, acts of terrorism and diversion for the benefit of organized crime;

CONCERNED by the increase in the levels of injury and violence generated by transnational organized criminal groups in some regions of the world due to illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition;

OBSERVING that the reduction of illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition constitutes one of the chief means of decreasing violence generated by activities of transnational organized criminal groups;

CONSIDERING that civilians, especially women and children, are the main victims of armed conflicts and violence;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the devastating effects of irresponsible trade in conventional weapons undermine peace, human safety and security, initiatives to reduce poverty and prospects for sustainable socio-economic development;

KNOWING that the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (the Protocol), as part of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, has been ratified to date by 111 States and is one of the main international legal instruments to combat the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition;

RECOGNIZING also that, in April 2013, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which comes into force on December 24, 2014 and constitutes the first international legally binding instrument governing the conventional weapons trade;

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION the preliminary results of the world study on arms trafficking carried out by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC);

CONSIDERING the paramount importance of harmonizing national laws so as to effectively combat the illicit traffic of arms throughout the Americas;

OBSERVING WITH APPRECIATION the assistance offered by UNODC to States who request it through the Global Firearms Programme in order to facilitate ratification and implementation of the Protocol and its Framework Convention, in particular by providing tools like model legislation on firearms in order to support legislators' efforts increase the effectiveness of national illicit arms trafficking laws;

CONSIDERING that, in addition to adopting national laws, legislators must provide for effective penalty mechanisms for offences and monitor their full performance in order to put an end to the impunity that reigns in many countries;

NOTING WITH INTEREST resolution L.6/Rev. 2 from the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, entitled "Importance of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime", in which the Conference *invites* States that have not yet done so to consider becoming Parties to the Protocol; *strongly urges* States that are Parties to the Protocol to harmonize their laws with the Protocol; and *gives special emphasis* to the importance of States' adopting proper legislative frameworks that include appropriate provisions governing penalties, improvement of technical skills and professional development of personnel responsible for penal investigations in relation to the illicit trafficking of firearms, of drugs and other forms of transnational organized crime;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the contribution of the Protocol and of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;

AWARE of the importance of addressing the problem of illicit arms trafficking and armed violence comprehensively in the light of these two international legal instruments;

KNOWING that it is the responsibility of all States, in accordance with their respective international obligations, to regulate and monitor international trading of conventional weapons, to prevent their diversion for illicit use and to implement effective systems of national control;

NOTING that the Treaty and the Protocol are the only legally binding international instruments, and that they are complementary and mutually reinforcing;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the parliamentarians play a very important role in the Treaty's defence and endorsement, as well as its ratification by their respective governments, integration into national law and effective implementation;

The Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), by means of its General Assembly, recognizes that it is essential to prevent all illicit trafficking and to regulate legal trade through the signing and ratification of the Treaty and the Protocol, and to oversee the integration of the legally binding provisions of these international instruments into national law. To this end, the parliamentarians:

1. **APPLAUD** the successful negotiations of the Final Conference held in March 2013, which led to the adoption of the Treaty and the increase in the number of States that are Parties to the Treaty and the Protocol;
2. **REAFFIRM** the importance of signing and ratifying the Treaty as well as the Protocol, because they are complementary and mutually reinforcing;
3. **URGE** the governments of their respective States to take action to ensure the ratification and promotion of the Treaty and the Protocol, which will save lives as well as protect and promote human rights, and **commit** to promoting the ratification of the Treaty and the Protocol to their colleagues in their respective parliaments, particularly through the following measures: direct contact with foreign affairs departments, media interviews, information documents for internal use, motions or questions in parliament, meetings with parliamentary speakers and public awareness raising;
4. **ENSURE** that their national laws reflect and integrate the provisions of the Treaty and the Protocol and that their respective governments uphold their commitments with respect to both instruments;
5. **GUARANTEE** their full cooperation with other regional and international organizations to promote ratification of the Treaty and the Protocol.

Resolution adopted during the 13th General Assembly of COPA, held in Asunción, Paraguay, from November 3 to 5, 2014.