

Implementation of the International Tracing Instrument Guidelines for National Reporting

INTRODUCTION

Recognizing that the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) is key to the effectiveness of national, regional and global efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in these weapons, the General Assembly, on 8 December 2005, adopted the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (International Tracing Instrument /ITI).

States have agreed to report on a biennial basis to the Secretary-General on their implementation of the ITI, including, where appropriate, information on national experiences in tracing illicit SALW, as well as measures taken in the field of international cooperation and assistance. This report may form part of a State's national report on its implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (Programme of Action) (ITI, para. 36).

States have agreed to meet on a biennial basis to consider the implementation reports for the International Tracing Instrument (ITI, para. 37). The General Assembly has decided that the first such meeting shall be held within the framework of the biennial meeting of States to consider the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action, scheduled for 14–18 July 2008, in New York (A/RES/61/66, paras. 4–5; A/RES/62/47, paras. 4–5).

The General Assembly has encouraged States to submit national reports on their implementation of the International Tracing Instrument, as well as the Programme of Action, well in advance of the next biennial meeting of States (A/RES/62/47, para. 6). By Note Verbale dated 28 January 2008, UNODA has requested States to prepare one combined report for the International Tracing Instrument and the Programme of Action, to be communicated to the Secretariat before 31 March. The report on the Tracing Instrument should preferably be presented as a separate chapter of the combined report.

The following guidelines are designed to assist States in reporting on their implementation of the International Tracing Instrument. While they highlight various issues of importance to Instrument implementation, the guidelines do not offer a comprehensive description of the content of the Instrument. In preparing their reports, States are encouraged to consult the full text of the International Tracing Instrument, available at:

<<http://disarmament2.un.org/cab/Markingandtracing/InternationalInstrumentEnglish.pdf>>

GUIDELINES

Marking

For the purpose of identifying and tracing illicit SALW, States have made a series of commitments relating to weapons marking (ITI, paras. 7–10). In reporting on their implementation of the Instrument in this area, States are encouraged to include the following information:

- national marking practices related to markings used to indicated country of manufacture and/or country of import as applicable (ITI, para. 31(b))
- measures taken to ensure that all SALW in the possession of government armed and security forces for their own use are duly marked (ITI, para 8(d))

Note: States could also provide information on the content of such markings, addressing in particular the question of the unique identification and tracing of government-held SALW.

- measures developed by manufacturers within their jurisdiction against the removal or alteration of markings (ITI, para. 8(e))

Record-keeping

For the purpose of tracing illicit SALW, States have made a series of commitments relating to record-keeping (ITI, paras. 11–13). In reporting on their implementation of the Instrument in this area, States could include the following information:

- measures taken to ensure that accurate and comprehensive records are established for all marked SALW within their territory, and maintained in accordance with relevant provisions of the Instrument (ITI, para. 11)

Cooperation in tracing

For the purpose of tracing illicit SALW, States have made a series of commitments relating to tracing cooperation (ITI, paras. 14–23). In reporting on their implementation of the Instrument in this area, States are encouraged to include the following information:

- name and contact information for the national point(s) of contact (ITI, para. 31(a))

Note: States may decide to designate more than one point of contact (ITI, para. 25)—for example, one point of contact charged with receiving and initiating requests for tracing assistance, and a second with responsibility for other aspects of Instrument implementation, such as information exchange.

- measures taken to ensure States are capable of undertaking traces and responding to tracing requests in accordance with the requirements of the Instrument (ITI, para. 14)

Cross-cutting issues

States are also encouraged to address the following cross-cutting issues, as identified in both the Instrument and General Assembly Resolution 62/47:

- national laws, regulations and administrative procedures—whether existing, new or planned—that ensure the effective implementation of the Instrument (ITI, para. 24)

Note: In implementing the International Tracing Instrument, States may need to determine: a) changes to their laws, regulations and administrative procedures that are needed to meet the requirements of the Instrument; and b) whether and how to strengthen national capacity for purposes of Instrument implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordination; consultation with industry, NGOs and other stakeholders; training programmes)

- implementation challenges and opportunities (A/RES/62/47, para. 8)
- national experiences in tracing illicit SALW (ITI, para. 36)
- measures taken in the field of international cooperation and assistance (ITI, para. 36)

Note: Under this heading, States could indicate their priority needs. They could also indicate if they would need assistance to address such needs. States in a position to do so could indicate what kind of assistance they can make available in support of Instrument implementation.