

**Statement by Dr. Natalie Goldring  
International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)  
"Advancing work on gender issues and on eliminating Gender Based Violence"**

26 August 2019

*Because of time limits, the delivered statement will be abridged.*

Thank you, chair.

I'm pleased to speak on behalf of the International Action Network on Small Arms, IANSA. We are a global network of NGOs working to decrease armed violence. We are also the official coordinator of civil society in the UN small arms process.

**IANSA welcomes the attention to GBV and gender generally**

The President's draft has many positive aspects and represents a significant step forward. If it is adopted, the next test will be the application of the principles.

For example, we appreciate the transparency with respect to the most recent sponsorship process. But the result, even after consideration of the gender dimension, was 56 percent men and 44 percent women.

Effective, full participation is key. The numbers are only part of the story.

**Synergies: Lessons from PoA and useful material from PoA on gender**

Another positive aspect of the President's draft is the attention to complementarity among instruments. The draft mentions the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security. We would also highlight the importance of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Secretary General's new disarmament agenda, and recommend their inclusion.

During the Third Review Conference on the United Nations Programme of Action (PoA), for example, States reiterated the importance of encouraging "the full participation and representation of women, including in leadership roles and as agents of change, in policymaking, planning and implementation processes [...] relating to community safety, violence reduction, collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons and conflict prevention and resolution." Moreover, States recognized "that eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a key part of combating gender-based violence."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Text adapted from the IANSA Women's Network Call to Action on Gender and Small Arms Control. Quotations from the Final Report of the Third Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The Secretary General's new Disarmament Agenda also offers useful material.

### **Gender-responsive disarmament and arms control<sup>2</sup>**

As we know, the ownership and use of small arms is closely linked to specific expressions of masculinity related to control, power, domination and strength. Men constitute a massive majority of the owners of small arms and young men constitute the vast majority of perpetrators of armed violence. Women, however, are more frequently the victims of gender-based violence facilitated by small arms, including domestic violence and sexual violence. Women can also bear indirect effects of armed violence, including psychological and economic burdens.

Key actions within the Secretary General's Disarmament Agenda include:

Action 36:

Full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes. The Secretary-General calls for the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security.

Action 37:

Gender parity on disarmament bodies established by the Secretariat. The Secretary-General will work to achieve gender parity on all panels, boards, expert groups and other bodies established under his auspices in the field of disarmament.

### **Several suggestions from IANSA Women's Network's Call to Action on Gender and Small Arms Control that could be included in the President's statement**

Overview:

- effective participation requires funding and capacity building
- implementing article 7(4) is critically important
- sex *and* age differentiation are necessary in disaggregating data

Support and fund initiatives to further build and strengthen women's capacity and skills. This includes documenting women's experience in decision-making and political processes in relation to small arms control, and improving women's awareness of and access to such opportunities pursuant to the provisions in UNSCR 1325;

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<sup>2</sup> Summary material is adapted from IANSA, Quick Guide to Small Arms Issues in: "Securing our Common Future – Secretary-General António Guterres' Agenda For Disarmament"  
[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/bb4a5b\\_6b2c03222cf64947b0a15739f943f34c.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/bb4a5b_6b2c03222cf64947b0a15739f943f34c.pdf)

Ensure the effective implementation of the gender-based-violence provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) whereby it is illegal to transfer weapons if there is a risk that the weapons will be used to facilitate gender-based violence (article 7(4)).

Ensure that women are consulted in processes related to national weapons collection and destruction programmes; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and community violence reduction programmes; and that such programmes are gender-mainstreamed by including components such as survivor assistance, psychosocial support, and livelihood programmes for women and men;

Promote and produce quality, participatory research and analysis highlighting the gendered effects of armed violence and its links with poverty and other forms of social injustice; and

Stipulate that more detailed sex- and age-differentiated data on small arms ownership and use should be collected through relevant national bodies, such as statistical offices, including for use in national reporting on the Programme of Action and for use in strengthening and improving small arms control programmes and initiatives – and that gender-expert involvement is needed in examining this data.

We are encourage by this progress and look forward to continuing to partner with States in these efforts.

Thank you.