

Stichting Kennis: Knowledge for Safety and Good Governance statement  
Panel discussion intervention

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for inviting Kennis to join this panel discussion.

Kennis: Knowledge for Safety and Good Governance is an NGO based in the Netherlands that seeks to connect the dots between implementation of arms control instruments on the one hand, and measurable impacts, such as levels of illicit manufacture and trafficking—as well as levels of armed violence committed with firearms. With our work we make an effort to link implementation of international arms control instruments with relevant Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators. In particular, we recently focused on the possible relationship between effective implementation the Firearm Protocol and trends in lethal violence (that is SDG indicator 16.1.1).

The Firearms Protocol, a foundational instrument, sits in a much broader context of global and regional instruments, as mentioned by other speakers earlier. I would like to highlight two points:

First: *illicit trafficking* – whether from the pre-diversion side or from the effective counter-trafficking side -, represents the main aspect of contact or overlap between the Firearms Protocol and international instruments such as the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the Arms Trade Treaty, and likely the upcoming Conventional Ammunition political framework. What the Firearms Protocol has that other relevant instruments do not is the focus on *illicit manufacture*. Therefore, efforts to implement the commitments on illicit manufacture are central to this process, and some of the definitional issues about illicit manufacture raised earlier by our colleagues are important.

Second: Although the explicit objective of international arms control instruments is ‘only’ the reduction of illicit firearms trafficking, by attempting to limit misuse of firearms they embed a violence reduction objective. The FP in its preamble mentions its aim to make the world safer for people, by reducing the negative impacts of these illicit practices, which endanger “[...] the well-being of people, their social and economic developments and their right to live in peace”. Effective implementation of the Protocol may indeed have impacts on armed violence reduction. The Review process is an opportunity to consider additional impact indicators. This could indeed help in answering the question of what role the FP plays in reducing AV. At Kennis we are working on it, but we face some of the usual data gaps.

For civil society, researchers and analysts to be able to really connect the dots and provide insights into which state actions are associated with what kinds of impacts, whether in terms of illicit trafficking or levels of violence committed with illicit weapons, we need the cooperation of national authorities: states who are willing to step forward and work together with researchers to really understand what works and why, and authorities that are willing to share data in a transparent way, who see civil society experts as essential partners in what should be a collective endeavor to reduce the proximate challenges of illicit manufacture and trafficking—and their impacts of people’s safety and security.

Thank you