

## Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe

### *Programming and Resource Allocation*

The Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact is well positioned to play an important role in curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the volatile South Eastern Europe region. According to the general document on small arms under the Stability Pact's Working Table III, the Stability Pact pursues the objective of establishing a cooperative regional approach in order to fight excessive small weapons circulation, building on the existing processes of the Wassenaar Agreement, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the European Commission, the OSCE and the United Nations. This document, drafted on 20 February, 2001, outlines five areas of concentration for the Stability Pact's SALW campaign: security sector reform, improving legislative standards, increasing the transparency of arms transfers, improving export controls, and assistance in the safe storing and destruction of small arms.<sup>15</sup>

The Stability Pact's commitment to addressing the SALW problem was first demonstrated by its *Joint Declaration on Responsible Arms Transfers*, adopted on 15 December 1999. Participating countries acknowledged the legitimate role of small arms and light weapons in international trade, but aspired to prevent these weapons from finding their way to irresponsible end-users. The states expressed readiness to develop a coordinated information system capable of tracking end-use and end-user certificates on weapons subject to export control.

The Stability Pact also organized several Working Group Meetings on small arms and light weapons throughout 2000. A workshop titled "Possible Contribution to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe" was held in Ljubljana on 27 January 2000, and another identified as the "Stability Pact Seminar on Small Arms and Light Weapons Collection and Destruction" took place in Sofia on 17 to 19 October 2000 (co-sponsored by Bulgaria and Canada). A Roundtable Meeting on "Tackling Small Arms Diffusion in South Eastern Europe," held in Szeged, Hungary from 17 to 18 November 2000, was also organized under the auspices of the Stability Pact.<sup>16</sup> The conferences affirmed member states' interests in the small arms problem, and the Roundtable Meeting proposed the following concentrations: strengthening legal controls on the accumulation and transfer of small arms, enhancing the operational capacity of governments to prevent and combat illicit arms trafficking and promoting the removal of weapons from society and the destruction of surplus and confiscated weapons.<sup>17</sup>

The Stability Pact has, in limited capacity, participated in several regional small arms initiatives in Croatia, Kosovo and Bulgaria. Additionally, to support non-proliferation efforts, economic development and the strengthening of civil society, the Stability Pact's Norway/US Joint Working Group is presently conducting a small arms project in Albania. The programme aims to enhance regional

---

<sup>15</sup>Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, *Working Table III, Small Arms and Light Weapons*: 20 February 2001.

<sup>16</sup>Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, *Working Table III, Small Arms and Light Weapons*: 20 February 2001.

<sup>17</sup>Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, *Roundtable Meeting on Tackling Small Arms Diffusion in South Eastern Europe*: 17-18 November 2000.