

- Undertaking joint training exercises of officials from the police, customs and other relevant agencies (including the military where it is involved in border controls) from countries within the region, and exploring the possibility for exchange programmes for such officials within the region, and with their counterparts in the EU;
- Promoting a rapid processing of firearm investigations when captured illicit weapons are investigated in relationship to crime patterns;
- Establishing bilateral and regional agreements to facilitate tracking, pursuit, seizure and destruction (e.g. agreements to co-operate in pre-planned cross-border operations);
- Strengthening facilities for training at a national and regional level for police, customs and other relevant groups, co-ordinated through SARPCCO/Interpol and creating a specialised information, training and analysis unit on firearms in SARPCCO, staffed by one officer per member state;
- Developing an independent financial capability at SARPCCO HQ which would strengthen its capacity to undertake more regular pre-planned cross-border operations similar to the South Africa-Mozambique-Swaziland "Operation Rachel".

In view of the above national and regional requirements, the EU could consider:

- *Providing technical support, equipment and training (e.g. most SADC countries lack necessary technical equipment — computers, communications equipment, and searching equipment — at border posts) to facilitate timely information exchange across borders;*
- *Exchanging relevant experience and expertise through customs/police exchange programmes;*
- *Supporting efforts to strengthen facilities for training at a national and regional level for police, customs and other relevant groups;*
- *Developing systems to enhance information sharing between the EU and SADC in order to enhance co-operative efforts to combat illicit trafficking.*

1.3 Improving systems to trace illicit arms flows

The circulation of illicit arms can only be effectively monitored if efforts are made to ensure that weapons are traceable and easily identified. The Southern African countries will seek to increase the level of traceability in arms flows by:

- Strengthening systems for national registration, control, and marking of legally-held arms to enhance capacity to identify and combat illicit trafficking;
- Establishing a regional system for the effective tracing of illicit arms, making use of the systems for marking and registering and maintaining databases on legally-held arms. Regional systems could be established, probably through SARPCCO, for timely responses to requests for information on confiscated or suspicious arms between relevant authorities in Southern Africa, linked with the international systems for collecting and communicating such data within Interpol.