

CANADA IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

Canada believes that international cooperation and assistance must lend itself to not only addressing initiatives directly related to the illicit trade in SALW, but also to creating an appropriate supportive environment that will ensure that those initiatives have an opportunity to succeed.

REGIONAL ISSUES (SPECIFICALLY AFRICA)

It is estimated that there is over 100 million small arms and light weapons currently in circulation in Africa. The trade in small arms and light weapons is often inextricably tied up with the exploitation of natural resources and the drug trade, and poses a danger to human security. Many of Africa's small arms and light weapons are left over from the Cold War stockpiles. The ready availability of arms in Africa is a key enabler of African conflicts.

CANADIAN LED INITIATIVES

Canada has led a number of initiatives towards advancing regional efforts to combat the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons.

Central Asia: Canada supported the organization of a series of training workshops (through the OSCE) in Central Asia (Tukmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Kyrkystan and Kazakhstan). These workshops were held in November - December 2001 and covered a number of topics including control and licensing of manufacture, export, import and transit of small arms; marking, record-keeping and tracing; secure storage of small arms stockpiles; destruction of surplus weapons.

Central America: Canada co-sponsored with Costa Rica and Finland, with the cooperation of the Arias Foundation, a seminar on SALW in Central America: Implementing the UN Programme of Action's Aspects for Control and Regulation of Arms Transfers. This seminar was held in San Jose, 3-5 December 2001. It produced a series of "Recommended Actions for National and Regional Implementation". This was very productive seminar that followed up on the Santiago Meeting held in November to which all the countries of the Americas were invited. Central America showed leadership in developing these recommendations that will hopefully trigger actions on a national and regional basis. NGOs played a very constructive role during this event. Canada intends to follow up this process.

Canada is planning to co-sponsor an event in South East Asia and another in Europe in 2002.