

time of manufacture or import, and also to examine the possibility and value of marking military equipment in transit

- Establishing comprehensive, up-to-date and compatible national electronic databases related to the character and history of each licensed weapon.
- Working in co-operation with EU member states and other supplier or transit states outside Southern Africa, to promote the capacity to trace weapons transferred internationally.
- *EU states should consider providing technical assistance in order to help with marking manufactured arms and to establish database systems for registering ownership of weapons.*

3. PROMOTE THE REMOVAL OF ARMS FROM SOCIETY AND THE DESTRUCTION OF SURPLUS ARMS

Southern African countries need to develop a co-ordinated programme to promote the removal of arms in circulation among civilians and the destruction of confiscated or surplus arms. This programme should include the following elements.

3.1 Collection, removal from circulation, and destruction of "surplus" military arms

Southern African countries should identify and adopt effective programmes for the collection, safe-storage, responsible disposal, and destruction of arms rendered "surplus" through peace agreements, demobilisation or integration of former combatants, or re-equipment of armed forces or other armed state bodies. To this end, they should consider:

- Encouraging full preparation for, and implementation of, arms collection, safe storage, and responsible disposal or destruction of arms as part of the implementation of peace agreements in Africa or elsewhere. Where possible, conditions and levels of disarmament and demobilisation should be specified in peace accords;
- Reviewing and developing appropriate programmes for demobilisation and (re)integration of former combatants as conflicts come to an end in Southern Africa, in association with the UN and other relevant international agencies;
- Establishing and implementing guidelines and procedures for ensuring that arms or ammunition rendered "surplus" to requirements (through the implementation of peace agreements, demobilisation of former combatants, or re-equipment or reorganisation of armed forces or other state bodies) are securely stored and disposed of in a way that ensures that they are prevented from entering the illicit arms market or flowing into regions in conflict or any other destination that is not fully consistent with agreed criteria for restraint (ref. discussions to develop a regional Code of Conduct for arms transfers from Southern Africa).
- Encouraging states, where possible, to destroy surplus military equipment. To promote and improve capacity for such practices, the establishment of regional or international mechanisms should be considered, in co-operation with the UN, EU and other interested international bodies, to facilitate and monitor the destruction of "surplus" arms throughout the region. This could include co-ordinating technical facilities for the safe physical destruction of such arms,