

Analysis of Survey on the Inclusion of Women and Civil Society in National Coordinating Mechanisms on Small Arms

December 2019

INTRODUCTION

The first clause of the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons (SALW) calls for the establishment of “effective laws, regulations, and administrative procedures to exercise control over the production of small arms and light weapons” at a national scale. In an effort to bolster this and the implementation of the UN PoA as a whole, the International Network on Small Arms (IANSA), in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is conducting research on national mechanisms and institutions in place to oversee transfer and circulation of SALW in all its aspects.

As part of this research, IANSA sent out a survey to member states of the UN PoA inquiring about their national mechanisms for SALW as well as measures taken to include civil society and women within these respective bodies. The 13-point survey includes questions on the different types of national coordination mechanisms in place and the extent of its functions. Most notably, the survey focuses on the existence of policy coordination, the frequency with which the national body in question is convened, and the inclusion of civil society and women. Between April 2019 and November 2019, the survey was sent to 163 member states with designated national points of contact available in the UNODA database, out of 193 in total. As of December 2019, IANSA had received 28 responses to its survey. The responses, though few in number, came from all five major regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Middle East, Europe and the Americas. This brief report contains an analysis of the responses by region. The accuracy of the analysis is dependent upon the information provided by the countries that responded.

N.B: When we first started to contact member states, UNODA had contact information from past years on the national contacts page of the poa-iss website: <http://www.poa-iss.org/Poa/NationalContactsList.aspx>. The UNODA conventional arms site <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/programme-of-action/> still contains a link to that page, but the page is no longer accessible. However, it allowed us to reach out to more national points of contact. This explains the discrepancy between 104 countries currently listed as having a national point of contact, and 163 countries where we sent the survey.

The 28 countries that responded were:

Africa	Europe	Americas
Benin	Albania	Colombia
Burundi	Bosnia & Herzegovina	Peru
Central African Republic	Finland	St Vincent and Grenadines
Gabon	Latvia	
Ghana	Luxembourg	Asia
Kenya	Netherlands	Japan
Lesotho	North Macedonia	Philippines
Madagascar	Switzerland	
Malawi		Middle East
Nigeria		Qatar
Senegal		Iraq
Sierra Leone		
Sudan		

ANALYSIS BY REGION

AFRICA – Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan

Of the 13 countries responding:

- Eight said they have national commission bodies¹ (all except Gabon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, and Sudan). Of these:
 - Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone’s NatComs met more than five times in 2018.
 - Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Ghana and Kenya’s NatComs met fewer than five times.
- Nine have policy coordinating mechanisms (all except Gabon, Ghana, Madagascar, and Sudan)
- 11 have national points of contact (all except Nigeria and Ghana)
- 11 invite civil society to participate (all except Lesotho and Sudan). Of these 11:
- Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Senegal, and Sierra Leone includes civil society as direct members of SALW processes.
- Nigeria gives civil society advisory participation
- 11 include women (all except Lesotho and Sudan); less than 50 percent of NatCom members are women in each of these countries.

EUROPE – Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Finland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Switzerland

Of the eight countries responding:

- Five said they have dedicated national commission bodies, of which:
 - Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Luxembourg met five or more times in 2018
 - Switzerland met fewer than five times in 2018
 - North Macedonia did not specify how many times their body met in 2018
- Seven have policy coordinating mechanisms (all, except Latvia)
- Seven have national points of contact (all, except Albania)
- Finland, Latvia, and the Netherlands invite civil society to participate. Finland and Latvia give civil society direct membership
- Seven include women:
 - In Finland, Latvia and Switzerland, 50 percent of the national commission members are women
 - In Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and North Macedonia, less than 50 percent of the national commission members are women
 - Albania and the Netherlands include women in leadership positions

¹ In our understanding, a country possesses a “national commission body” if it has dedicated an independent national agency to the sole function of overseeing policy on SALW.

AMERICAS – Colombia, Peru, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Of the three countries responding:

- Two said they have national commission bodies:
 - Colombia met more than five times
 - Peru met fewer than five times
- Colombia and Peru have policy coordinating mechanisms
- Peru and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have national points of contact
- None of the respondent countries invite civil society to participate
- Colombia and Peru include women in their national commissions; only Colombia has more than 50 percent women on its national commission

ASIA – Japan and the Philippines

Of the two countries responding:

- The Philippines said it has a national commission body, as well as sub-commission bodies, that met more than five times in 2018. The Philippines also has policy coordinating mechanisms.
- Japan and the Philippines both have national points of contact.
- Neither country invites civil society to participate
- Only the Philippines includes women; less than 50 percent of national commission members are women.

MIDDLE EAST – Qatar and Iraq

Of the two countries responding:

- Qatar has a national commission body that met more than five times in 2018
- Qatar has policy coordinating mechanisms.
- Both Qatar and Iraq have national points of contact.
- Iraq invites civil society to participate.
- Qatar includes women; approximately 50 percent of the national commission members are women.

SUMMARY – Of the 28 countries responding by November 30:

- 17 have national commission bodies (57 percent of countries reporting)
 - Nine have met more than five times
 - Eight have met fewer than five times
- 20 have policy coordinating mechanisms (71 percent)
- 23 have national points of contact (82 percent)
- 14 invite civil society to participate (50 percent)
- 21 include women (75 percent)
 - Four countries have a coordinating body that is more than 50 percent women (14 percent)
 - In 17 countries, women are less than 50 percent of national commission members (61 percent)

CONCLUSION

Less than 60 percent of the countries responding have established national commission bodies dedicated to the issue of small arms. Roughly 50 percent include civil society within their activities. Nearly 80 percent of respondent countries have female representation within their national coordination mechanisms. However, women are at least half of the national commission members in just 15 percent of the countries responding.

In conducting this research, IANSA staff observed that:

- Out of 193 member states, 89 have not provided details of their National Point of Contact to UNODA (see full list in the Appendix)
- It was difficult or impossible to obtain a response from a National Point of Contact, by email or by phone, in the vast majority of cases.

Recommendations:

- As part of preparation for each meeting of the UN small arms process, delegates should ensure that their country's NPC information is correct.
- This survey should be repeated regularly.
- Determining the number of women participating is a first step. It is even more important to determine the extent to which women are full and effective participants in these processes.

APPENDIX: Countries that have not provided details of their National Point of Contact

1. Afghanistan	24. Equatorial Guinea	47. Libya	71. Seychelles
2. Algeria	25. Eritrea	48. Malawi	72. Singapore
3. Andorra	26. Ethiopia	49. Malta	73. Solomon Islands
4. Angola	27. Fiji	50. Marshall Islands	74. South Africa
5. Armenia	28. Gabon	51. Micronesia	75. Sri Lanka
6. Austria	29. Gambia	52. Monaco	76. Suriname
7. Bahamas	30. Grenada	53. Mongolia	77. Syrian Arab Republic
8. Bahrain	31. Guinea-Bissau	54. Mozambique	78. Tajikistan
9. Bangladesh	32. Guyana	55. Myanmar	79. Tonga
10. Barbados	33. Haiti	56. Nauru	80. Trinidad and Tobago
11. Bhutan	34. Honduras	57. Nepal	81. Tunisia
12. Bolivia	35. Iceland	58. Nicaragua	82. Turkmenistan
13. Brunei	36. Indonesia	59. Oman	83. Tuvalu
14. Cameroon	37. Iran	60. Pakistan	84. United Arab Emirates
15. Chad	38. Iraq	61. Palau	85. Uzbekistan
16. Comoros	39. Israel	62. Papua New Guinea	86. Vanuatu
17. Costa Rica	40. Japan	63. Qatar	87. Vietnam
18. Cuba	41. Jordan	64. Republic of Moldova	88. Yemen
19. Cyprus	42. Kiribati	65. Russian Federation	89. Zimbabwe
20. Democratic People's Republic of Korea	43. Kuwait	66. Saint Kitts and Nevis	
21. Djibouti	44. Kyrgyzstan	67. Saint Lucia	
22. Dominica	45. Lao People's Democratic Republic	68. Samoa	
23. Egypt	46. Lebanon	69. San Marino	
		70. Sao Tome and Principe	