

Exit Memo

What is IANSA

The [International Action Network on Small Arms \(IANSA\)](#) is a member based NGO based in New York City and Accra, Ghana. IANSA provides a platform and resources for local level civil society groups around the world to help advocate on issues pertaining to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW). Due to IANSA's special consultative status with the UN, IANSA member organizations are able to have their voices heard at UN meetings related to SALW proliferation. This is crucial as IANSA believes that local level voices are essential to providing and implementing possible solutions to the illicit trafficking of SALW.

About the practicum

The summer 2021 cycle of the practicum was conducted in partnership with IANSA, which is preparing for BMS7 to promote gender mainstreaming, ammunition, marking and tracing, diversion, and stock management to combat small arms trafficking and misuse. For this purpose, students produced briefs for IANSA's members doing advocacy work in their own countries to ensure that the five main themes of interest are addressed and integrated in member-state's national agendas.

Methodology

There were a total of 15 countries. Since the team was composed of three individuals, they were assigned five countries each, with one country appointed per week.

Five of these countries were Spanish-speaking countries, thus their documents were in Spanish. Since one of us could speak Spanish and translate these, they were automatically assigned to those countries. The other two were able to choose between the other countries based on preference.

IANSA provided a template with six boxes to fill in: a summary and then the five major themes of focus (gender mainstreaming, ammunition, marking and tracing, diversion, and stockpile management). For each state, students compiled information about the country's stances on all five themes. They were also provided with bullet points and questions to aid the research process.

While writing these briefs, students updated a [Keywords and Acronyms document](#) which had the names of all the countries with acronyms specific to them for referencing.

In terms of sources used for the project, IANSA advised students to search each country's statements to the UN regarding the PoA at [Reaching Critical Will](#), a website which compiles various statements and documents made at the UN regarding disarmament and arms control. The statements are organized by country, topic, forum, and year. IANSA also recommended the [UN PoA site](#) for countries' biannual national reports.

In addition to these, students used websites such as [Gunpolicy.org](#), [the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](#) (which provides data and analysis for disarmament and arms control), countries' Foreign Affairs Ministry's websites, countries' Ministry of Defense websites, or the countries'

Mission in New York websites. For additional context, students used news articles, documentaries, and statistics. When using information from these sources or direct quotes, students would source content through the use of footnotes.

Project Organization

First drafts were to be completed by Friday evenings. Leah and Professor Hoffman would review them and give feedback through comments in Google Docs. The drafts would be edited individually and then collectively in a zoom meeting on Monday mornings. During this meeting students screen shared their briefs which would then be read through and revised collectively. We would revise the briefs again and then send them to IANSA that day.

IANSA and the students met every Tuesday. During the meetings IANSA provided feedback on the briefs. Students would revise their briefs again before sending them out again to IANSA that same day. IANSA would then send the briefs to the respective civil society organizations of that country. Students would begin research for the following brief in time for submission the following Friday.

The Content

The Briefs included a summary and five main sections focusing on IANSA's focus themes. The **Summary** answered whether the state in question has been consistent in raising any particular issue in the PoA, listed the record of participation in PoA processes, examined whether the state was considered as a 'champion' on any of the five issues elaborated upon below, answered whether the state's government changed in recent years and whether it has affected its policies and practices toward SALW and finally, whether the state is a recipient of major international arms transfers.

Gender Mainstreaming focused on women's participation in policymaking, planning, and implementation processes in SALW controls; whether a state collects sex and age-disaggregated data, examining states' analysis of the gendered impacts of SALW, including domestic violence; the level of women's full and effective participation and involvement in stages of peace negotiations and the security sector reform process; and whether states are taking measures to address gender-based violence. Though it was easy to find secondary sources that discussed countries' efforts and perspectives on gender and SALW, national reports often mentioned the theme in passing with little elaboration on how the perspective was implemented in action and policy. Some countries like Colombia and Argentina had training, workshops, and systems that considered gender in theory and practice.

Ammunition, included manufacturing, safe storage, diversion, and International transfers of ammunition as well as prohibitions of transfers of ammunition under arms embargoes and marking and tracing of ammunition. Most countries did not report specifically on their approach to ammunition and it was hard to find information through secondary sources. Some countries such as Chile, hold training on identification of parts of weapons and are in the process of modernizing legislation on trade in weapons, especially related to their brokerage and transit/transshipment and the export of their parts and components.

Marking and Tracing of SALW referred to the marking of ammunition, marking of state/law enforcement SALW, record keeping of marked SALW, and national procedures on marking and tracing as well as need for trained officials. Most countries detailed a number of measures to mark and trace their SALW in their PoA National Reports. Among the champions identified in this area was Argentina with its Weapons and Explosives Law No. 20,429 which requires all SALW to be marked with the brand and serial number at

the time of import and manufacture and requires manufacturers to keep records of their activities. Additionally, they have a computer system named "María" --which registers the import and export destinations and requires the documenter to declare: brand and model, type of action, caliber, shot-by-shot, repetition or semi automatic systems.

Diversion, focused on preventing the diversion of SALW to unauthorized or unlawful end-users or for an unauthorized or unlawful end-use. This includes the need for end use certificates to address diversion, assessing the risk of diversion when considering imports and exports of SALW, and rigorous national licensing systems to prevent diversion. Many countries had detailed diversion prevention schemes. Guatemala is among those countries found to have a rigorous licensing system to prevent the diversion of SALW. In it, persons and entities who transfer SALW require a license to transfer SALW from or into Guatemala. Additionally, it is a criminal offense to trade SALW without a license or to do so in a manner that is in contradiction to the terms of the license.

Stockpile Management, referred to the safety, security, and destruction of surplus and excessive accumulation. Countries reported on stockpile management of ammunition, inventory management and following best international practices. Most countries reported the number of SALW confiscated and destroyed and some had particular laws and regulations such as Bolivia's Law N°400 which according to its Article 23 states that the storage of firearms, ammunition, explosives, their parts and components, and other related materials, must be made in facilities that comply with the standards safety and the requirements established in the regulations. And, according to Article 141 whoever stores firearms, ammunition, explosives or related materials, in places that do not meet the conditions of security, putting at risk the life or physical integrity of people, the environment, public or private goods, will be punished with a custodial sentence of two to six years.

Recommendations

Should future students working with IANSA be writing country specific briefs, open communication and time management are highly recommended. Being able to speak to one another and ask questions was especially valuable at the beginning of the project. Having never written briefs like these before, the first round of deliverables was mostly trial and error as to what information should be included. Once students received the first round of feedback, the process was increasingly streamlined. More so, being able to ask clarifying questions from the onset decreased helped simplify the task at hand.

With regard to time management, splitting up the work on multiple days was the most effective approach. UNSS is a challenging and potentially overwhelming program, thus it is not a good idea to push oneself to produce a brief in one day. Devoting one or two days to research and information compilation, and another to construction of the brief is recommended.

Additionally, begin the research by thoroughly reading any national statements and/or reports. Much of the information needed can be found here (when states have been good at publishing them). To support that hard information, or if these documents cannot be found, attempt to contextualize the nation-state in question with secondary resources. This can be especially helpful for the reader to gain a clearer understanding of the unique intricacies of SALW proliferation in states around the world.

An issue students ran into was the UN PoA website crashing, blocking access to the national reports. Therefore download and save the national reports as soon as you access them.

Lessons learned and Take-aways

Some of the specific skills this practicum provided the team are policy research and critical analysis, copy-editing, and improving accessible writing abilities. In creating a new brief each week, students were able to build upon previous knowledge to produce a more useful document than the last. Additionally, the process of streamlining the researching and drafting period built our confidence to continue taking on assignments such as these in the future.

The practicum also resulted in opportunities beyond the scope of the IANSA practicum. With the practicum members invited to the BMS7 and one of the students being offered a position as note-taker throughout BMS7.