

UNLIREC Newsletter

Caribbean Region

UNLIREC undertook destruction and stockpile management activities in the Caribbean as part of a larger UNLIREC Caribbean Assistance Programme, launched in Jamaica in April 2010. The Caribbean Assistance Programme is currently being carried out in thirteen CARICOM countries with the support of the United States and Canada.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs supports weapons and ammunition destruction in Saint Lucia

From 8–12 October 2012, UNLIREC assisted the Government of St. Lucia in the destruction of nearly 380 surplus, obsolete and confiscated firearms and close to 16,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. Both weapons and ammunition destruction were undertaken using the UN International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the UN International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG).

All 380 weapons were cut using a set of hydraulic shears donated by UNLIREC to the Government of St Lucia in May 2012. The ammunition destruction took place at Vieux Fort using a field expedient disposal method and 10 members of the Royal St. Lucia Police Force (RSLPF) were trained on the safe destruction of ammunition in accordance with the IATG. Both destruction processes included independent monitoring by UNLIREC personnel.



Since June 2010, UNLIREC has assisted the Government of St. Lucia in the development of a National Action Plan on Stockpile Management and Firearms Destruction, securing stockpile facilities through the provision of international standard padlocks, and training of law enforcement officials in the fight against illicit firearms trafficking.

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Over 1,300 weapons destroyed in Belize using destruction equipment provided by UNLIREC

From 15–19 October 2012, UNLIREC assisted the Government of Belize in the destruction of 427 surplus, obsolete and confiscated weapons from both the Defense and Police Force for a total of 1,329 weapons destroyed since May 2012.



The weapons destruction activity was conducted in accordance with ISACS. All weapons were cut using a set of hydraulic shears donated by UNLIREC to the

Government of Belize in May 2012. The destruction process included monitoring and verification by Belizean authorities and UNLIREC representatives.

Since September 2010, UNLIREC has assisted the Government of Belize in the development of a National Action Plan on Stockpile Management and Firearms Destruction, securing of stockpile facilities through the provision of international standard padlocks, training of law enforcement officials in combating illicit firearms trafficking and providing recommendations on legal reforms and updates to the national firearms act. This latter assistance aims to bring national legislation in line with the international agreements and reduce loopholes that can be exploited by illicit traffickers in firearms, ammunition and explosives.

UNLIREC and Government of Barbados promote regional small arms control in the Caribbean

In collaboration with the Government of Barbados, UNLIREC conducted a two-day technical workshop from 23 to 24 October to mark the launching of the next phase of UNLIREC's Assistance Package for Caribbean States on Firearms and Ammunition Stockpile Management and Destruction.

Workshop participants included representatives of the governments of the Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and

Nevis, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the CARICOM Crime and Security Implementation Agency (IMPACS).

In the opening session of the workshop UNLIREC's Public Security Programme Coordinator William Godnick encouraged participants to "consider stockpile management and weapons and ammunition destruction planning as integral parts of public security strategies."

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Following the workshop, UNLIREC technical advisers will continue to support Caribbean governments in undertaking national baseline assessments, developing national action plans and assisting in the implementation of concrete measures to improve stockpile management practices and destroy surplus, obsolete and confiscated firearms and ammunition. UNLIREC technical assistance is based on the ISACS and the IATG.

During the closing session of the workshop Barbados Police Commissioner Darwin Dottin called for a “mix of measures to provide a coherent strategy” to address the problem of firearm crime including inter alia “comprehensive and robust legislation, strict licensing arrangements and regulation and oversight arrangements for imports and exports”. He also highlighted UNLIREC’s Assistance Package as having “considerable relevance to the region at this time”.

UNLIREC and Government of The Bahamas continue cooperation for destruction of weapons and ammunition

From 12 to 15 November 2012, UNLIREC and the Government of The Bahamas destroyed 431 confiscated firearms held by the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) and the Customs and Immigration Department, as well as 2.3 tons of obsolete and confiscated small arms ammunition. Both destruction processes were monitored by UNLIREC and Bahamian government representatives, demonstrating the Government’s commitment to implement the UN Programme of Action on small arms.



All firearms were destroyed using a set of hydraulic shears (donated by UNLIREC to the Government of the Bahamas in May 2012) using UNLIREC Standard Operating Procedures, which are based on the ISACS. The ammunition destruction took place at the Police Firing Range using UNLIREC Standard Operating Procedures for field expedient small arms ammunition destruction, which are based on the IATG.

Ten Bahamian government officials were trained during the UNLIREC mission, thus establishing a long-term technical and human resource capacity in The Bahamas to destroy surplus, obsolete and confiscated weapons and ammunition over time.

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Building capacity and promoting public security: UNLIREC supports the destruction of arms and ammunition in the Dominican Republic

From 12 to 16 November 2012, UNLIREC assisted the Armed Forces of the Dominican Republic in the destruction of 1,400 surplus firearms and more than 300,000 rounds of small arms ammunition (approximately 8 tons). The destruction activities were conducted using UNLIREC's Standard Operating Procedures, which are in accordance with the ISACS and the IATG. The destruction process included monitoring and verification by Dominican authorities and UNLIREC representatives. These initial destruction activities set the stage for a robust agenda of technical cooperation between UNLIREC and the Dominican Republic in 2013.



“The periodic destruction of weapons and ammunition constitutes one of the most effective means of ensuring that they do not make their way back onto the streets and/or are not diverted to criminal networks” said UNLIREC Senior Technical Officer Rodolfo Gamboa.

On this occasion the weapons were destroyed by smelting through a public-private partnership overseen by the Government of the Dominican Republic, in cooperation with UNLIREC. UNLIREC has also donated to the Government a small arms ammunition and pyrotechnics burning tan, which was used to destroy the 300,000 rounds of ammunition. UNLIREC will continue to work with the Ministry of the Armed Forces in early 2013 to destroy thousands more weapons and rounds of ammunition.

Since September 2010, UNLIREC has assisted the Government of the Dominican Republic in the development of a National Action Plan on Stockpile Management and Firearms Destruction, in securing of stockpile facilities through the provision of international standard padlocks and a set of hydraulic shears for the periodic destruction of weapons. UNLIREC has also assisted in training law enforcement officials to better combat illicit firearms trafficking and in providing recommendations on legal reforms and updates to the national firearms act. The latter aims to bring Dominican legislation in line with international agreements and reduce loopholes that can be exploited by illicit traffickers in firearms, ammunition and explosives.

Central American Region

UNLIREC is working with Central American States to strengthen capacities to curb illicit small arms trafficking and reduce armed violence through inter-institutional capacity-building and multi-agency technical application of international standards for small arms control as part of a multi-year assistance package entitled *Preventing Armed Violence in Central America Through the Combat of Illicit Trafficking in Firearms*. This Central American assistance package is funded principally by the Governments of Finland, Germany, Spain and Sweden.

UNLIREC welcomes reactivation of El Salvador's firearms technical working group and supports implementation of its action plan

Subsequent to the reactivation of the firearms technical working group in El Salvador, UNLIREC collaborated with the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in carrying out a set of activities aimed at enhancing public security and preventing armed violence through the combat of illicit firearms trafficking. This entailed enhancing the capacity of legal practitioners in reducing impunity in firearms-related cases and raising awareness among decision-makers and parliamentary advisers on firearms policy development.

The first activity offered focused training to 33 legal practitioners and judicial officials on relevant national and international legal frameworks, inter-institutional and international cooperation mechanisms, and technical aspects of firearms and ammunition, including

ballistic information through UNLIREC's four-day Specialized Training Course beginning on 8 October. Participants from a variety of governmental institution, including the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the Judiciary, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the National Police now have at their disposal improved technical tools and practical knowledge to assist them in their efforts to more effectively combat the scourge caused by illicit firearms trafficking.

While the one-day national seminar - undertaken on 10 October - brought together 23 members of the firearms technical working group and advisors of the Defense and Security Commission of the National Congress to expose them to a wide range of disarmament policies and legal measures related to arms control and armed violence reduction.

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UNLIREC supports the Government of Honduras in efforts to curb illicit firearms trafficking and reduce armed violence

As part of UNLIREC's efforts to support to the Government of Honduras in improving public security and implementing the Security Strategy of the Central American Integration System (SICA), UNLIREC undertook two initiatives in November 2012, thanks to the financial support provided by the Governments of Finland and Germany.

From 5 to 16 November, UNLIREC's Inter Institutional Training Course on Combating the Illicit Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives (IITC) trained 62 security sector personnel (46 men and 16 women) from a diverse range of law enforcement and justice entities. Participants received specialized training from international and national experts in weapons and ammunition identification, investigation and tracing techniques, firearms and ammunition evidence management.

The training was delivered in the context of international, regional and national legal frameworks to combat illicit firearms trafficking, as well as human security and human rights. The ten-day course culminated in a two-day simulation exercise where participants had to intervene, prepare and prosecute a case of illicit weapons trafficking in full coherence with the rule of law and respect for human rights and the rights of minors.



Additionally, UNLIREC co-organized on 14 November a high-level policy seminar on disarmament, firearms control and armed violence reduction jointly with the National Secretariat for Public Security and the United Nations Development Programme. The seminar presented contemporary policy frameworks designed to enhance small arms control and armed violence reduction efforts.

During the seminar, H.E. Coralia Rivera, Vice-Minister for Security, told participants "that the recommendations put forth during the seminar would be taken into consideration during future legal reforms."

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Southern Cone States

UNLIREC trains federal forces on stockpile risk management and security planning in Argentina

On 29-30 November 2012, UNLIREC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Security of the Republic of Argentina trained over 30 officials on firearms and ammunition stockpile management risk assessment and security planning. Officials were trained from the key federal law enforcement agencies including the Federal Police, Airport Police, National Gendarmerie and the Coast Guard.

In August 2012 UNLIREC signed an agreement with the Ministry of Security of the Republic of Argentina to provide technical assistance in the area of small arms, light weapons and ammunition stockpile management.



To date, UNLIREC has supported the Ministry in undertaking baseline assessments of federal stockpile facilities and in making recommendations for essential improvements to infrastructure, standard operating procedures and the training of personnel.

The assistance that UNLIREC provides to the Government of Argentina is based on the draft UN International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the UN International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG). Efforts to build government officials' stockpile management capacities and improve infrastructure of facilities where weapons, ammunition and explosives are stored are essential measures for preventing theft, loss and diversion, as well as accidents.

UNLIREC and the Ministry Security of the Republic of Argentina are currently exploring the modalities of a second phase to this project.

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Andean Region

In the Spotlight

UNLIREC supports the States of the Andean Community in moving towards a standardized model for marking small arms and ammunition

UNLIREC provided technical assistance and support to the countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), during the *Andean Regional Seminar on the Marking of Small Arms and Ammunition* held in Lima on the 10th and 11th of December. Participants in this seminar included representatives from the military industries, the national entities responsible for weapons control and the Foreign Ministries of the four Andean States.

During the seminar, UNLIREC presented its *Technical Guide for the Marking of Small Arms and Ammunition*, a tool to enable the standardization of the marking of arms and ammunition. The guide consists of a series of recommendations for standardized primary and secondary markings (based on Alphanumeric codes) of small arms at the time of manufacture, import, transfer, confiscation and/or deactivation, as well as the marking of ammunition at the time of manufacture and import. This technical guide is based on the guidelines of the ISACS and the best practices of States in the region.

The marking of arms and ammunition aims to facilitate the processes of tracing and information exchange, improve the control of arms and the management of arsenals, and strengthen regional and international cooperation in the area of controlling the legal market and combating the illicit trade in small arms and ammunition.

Using the UNLIREC Technical Guide as a basis, the Andean States took their first steps towards the adoption of a legally binding technical regulation to standardize the

marking of arms and ammunition in the sub-region.



Representatives of the four Andean States agreed in principle – subject to further review and national consultations – on the marking recommendations proposed in the UNLIREC technical Guide. A roadmap leading to the adoption of the technical norm was also approved.

The seminar was the first time that a sub-region held discussions on the possibility of adopting a legally-binding technical framework on the marking of arms and ammunition, thus demonstrating the leadership of the four Andean States, which have always stood out for their commitment to arms control and disarmament.

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UNLIREC Agenda (January – March 2013)

January

- ✓ *Regional Technical Seminar on Stockpile Management*
San José – Costa Rica

February

- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
St. John's – Antigua and Barbuda
- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
Dominican Republic
- ✓ *National Inter-institutional Training Course on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition and Explosive (IITC)*
Belmopan– Belize
- ✓ *Workshop on the implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) in partnership with VERTIC*
Bogotá - Colombia

March

- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
Kingston – Jamaica
- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
Belmopan– Belize
- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
Port of Spain – Trinidad and Tobago
- ✓ *Small arms and ammunition destruction*
St. Georges – Grenada

**United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in
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