



Council of the  
European Union

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## PROPOSAL

From:	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, signed by Mr. Stefano SANNINO, Secretary General
date of receipt:	31 October 2022
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
Subject:	Proposal of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the Council for a Council Decision in support of the development of an internationally recognised arms and ammunition management validation system (AAMVS) to prevent illicit proliferation

Delegations will find attached document HR(2022) 253.

Encl.: HR(2022) 253

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EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



**Proposal of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security  
Policy to the Council**

**of 30/10/2022**

**for a Council Decision in support of the development of an internationally  
recognised arms and ammunition management validation system (AAMVS)  
to prevent illicit proliferation**

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**COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2022/...**

**of [dd/mm/2022]**

**in support of the development of an internationally recognised arms and ammunition management validation system (AAMVS) to prevent illicit proliferation**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Articles 28(1) and 31(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy,

Whereas:

- (1) On 19 November 2018, the Council adopted the EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms & light weapons ('SALW') and their ammunition, entitled 'Securing Arms, Protecting Citizens' (the 'EU SALW Strategy'). The purpose of the EU SALW Strategy is to guide integrated, collective and coordinated European action to prevent and curb the illicit acquisition of SALW and their ammunition by terrorists, criminals and other unauthorised actors, and to promote accountability and responsibility with regard to the legal arms trade.
- (2) The EU SALW Strategy observes that poor stockpile security is a key factor that allows arms and ammunition to be diverted from the licit to the illicit markets. The European Union and its Member States are committed to helping other countries to improve the management and security of state-held stockpiles by strengthening national legislative and administrative frameworks and strengthening institutions that regulate the legitimate supply and stockpile management of SALW.
- (3) The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has developed standards and good practices for the management of small arms and ammunition, in particular, the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and the Modular Small-Arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), formerly known as the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS). The EU SALW Strategy commits the European Union to promoting and implementing standards and good practices.
- (4) On 30 June 2018, the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action against illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons adopted an outcome document in which States renewed their commitment to prevent and combat the diversion of small arms and light weapons. States reaffirmed that they are to

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redouble national efforts to provide for the safe, secure and effective management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons held by governments, in particular in conflict and post-conflict situation. States also acknowledged the application of relevant international standards in strengthening the implementation of the UN Programme of Action.

- (5) The 2022 'Eight Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action' ('BMS8'), took note of the open-ended working group (OEWG) established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/233 to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework that will address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management.
- (6) The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development affirms that combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is necessary for the achievement of many sustainable development goals, including those relating to peace, justice and strong institutions, poverty reduction, economic growth, health, gender equality and safe cities. Therefore, in Sustainable Development Goal 16.4, all States have committed to significantly reducing illicit financial and arms flows.
- (7) In the Agenda for Disarmament 'Securing our Common Future' (1), which was presented on 24 May 2018, the UN Secretary-General called for addressing the excessive accumulation of conventional arms and the illicit trade in conventional arms and called for the support of country-level approaches on small arms. The Union has decided to support the Agenda's Action 22: 'Secure excessive and poorly maintained stockpiles'.
- (8) On 4 December 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 72/55 on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. That resolution supports initiatives at the international, regional and national levels that shed light on improving the sustainable management of ammunition, including through the implementation of the IATG.
- (9) On 24 December 2021, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 76/233 establishing an OEWG to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework that will address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management.
- (10) The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) contributes to the development, review and promotion of the International Mine Action Standards, and, through its Ammunition Management Advisory Team (AMAT), to the development, review and dissemination of the IATG. AMAT was created as a result of a joint initiative between the GICHD and UNODA in response to the urgent need for support to States in the safe, secure and effective management of ammunition, in accordance with the IATG.
- (11) The European Union has been exploring the possibility of establishing an internationally recognised system to validate arms and ammunition policy and practice at the state and end-user levels. Through adoption of Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/979 and amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2075, the EU tasked the AMAT with the project of developing an internationally recognised AAMVS to prevent illicit proliferation and accidental explosions.

- (12) While various international standards, guidelines and good practices for stockpile management and security exist, there currently is no internationally recognised methodology to provide assurances on a third country or end-user's capabilities in preventing diversion (ATT Article 11) in their arms and ammunition stockpiles. An internationally recognised methodology for the independent validation of compliance with international arms management standards will make the impact of the Union's assistance to third countries in relation to arms stockpile management measureable and will also support the risk assessment in the context of arms export control.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

1. With a view to the implementation of the EU SALW Strategy, the purpose of this Decision is to support efforts to ensure the safe and secure management of SALW and ammunition by improving the decision-making processes of stakeholders working in export control and international cooperation and assistance.
2. Pursuant to paragraph 1, the objectives of this Decision are the following:
  - a) create an operational AAMVS System.
  - b) encourage regional organisations and their Member States' efforts to develop their own AAMVS.
3. A detailed description of the project is set out in the Annex to this Decision.

*Article 2*

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy ('HR') shall be responsible for implementing this Decision.
2. The technical implementation of the project referred to in Article 1 shall be carried out by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining ('GICHD') and its specialised agency, the Ammunition Management Advisory Team ('AMAT').
3. The GICHD shall perform its tasks under the responsibility of the HR. For that purpose, the HR shall enter into the necessary arrangements with the GICHD.

*Article 3*

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the project financed by the Union shall be [XXX].
2. The expenditure financed by the reference amount set out in paragraph 1 shall be managed in accordance with the procedures and rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

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3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure referred to in paragraph 1. For that purpose, it shall conclude the necessary agreement with the GICHD. The agreement shall stipulate that the GICHD has to ensure the visibility of the Union's contribution, appropriate to its size.
4. The Commission shall endeavour to conclude the agreement referred to in paragraph 3 as soon as possible after the entry into force of this Decision. It shall inform the Council of any difficulties in that process and of the date of conclusion of the agreement.

#### *Article 4*

1. The HR shall report to the Council on the implementation of this Decision on the basis of regular narrative reports prepared by the GICHD. Those reports shall form the basis of the evaluation to be carried out by the Council.
2. The Commission shall report on the financial aspects of the project referred to in Article 1.

#### *Article 5*

1. This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.
2. This Decision shall expire 36 months after the date of conclusion of the agreement referred to in Article 3(3). However, it shall expire six months after the date of its entry into force if no agreement has been concluded within that period.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council*

*The President*

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