



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 7.2.2019

C(2019) 107 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Joint Communication on Elements for an EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition {JOIN(2018) 17 final}.

The Commission welcomes the recommendations and support expressed in the Opinion with regard to the Joint Communication.

The Commission recommendation on immediate measures to improve security in export, import and transit measures for firearms, their parts and essential components and ammunition (C(2018) 2197 final) follows up on the evaluation report from the Commission on the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 258/2012, establishing export authorisation, and import and transit measures for civilian firearms, their parts and components and ammunition (COM(2017) 737 final). It provides guidance to Member States on how best to implement the Regulation.

It is important that Member States provide accurate statistics on the number of export licences granted, denied, and customs data on civilian firearms imports and exports. Import and export control procedures need improvement. Imported firearms should bear an additional and simple marking with the identification of the country and year of import. Exported deactivated firearms should also be marked and accompanied with a deactivation certificate in accordance with Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2403. Information exchange should be stepped up, for instance, the European Criminal Records Information Exchange System (ECRIS) should be checked systematically. The Conventional Arms Export Control Information System (COARM) should also be used systematically by competent authorities, both to verify the existence of denials and suspensions of an export authorisation by other Member States, and to

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notify such denials to other Member States. Member States are also encouraged to set up an electronic licensing system.

The Commission shares the Camera Deputaților's view about the importance of scientific research and awareness raising in the field of firearms control and counter trafficking. The Commission also notes the call for cooperation and assistance with countries in the Middle East and North Africa and finding synergies with African regional organisations.

On all those matters, the Commission stands ready to provide any specific clarification that would be requested by the national competent authority. The new European Union strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition was adopted on 19 November 2018, endorsing the objectives and the proposed actions of the Joint Communication.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Camera Deputaților in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Federica Mogherini
High Representative*