



2024/2500

24.9.2024

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2024/2500

of 23 September 2024

**in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the
Member States of the League of Arab States – Phase III**

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) The 2018 EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms & light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition entitled 'Securing Arms, Protecting Citizens' (the 'EU SALW Strategy'), states that the Union gives particular prominence to regional cooperation as an efficient means of small arms control.
- (2) The EU SALW Strategy notes that the Union will continue to support cooperation and assistance for the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (the 'UN PoA').
- (3) In the outcome document of the fourth UN Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the UN PoA in June 2024, UN Member States have undertaken to strengthen, as appropriate, partnerships and cooperation at all levels in preventing and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.
- (4) The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of 2015 affirms that combating the illicit trade in SALW is necessary for the achievement of many goals, including those relating to peace, justice and strong institutions. In his Agenda for Disarmament 'Securing our Common Future' of 2018, the UN Secretary-General calls for an inclusive, integrated and participatory approach to small arms control at the country level and, in some situations, at the sub-regional level.
- (5) The League of Arab States (LAS) is a regional organisation bringing together all Arab countries, with the purpose of promoting and strengthening cooperation among its members.
- (6) In 2016, the Union and the LAS set up an EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue and established a number of working groups, including the Strategic Dialogue Working Group on Weapons of Mass Destruction and Arms Control, which defined priority areas for possible, concrete cooperation.
- (7) The 2019 EU-LAS Sharm El-Sheikh Summit Declaration included a pledge to take concerted action against illicit arms trafficking.
- (8) Council Decisions (CFSP) 2018/1789 ⁽¹⁾ and (CFSP) 2021/1726 ⁽²⁾ supported phase I and phase II of a project in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of SALW in the LAS Member States. The Union now wishes to continue to support the phase III of the project.
- (9) Union support to the project will reflect overall Union policy related to the LAS and its Member States,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. With a view to supporting the Member States of the League of Arab States (LAS) with their national implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (the 'UN PoA') and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), phase III of the project

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1789 of 19 November 2018 in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Member States of the League of Arab States (OJ L 293, 20.11.2018, p. 24).

⁽²⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1726 of 28 September 2021 in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Member States of the League of Arab States – Phase II (OJ L 344, 29.9.2021, p. 7).

commenced by Decisions (CFSP) 2018/1789 and (CFSP) 2021/1726 shall enable LAS Member States to sustainably strengthen the effectiveness of their national small arms control and counter-proliferation frameworks, in line with the practices and standards set by the UN PoA, the ITI, and the Global Framework for Ammunition (GFA) according to their priorities and need.

2. In particular, the project will pursue the following objectives in order to combat the threat of small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation in the LAS region:

- strengthening the capacities of customs and other border agencies to detect, interdict, and report on matters of illicit firearms trafficking in the LAS region;
- strengthening the capacities of law enforcement agencies to effectively investigate and cooperate on matters of illicit firearm proliferation and trafficking in the LAS region; and
- strengthening the capacities of security and military agencies to design and implement safe and secure stockpile management systems for SALW and ammunition in the LAS region.

3. In order to achieve the objectives referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, the Union shall, by means of this Decision, support actions in, inter alia, the following priority areas:

- Area 1: international SALW transfer control, including risk assessment and preventing the diversion of SALW to unauthorised recipients.
- Area 2: identification and disruption of sources of illicit small arms, including capacity building for law enforcing agencies, control of land, air and maritime borders, marking and record keeping and tracing of SALW, techniques for arms investigations and tracing of arms and use of ballistic information and identification or disruption of smuggling routes and methods.
- Area 3: other small arms measures, including stockpile management and security.
- Area 4: provision of information relevant to SALW and enhanced SALW control, such as evaluation of laws and regulations in LAS Member States and advice on possible revisions as well as translation of relevant research and studies into Arabic.

4. A detailed description of the project referred to in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 is set out in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative') shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decision.

2. The technical implementation of the project referred to in Article 1 shall be carried out by Small Arms Survey (SAS), represented by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, with the assistance of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), and in close cooperation with the LAS Secretariat.

3. SAS, assisted by Interpol and the WCO, shall perform its tasks under the responsibility of the High Representative. For that purpose, the High Representative shall enter into the necessary arrangements with SAS.

Article 3

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the project financed by the Union referred to in Article 1 shall be EUR 3 999 776,72.

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 Union budget.

3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure referred to in paragraph 2. For that purpose, it shall conclude the necessary agreement with SAS. The agreement shall stipulate that SAS has to ensure the visibility of the Union's contribution, appropriate to its size.

Article 4

1. The High Representative shall report to the Council on the implementation of this Decision on the basis of 6-monthly reports prepared by SAS.
2. The Commission shall report on the financial aspects of the project referred to in Article 1.

Article 5

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

This Decision shall expire 36 months after the date of conclusion of the agreement referred to in Article 3(3). However, it shall expire 6 months after the date of its entry into force if no agreement has been concluded within that period.

Done at Brussels, 23 September 2024.

For the Council

The President

Z. FELDMAN

ANNEX

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Member States of the League of Arab States**Phase 3 Project description (2024–2027)****1. Background and rationale for CFSP support**

The European Union-League of Arab States Project Phase 3 (EU-LAS project phase 3) will build on earlier efforts undertaken by the League of Arab States (LAS) and the European Union (EU), including those undertaken during Phases 1 (2019–2021) and 2 (2021–2024) of the project, to assist LAS member states to reduce the risks that arise from illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition flows and use in the Arab States Region.

The project stems from the EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue Working Group on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Small Arms and Light Weapons, and Arms Control, which defined priority areas for possible substantive cooperation at the beginning of the initiative (see section 2.1).

Phase 1 of the EU-LAS project was essential to build confidence between LAS member states and three implementing partners: the Small Arms Survey (the Survey), the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), and the World Customs Organisation (WCO). The three organisations provided entry-level training to eight Arab countries. They fostered the exchange of best practices and lessons learned in combating the proliferation of illicit small arms through a series of regional and sub-regional meetings.

Phase 2 focused on providing technical training at the country and regional levels on the following matters:

- stockpile management;
- illicit small arms and light weapons detection and identification—including their ammunition and components;
- firearm investigation; and
- use of existing knowledge management systems for customs and law enforcement officials.

During this phase, LAS member state engagement with the project was exceptionally strong, with 18 states requesting national training and participating in the regional training programme delivered between January and the end of May 2024. National training provided participating officials with basic knowledge and expertise in small arms control. Regional training provided more in-depth instruction and takes steps designed to enable participants to share acquired knowledge and expertise with other Arab government officials. For Interpol and WCO, the in-depth training sessions also provided the opportunity to start a Training of Trainers (TOT) component, building sustainable capacity for small arms control in participating LAS member states. Two joint operations, conducted by participating LAS states and facilitated by Interpol and WCO, allowed states to implement the newly acquired knowledge. Three thematic webinars and two regional workshops were conducted, providing ample opportunities for the LAS Secretariat, member states, and the three implementing partners to engage in policy discussions and share experiences and lessons learned.

During Phase 3, the initiative will consolidate and strengthen the capacity-building efforts carried out in the previous phases. The main effort will seek to strengthen the foundations for effective and long-term sustainability. In particular, the project will continue to offer interested countries the opportunity of more national advanced substantive engagement through tailored, in-depth training and other capacity-building support provided by the three implementing partners. This engagement will allow the Survey, Interpol and WCO to assess the potential for longer-term cooperation with interested member states. In parallel, the project will continue to provide entry-level training sessions, especially to countries that did not receive them during the first two phases of the project. To the extent possible, these will involve national trainers whose capacity was developed during Phase 2.

Reducing and eradicating illicit small arms in the Arab region remains crucial to reducing all forms of violence and promoting sustainable development and prosperity in line with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – both in the Arab States Region and in neighbouring regions, including Europe. More specifically, the project aims to strengthen the capacity of LAS member states to implement the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (the ‘UN PoA’) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), according to the priorities and needs identified by these states. It will also sensitise LAS member states to the recently adopted Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management (GFA).

This project will directly contribute to the UN Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ⁽¹⁾ and the achievement of its SDGs. It will generate insights and expertise to help LAS countries reduce armed violence, promote peace, and build inclusive societies in order – among other things – to ‘reduce all forms of violence and related death rates’ (Target 16.1), ‘reduce illicit arms flows’ (Target 16.4), and where relevant, ‘eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls’ (Target 5.2) ⁽²⁾. This project is also a concrete manifestation of the pledge made in the 2019 EU-LAS Sharm El-Sheikh summit declaration ⁽³⁾ to take concerted action against illegal arms trafficking.

2. Project vision, objectives, and long-term sustainability

For Phase 3, the project will follow the same long-term objectives as in its previous incarnations to enable LAS member states to sustainably strengthen the effectiveness of their national small arms control and counter-proliferation frameworks, in line with the practices and standards set by the UNPOA, ITI, and GFA, according to their priorities and needs. This strengthening will be done through policy and practice, combining the use of data, evidence-based knowledge, authoritative resources and tools, tailored expert advice and training, and the convening of practitioners and policy makers in the LAS region.

Engaging with key agencies and partners responsible for curbing the threat of small arms and light weapons proliferation in the LAS region will allow the project to meet a three-pronged objective:

1. strengthen the capacities of customs and other border agencies to detect, intercept, and report on matters of illicit firearms trafficking in the LAS region;
2. strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies to effectively investigate and co-operate on matters of illicit firearm proliferation and trafficking in the LAS region; and
3. strengthen the capacities of security and military agencies to design and implement safe and secure stockpile management systems for small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in the LAS region.

2.1 Project’s substantive areas for support as expressed by LAS countries

Phase 3 of the EU-LAS project, combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in LAS member states (2024–2027), is designed to respond to the needs that LAS member states expressed at the beginning of the initiative, and keep expressing, in four priority areas:

Area 1: International small arms and light weapons transfer control (combating illicit arms flows).

- 1.1. Export, import, and transit licensing and control (for example, risk assessment).
- 1.2. Preventing the diversion of small arms and light weapons to unauthorised recipients.
- 1.3. Detecting small arms and light weapons and their parts during the inspection of transported goods and cargo (for example, inspection methods, techniques, and equipment).

⁽¹⁾ UN (United Nations). 2015. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: UN. 2015. A/RES/70/1.

⁽²⁾ UN (United Nations). 2015. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: UN. 2015. A/RES/70/1.

⁽³⁾ Council of the EU (European Union). 2019. Sharm El-Sheikh summit declaration. 25 February 2019, para. 12.

Area 2: Identification and disruption of sources of illicit small arms (for example, capacity-building for law-enforcement agencies).

2.1. Control of land, air, and maritime borders, including technology transfer.

2.2. Marking, record-keeping, and tracing of small arms.

2.3. Additional techniques and methods for arms investigation and inspection (for example, use of ballistics information and identification or disruption of smuggling routes and methods).

Area 3: Other small-arms control measures.

3.1. Stockpile management and security.

Area 4: Provision of information relevant to illicit small arms and light weapons and enhanced small arms and light weapons control.

4.1. Evaluation of the laws and regulations of LAS member states; advising on possible amendments and revisions.

4.2. Translation of relevant research, published studies, and other resources into Arabic.

3. Proposed logic of intervention

The Survey, as coordinator for the project, held extensive consultations with the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department, Interpol, and WCO, resulting in group consensus on the following two-pronged approach.

Building national capacity to combat illicit small arms and light weapons flows through:

- tailored training on small arms and light weapons control systems, including stockpile management across the LAS region (see the next section); and
- post-training engagement and support to national experts to establish national frameworks that allow for implementation of the practices acquired during training.

Connecting engagement at existing national levels (where they exist) to internationally recognised certification processes and utilising national trainers (trained by the project) to strengthen relevant national or regional training institutions and national frameworks and structures.

All the project's components are designed with a view to develop sustainable capacities among government institutions and officials in LAS member states, in partnership with the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department. The project builds upon our experience that LAS member states are the primary agents of change in designing and implementing national frameworks that promote responsible firearm control and minimise proliferation risk.

Phase 3 will continue the efforts to ensure that essential training material and knowledge resources, such as relevant and specific modules of the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), are made available in Arabic and disseminated throughout the LAS region. This effort is particularly important in an environment where selected government personnel may rotate regularly, and an accessible, dedicated repository of information is necessary across the region.

With this in mind, the project postulates that, if law enforcement and customs officials can detect, investigate, intercept, and report on small arms and light weapons trafficking in the LAS region, and if military and security agencies can design and implement more effective stockpile management systems for small arms, light weapons, and ammunition, then countries across the LAS region will be able to understand, recognise, and address the risks that stem from illicit small arms proliferation more effectively.

The intervention will be structured around the following three outcomes:

1. customs and other border agencies will have strengthened capacities to detect, intercept, and report on matters of illicit small arms and light weapons trafficking in the LAS region;
2. law enforcement agencies will have strengthened capacities to effectively investigate and cooperate on matters of illicit small arms and light weapons proliferation and trafficking in the LAS region;

3. security and military agencies will have strengthened capacities to design and implement safe and secure stockpile management systems for small arms, light weapons, and ammunition in the LAS region.

For all three outcomes, participants will gain knowledge and skills in training methodology and technical knowledge.

4. Description of action

Outcome 1: Customs personnel have strengthened capacities to detect, intercept, and report on matters of illicit small arms and light weapons trafficking in the LAS region.

Outcome 1 seeks to leverage progress made under previous phases and enable the final accreditation of WCO-certified small arms and light weapons expert trainers across the LAS region. A small group of customs personnel trained under Phases 1 and 2 will be involved in delivering national training sessions in LAS countries, practicing the methodological and technical skills they gained in earlier phases of the project.

By delivering training sessions, these personnel will obtain globally recognised accreditation from WCO as part of its Accredited Trainer Programme. Once the trainers are accredited, they can deliver subsequent national trainings under WCO auspices inside or outside the LAS region. These trainers will be asked to support the development of national curricula in their respective countries, further contributing to the sustainability to the endeavour.

Outputs and activities will include:

- 1.1. the completion of up to 12 national small arms and light weapons in-person training events for WCO member administrations to strengthen the ability to control the movement of illicit small arms and light weapons at the border. These training sessions target countries requesting training that did not receive prior national training during Phases 1 and 2 (entry-level training) and, or, are assessed as having the highest risk of illicit small arms and light weapons activity, or require advanced training.
- 1.2. Hosting of up to six regional one- or two-day online thematic workshops presenting specific topics of high interest to LAS member states. The workshops should focus on areas of specific need for capacity building (for example, identification of components of small arms and light weapons), awareness raising (for example, the use of 3D printing in illicit small arms and light weapons manufacture), and information exchange (for example, best practises in risk management for small arms and light weapons). Online forums will allow officials from LAS member states, including those in remote areas, to participate and provide a wider impact and regional ownership.
- 1.3. The use of entry-level training sessions to complete the accreditation process for WCO pre-accredited small arms and light weapons trainers that began in Phase 2.
- 1.4. Participation in activities led by other implementing partners.
- 1.5. Availability of WCO technical expertise on demand to advise LAS member states on updating their national curricula for small arms and light weapons training.

Outcome 2: Law enforcement agencies have strengthened capacities to effectively investigate and cooperate on matters of illicit small arms and light weapons proliferation and trafficking in the LAS region.

Outcome 2 seeks to increase the effectiveness of national workflows involving various national law enforcement agencies, which are necessary to collect, process, and share information on illicit firearms. This effectiveness will enhance investigations on illicit firearms trafficking and improve inter-agency and international police cooperation on organised crime.

Interpol will leverage the strength of the network of experts and trainers developed under Phases 1 and 2. The personnel selected as trainers under Phases 2 will have completed their accreditation and will be involved in delivering advanced national training sessions in LAS countries during Phase 3 to practice the methodological and technical skills they gained in earlier phases.

For countries that request more in-depth cooperation, experts trained during the previous phases will be directly involved in establishing and implementing a National Firearms Taskforce aimed at enhancing the collection, processing, and sharing of firearm-related data at the national level. This step will be instrumental in assessing countries' capacities to implement the Interpol Firearm Recovery Protocol more effectively and actively cooperating at a regional and international level on firearm-related matters. The Firearms Recovery Protocol is an Interpol guide to uncovering firearms trafficking. It covers both law enforcement and forensics components, with the goal of both parties sharing information to solve firearms trafficking.

For this outcome to be realised, Interpol will focus on the following outputs:

- 2.1. senior country officials understand firearms trafficking threats and the benefits of a National Firearms Taskforce;
- 2.2. terms of reference for National Firearms Taskforces are developed and adopted by countries;
- 2.3. national institutions and the National Firearms Taskforce are trained on the Interpol Firearm Recovery Protocol and Interpol instruments for international cooperation on firearm-related matters;
- 2.4. operational support is provided to National Firearms Taskforces (investigative leads are generated by the National Firearms taskforce with the support of Interpol).

Activities will include:

- up to 10 in-country deployments to support the assessment and development of the capacities required to implement the Interpol Firearm Recovery Protocol;
- up to five in-depth training sessions led by Interpol trainers to support countries in developing national capacities to collect, prepare, and share information related to firearms;
- up to five national training sessions led by qualified national trainers who will be able to deliver national trainings under Interpol auspices;
- mentoring support to countries for the establishment of national firearm taskforces, delivered through sub-regional capacity-building activities or national deployment for on-the-job training;
- a workshop on the exchange of best practices on firearm investigation techniques and analysis of firearm-related intelligence, to be delivered as part of a regional event organised jointly with other implementing partners;
- participation in activities led by other implementing partners, such as online thematic fora or in-person training sessions.

Outcome 3: Security and military agencies have strengthened capacities to design and implement safe and secure stockpile management systems for small arms, light weapons, and ammunition in the LAS region.

Outcome 3 seeks to build on the approach developed in Phase 2. The work will focus on advanced skill development at the country level to foster and promote sustainable skills transfer to the trainees. At the same time, the Survey will continue to develop and deliver tailored national entry-level and advanced training packages on stockpile management and security.

Unlike the other two outcomes where Interpol and WCO can link project activities to global training programmes for expert operators and trainers with an established accreditation system, nothing equivalent exists at the multilateral level in the stockpile management domain.

For this reason, the Survey will map, assess, and propose concrete options for a certification process for successful participants at expert or trainer levels, as well as ensure that key resources are translated into Arabic and available for relevant audiences. These activities will contribute to the desired sustainability approach.

Outputs and activities will include:

- 3.1. Delivery of up to four one-week entry-level national training packages. If demand for entry-level training is lower than expected, remaining resources will be allocated to advanced training packages.
- 3.2. Development and delivery of up to six two-week national, tailored in-depth training packages.
- 3.3. Translation of key thematic resources into Arabic, including but not limited to training material under Phase 3. This activity may also include producing social media material in Arabic, as needed.
- 3.4. Undertaking an analysis of options to facilitate or support the integration of stockpile management and security into national curricula, with related national and international certification options. Regional approaches should also be assessed.
- 3.5. One final, wrap-up regional event, held in collaboration with the LAS Secretariat, WCO, and Interpol. The wrap-up meeting will take place in Cairo at the end of Phase 3 and provide the opportunity to participating countries to assess the main results of this phase and exchange best practices in the substantive areas covered.
- 3.6. Up to 10 national engagement visits will occur to foster buy-in and national ownership, in close coordination with the other implementing partners.
- 3.7. Participation in up to five activities led by other implementing partners, such as online thematic fora or during national in-person training sessions.
- 3.8. Up to two 'pause and reflect' (P & R) learning sessions implemented for all partners (see section 5 below).
- 3.9. Regular virtual and up to three in-person project planning and coordination meetings to ensure the project's continued relevance and effectiveness.

5. Monitoring, evaluation, and learning

As the project coordinator, the Survey will ensure the coherence of the initiative's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) approach. It will incorporate practical mechanisms to learn throughout the project lifecycle and feed into programmatic adjustments should the need arise. The MEL approach will include routine and continuous process monitoring (for example, small cycle learning), as well as project mid-term or annual P & R learning sessions, to ensure external perspectives are taken into account throughout the project lifecycle and mitigate some of the complex features of the operating environment. In addition, an external evaluation will occur towards the end of the project.

Event feedback forms: Upon holding online and in-person events, the project team will elicit and collect participant feedback to maintain high-quality analysis and programming to cater to stakeholders' needs. The resulting data is expected to be primarily quantitative and lend itself to aggregation across project activities.

Six-monthly monitoring rounds: The Survey's team will consolidate monitoring data from the three implementing partners up to twice a year at the output and outcome levels. These sessions will focus on context, relevance, performance, assumptions, and risks. A member of the project team will document these sessions and may be supported by the Survey's MEL Advisor. These sessions may allow the project team to discuss the following:

- contextual developments: what contextual factors affected the intervention and its relevance or influenced the project delivery schedule over the past six months;
- performance: what progress was made at the outcome and output levels; and
- efficiency: whether any efficiencies were created through expenditures, workplans, resources, and internal team management.

P & R sessions, feeding into the Annual Progress Reports (APRs): The Survey will conduct up to two internal reviews of the project (possibly during the annual in-person coordination meeting, which will also offer space for pause and reflection). P & R sessions will consist of a light-touch, structured, and introspective review. Recognising the complex environment in which the project will take place, the P & Rs will involve consultations with the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department, Interpol, WCO, and feedback from some of the in-country training participants to bring diverse perspectives and foster transparency and accountability.

Modalities of participation may vary and include online group sessions with external project partners and bilateral key informant interviews. These sessions will lend themselves to learning reports capturing emerging findings and recommendations for adaptation, if necessary. These learning reports will be shared with all project partners and will feed into the project's annual reports.

6. Partnership arrangements

Phase 3 of the project will be implemented in partnership with the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department within the framework of the EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Small Arms and Light Weapons, and Arms Control. The partnership with, and strong support of, the LAS Secretariat remains vital to the successful continuation of the project. During Phase 2, the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department hosted two regional meetings and attended most national and in-depth training events. In Phase 3, the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department will co-organise the regional conferences and be invited to attend training events. It will also attend one coordination meeting per year with the IPs.

Phase 3 will retain the same implementation arrangements as the previous two phases. The Survey will continue to be the project coordinator and Interpol and the WCO will lead in their respective area of expertise. During this phase, the WCO trainees who started their accreditation as trainers during Phase 2 must deliver national training modules to complete their curriculum. On the other hand, Interpol will work with accredited national trainers and experts to deliver in-person training modules and conduct other activities that support the implementation of the Firearms Recovery Protocol. For this reason, the project will require greater agility to implement the three components, and mobilise WCO and Interpol's existing networks in the LAS countries in a more systematic manner, while keeping the LAS Secretariat informed of the planned activities.

This partnership represents a complementary and thematic cooperation model in the small arms control field. The project harnesses the knowledge and expertise of each implementing partner to offer a comprehensive knowledge- and capacity-building programme covering the major components of the UNPOA, ITI, and GFA. In this way, the project translates the concepts of international cooperation and multilateralism, as emphasised in documents such as the UNPOA and the EU Small Arms and Light Weapons Strategy, into tangible capacity and security improvements in the LAS region.

To balance the need for increased operational independence among the three implementing partners, regular coordination and planning meetings between the implementing partners and the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department will allow for coherence and efficiency in information, sharing, planning, and implementing project activities. The implementing agencies, for example, will coordinate their engagement and approaches with countries that will request support from the project. Furthermore, the implementing partners will maintain joint activities in common thematic areas, when feasible.

The implementing partners will also coordinate with governmental and non-governmental organisations working in LAS member states, as well as any EU programmes with a presence there, to ensure that all of the activities undertaken within the framework of the project complement and build upon existing initiatives. This project has leveraged EU support in recent years for developing and implementing Interpol's Illicit Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS), the core component of Interpol's EU-LAS training offer.

As necessary, and subject to funding availability, the Survey may collaborate with other specialised organisations to assist with implementing specific project components in coordination with the LAS Secretariat's Arms Control and Disarmament Department. Depending on the needs and preferences of participating LAS member states, other organisations, including civil society organisations and certain LAS specialised agencies, could also contribute to the implementation of the project.

The implementing partners will also take appropriate measures to ensure project visibility in line with European Union guidelines.

7. Duration

The project is expected to last 36 months, from 1 October 2024 until 30 September 2027.

The operational phase will last 33 months, and the last 3 months of the project will be dedicated to reporting duties.
