

**Statement to the First Committee of the 2014 General Assembly  
IANSA, the International Action Network on Small Arms  
Baffour Amoa**

Mr Chair, Member States,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the First Committee.

We see and hear reports of gun violence in the news, a daily reminder of the urgent need for action against small arms proliferation and misuse. As the tragedies of the past few days have shown, this is not only in the developing world – industrialised countries also have to get their guns under control.

More than 800 organisations and individual members of IANSA are working tirelessly to address this crisis.

IANSA is the official coordinator of civil society in the UN small arms and conventional weapons discussions.

At this year's Biennial Meeting of States on small arms, we were pleased to see some important advances, as reflected in the final report. In particular:

- The commitment to increase the participation of women in small arms issues. A success for the IANSA Women's Network, which has been lobbying for this goal since 2001.
- The framing of small arms as a problem not just in conflict and post-conflict settings. The vast majority of gun violence occurs in crime, not conflict – for example, in my own country Ghana.

There were also disappointments at BMS5:

- As you know, for every person killed by a gun, 3 more are injured, often resulting in severe disabilities. We thank the Member States who supported our efforts at BMS5 to recognise the need to assist survivors of gun violence, and we hope that at the next UN small arms meeting, the needs and rights of survivors will be formally recognised.
- Another topic which failed to gain consensus, despite considerable support from States, was the inclusion of ammunition in the scope of the Program of Action on small arms. Every country's regulatory scheme for guns – and even the Arms Trade Treaty – addresses ammunition. So the POA should do likewise.

We want to thank Member States for the warm reception given at BMS5 to David Wheeler, whose little son was killed in the Sandy Hook school massacre in Connecticut. His powerful speech brought delegates to tears and they gave him a standing ovation. The Chair interrupted the proceedings so that he could personally give Mr Wheeler his condolences and a hug.

At BMS5 we heard that some states are not reporting regularly on implementation of the PoA. As a result, IANSA members have decided to work with governments specifically to improve reporting. This is in addition to other activities by our members at local, national and regional level – including research, advocacy and public awareness through the Global Week of Action against Gun Violence.

Mr Chair,

Later this week the Omnibus Resolution on small arms will be tabled. The Resolution encourages states to implement, **“as appropriate”**, the recommendations of the BMS5 report. We are concerned that this phrase weakens even further the already modest obligations under the PoA. We suggest that “as appropriate” in the Resolution be replaced by “as reflected in the report”.

The Resolution emphasises the need for civil society to strengthen cooperation and work with states to implement the POA. IANSA members stand ready to act on this call – but we need member states to strengthen their partnership with civil society. As an excellent example: the UK government is supporting our regional network, the West African Action Network on Small Arms, in a project promoting ratification of the ATT across the region.

IANSA members made up the bulk of the campaigning force for the ATT. They continue to work around the world for its ratification and implementation, and to develop synergies between the ATT and the PoA.

Our members are also addressing new threats posed by emerging technologies, such as guns produced from new materials and by 3D printing. We are looking forward to next year’s Meeting of Government Experts, where IANSA will be coordinating expert input from civil society.

Lastly I would like to mention international cooperation and assistance. Increased partnerships – among states as well as between states and civil society – are essential, not only in promoting development but specifically in reducing armed violence. IANSA members have been working for peace and security to be embedded in the post-2015 agenda, and gun violence prevention will be crucial to realising this new development goal.

Thank you.