INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION AGAINST THE OEA/Ser.L/XXII.2.2

ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING CIFTA/CC-XX/doc.11/21

IN FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES, 13 January 2021

AND OTHER RELATED MATERIALS (CIFTA) Original: Spanish

### Consultative Committee

Twentieth Regular Meeting

December 17, 2020

Washington, D.C.

REPORT OF THE PRO TEMPORE SECRETARIAT OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CIFTA ON THE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN THE 2019-2020 TERM

# The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Consultative Committee of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) has the honor to hereby submit the report on the activities carried out since its election on April 5, 2019, at the Nineteenth Regular Meeting of the Consultative Committee of CIFTA, in fulfillment of Article 5 of the Consultative Committee's Rules of Procedure, using as a frame of reference the “2018-2022 Course of Action for the Operation and Implementation of the CIFTA,” as well as the decisions and mandates adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Hemisphere, contained in resolution AG/RES. 2950 (L-O/20), entitled “Advancing Hemispheric Security: A Multidimensional Approach.”

**Status of signatures and ratifications of the CIFTA Convention**

To date, 31 states have ratified or acceded to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials.

In letters it sent to the permanent representatives to the OAS on December 3, 2020, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat sought to urge the signatory states that had not yet ratified the Convention – Canada, the United States, and Jamaica – to consider ratifying it as soon as possible. They were also asked to report on action their government had taken to that end.

**Questionnaire on the level of implementation and effectiveness of the CIFTA**

By way of background, with regard to its application it should be borne in mind that in order to ascertain the current status of the states party to the Convention and those not party, the “Questionnaire on the Implementation and Effectiveness of CIFTA” has been sent to them since 2011. This request for information has been reiterated to all member states of the Organization of American States on an annual basis.

During 2019-2020 period, five updated questionnaires were received from Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. The Technical Secretariat urged member states that had not yet done so to send in their updated questionnaires.

**Regional and international cooperation and coordination**

Guided by the mandate contained in paragraph 92 of resolution AG/RES 2907 of 2017, to promote and strengthen synergies involving OAS member states and other international and regional organizations and mechanisms engaged with the issue of illicit firearms trafficking, as *Pro Tempore* Secretariat Mexico hosted two consecutive editions[[1]](#footnote-1)/ of the meeting “Strengthening Regional Cooperation in the Americas to Prevent and Combat Illicit Firearms Trafficking and Related Crimes,” organized jointly with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime’s Global Firearms Programme.

Notable conclusions arising from both meetings included:

* Most countries of the Americas are signatories to the Palermo Convention, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, and to the CIFTA and hence need no additional agreement to cooperate, but rather just need to establish mechanisms to engage in counteracting arms trafficking.
* Standardize ballistics fingerprinting systems internationally for information sharing with a view to seeking more economical alternatives to the existing ones.
* Reform national laws on firearms, their components, and ammunition, as they are not up to date and hinder efforts to tackle the crime of illicit arms trafficking.

Mexico chaired the Working Group on Firearms of the Palermo Convention on July 16 and 17, 2020. During its chairmanship, Mexico promoted information sharing to understand current trends in illicit firearms trafficking and further stressed the importance of capacity building for national, regional and international specialized agencies to be able to settle cases, as well as to collect data in this area. Lastly, Mexico promoted multilateral cooperation to fulfill target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls for a reduction of illicit financial and arms flows.

The Technical Secretariat of CIFTA delivered a presentation at the meeting, on the groundbreaking nature of the Convention, highlighting the progress made, such as the model legislation and the courses of action approved, and the support provided by the Department against Transnational Organized Crime and the Department of Public Security to help member states meet their obligations under the Convention.

It is worth noting that as part of preparations for the next Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Mexico is facilitating the Working Group on Transparency and Reporting along with Belgium.

Furthermore, consistent with the mandate, contained in paragraph 109 of resolution AG/RES. 2950 of 2020, to invite member states to collaborate on the hemispheric study on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition in the Americas, Mexico has worked alongside the Department against Transnational Organized Crime and the Department of Public Security and is currently conducting an analysis to draw up a road map for embarking on preparations for the study, as well as for exploring sources of funding.

In conclusion, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat would like to refer to paragraph 18 of the Declaration on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of CIFTA, “Hemispheric Cooperation to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials,” to respectfully urge states, international organizations, and other allies to make financial contributions to the trust fund established to improve the operations and functions of the CIFTA.

**Preparations for the Twentieth Regular Meeting of the Consultative Committee**

Although this *Pro Tempore* Secretariat had intended to hold the Twentieth Regular Meeting of the Consultative Committee on or around April 5 to mark Inter-American Day for Countering the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, due to the COVID-19 countermeasures in force at that time, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat requested the OAS Permanent Council to postpone that meeting. That request was granted with the approval of resolution CP/RES. 1152 (2282/20).

Months later, once the appropriate protocols had been established, and pursuant to the decisions adopted in resolution AG/RES. 2950 (L-O/20) of 2020, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat again requested the Permanent Council to approve a resolution establishing the place and date of that regular meeting. That request was granted in CP/RES. 1162 of November 18, 2020, setting December 17, 2020, as the date for the Twentieth Regular Meeting of the Consultative Committee of CIFTA, to be held virtually from OAS headquarters.

Under the provisions set forth in paragraph 6 of Article XXI of the Convention, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat convened the Twentieth Regular Meeting of the Consultative Committee, through document CIFTA/CC-XX/doc.1/20, and prepared the draft agenda, draft schedule, and draft list of invited guests. These documents were distributed and submitted to the member states of the Organization for consideration through a virtual process that was put in place in view of the preventive measures taken to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Luz Elena Baños Rivas

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OAS

*Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Consultative Committee of CIFTA

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1. . The first meeting was held November 5 to 7, 2019 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and drew participation from representatives of Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Dominican Republic.

   Later on, from November 13 to 15, the second edition was held at Hotel Fiesta Americana Reforma, with representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela participating. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)