

PRESS RELEASE

A Regional Parliamentary Workshop on Mobilizing Parliamentarians to Advocate for Improved Compliance with the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, will take place in the Tanoa Tusitala Hotel in Apia, on Thursday and Friday 26 and 27 April, 2018.

Organized by PGA (Parliamentarians for Global Action) in consultation with the Legislative Assembly of Samoa, this Workshop will convene Legislators from across the region to review and discuss steps taken, or that may be taken in the near future, to Address the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in the region.

The Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons is a continuing problem and challenge in the Pacific Islands Region, and has had a particularly negative impact in terms of the rise of number of cases, reported and unreported, of domestic armed violence affecting women in particular.

The negative impact of this illicit trade manifests itself, not only in terms of loss of life and serious injuries, but also in terms of a negative impact on achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and has been widely documented in recent years, in particular the disproportionately adverse impact on Women in many domestic violence cases occasioned by this illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The Government of Samoa has ratified the Arms Trade Treaty in June 2014 and in 2016 submitted a comprehensive Report on its Compliance with the UN Programme of Action Addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. In the context of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Samoa ratified the Biological Weapons Convention in September 2017. As such, Samoa serves as an excellent inspiration to a number of other countries in the region to follow suit.

The opening ceremony will start at 9.00 on Thursday morning with the Opening address by the Acting Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Fiame Naomi Mataafa

There will also be presentations by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Samoa, HE Ms Simona Marinescu; and High Commissioner of New Zealand to Samoa, HE David Nicholson.

Among the local presenters are; the Acting Attorney General, Galumalemana Noumea Loretta Teueli; Commissioner of Police, Fuiavailiili Egon Keil, and PGA member from Samoa, Afioa Taefu Lemi Taefu. The workshop will also receive presentations from 10 participating Pacific Island countries.