



**Conference of the Parties to the
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
(Firearms Protocol)
Vienna, Austria, October 19-20, 2010**

**Statement of
the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities (WFSA)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Mark Barnes of the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities, the WFSA. We are an ECOSOC NGO representing over 100 million hunters, sport shooters and collectors. We also represent most of the major civilian firearms and ammunition manufacturers.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the Conference, for extending an invitation to the NGOs to comment on, and lend our expertise to, the vital issues that are before this committee.

The WFSA and its members have been involved with the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, and more specifically the Firearms Protocol, since the process's very inception. Indeed, the WFSA was present when the Protocol was adopted in 2001.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to make some very brief comments.

First, I want to thank the UN Office on Drug and Crime for its inclusion of the WFSA and other members of civil society in processes related to the Protocol, particularly the Model Law that has just been completed and circulated. Mr. Chairman, I must also compliment governments and experts on their contributions to the process, despite long gaps between meetings and short turnaround times for document reviews. I would be remiss if I did not give particular thanks to the governments of India, Belgium, and the United States, who continue to be actively engaged.

I would note that the process itself did not lend itself to drafting the most useable document, in part because many of the experts lacked familiarity with the Protocol, were not present at all the meetings, or viewed the model law as means to other objectives.

Indeed, at the final meeting of the experts there was much discussion on the mandate of the group and the document itself. In our view, in order for the model law to be an effective drafting aid to legislative assemblies it must be simple, restricted to the Protocol and aimed for the audience of those nations seeking help in implementing the Protocol, as opposed to general firearms controls.

For example, the marking of ammunition was a topic during the experts meetings, a practice no country in the world undertakes for either its imports or exports, both because of the cost and questionable utility. This subject was excluded from the Protocol, so it is hard to imagine how this would be perceived as a helpful provision to a nation struggling with implementing the Protocol.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, on the suggested future activities of the UN ODA in regards to Firearms Protocol, we hope that you and the UN ODA will continue to involve the WFSA and other civil society members. This involvement is particularly important because our constituents, the hundreds of millions of hunters, sport shooters and collectors, own the great majority of firearms in the world. In fact, civilians legally own sixty percent of the small arms in the world. Of this, only a small, small percentage are ever involved in crime or other types of violence.

Mr. Chairman, we also hope that any future effort regarding the UN Firearms Protocol would acknowledge the beneficial aspects of civilian firearms ownership.

Thank you.

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