

## Global Week of Action Against Small Arms 2006

### Report of the PIR Centre, Russia

**On May 15-19, PIR Center and *Saferworld* organised an educational program in Vladivostok, which included a number of university lectures, round-tables for mass-media and academics; and a three-day training seminar on the issues of small arms and light weapons (SALW) controls.**

It became possible to carry out all these public events thanks to the Vladivostok Department of Russian Custom Academy and the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service.

On May 15, there were given two blocks of lectures for the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service students and the Vladivostok Department of Russian Custom Academy listeners and academics. Both lecture courses were arranged in the same manner:

**Vadim Kozyulin** (PIR Center) presented his view on the problem of illicit arms trade and analysed national mechanisms of export control. He showed the main shortcomings of the last ones and gave some concrete examples of injudicial activities in the field of arms trade.

**Duncan Hiscock** (*Saferworld*) told about the Arms Trade Treaty initiative, which is to be included in the agenda of the nearest Biennial Meeting of States to review implementation of the UN Programme of Action on small arms (PoA).

**Anastasia Laguta** (PIR Center) traversed the role of civil society in solving the small arms and light weapons problem in Russia and illustrated the description of the main directions of its work with the example from the PIR Center and *Saferworld* activities. Considerable interest provoked such PIR Center projects like internship and Nonproliferation Summer School for Young Specialists from Russia and the CIS.

**Denis Krivosheev** (*Saferworld*) supplemented the previous speaker telling on the development of the Control Arms global campaign jointly run by *Amnesty International*, *IANSA* and *Oxfamhttp*. Among other factors he mentioned the Million Faces petition, which is collecting photos and self portraits from around the world to use these faces to send a powerful, global message of support to the world's governments for an International Arms Trade Treaty.

**Gagik Avakyan** (NGO "Democracy and Cooperation", Armenia) analysed the problems connected with small arms and light weapons availability for the civilian population in the Northern Caucasus. He demonstrated the negative arms' impact on the psychology of children and women and fatal mutations in the mass consciousness resulting from the surplus of weapon in the region.

On May 16, PIR Center and *Saferworld* experts organised two round tables:

Opening the round table in the the Vladivostok Department of Russian Custom Academy **Vadim Kozyulin** told briefly on the PIR Center and *Saferworld* joint project's basic goals and results. He also described the main strategies of arms smuggling and estimated the perspectives of illegal arms trade extension at the context of the technologies' development.

The most problematic aspects of trans-border cooperation were specified by **Denis Krivosheev**. He noticed that *Saferworld* had worked for several years in South Eastern Europe to encourage and support co-operation between police forces through the Southern European Co-operative Initiative (SECI) Regional Centre for Combating Transborder Crime. In particular, *Saferworld* had helped the SECI Centre's Task Force on small arms and light weapons to establish a system of information exchange and reporting mechanisms on illicit small arms and light weapons.

**Goska Wasilevska** led a brief training session for the customers to define the benefits the participants wanted to get from the international collaboration and also estimate the negative impact of the lack of cooperation between power departments from different countries.

As the Director of the Vladivostok Department of Russian Custom Academy **Alexander Borisenko** noticed on the results of the event: “It isn't our first experience of joint work with PIR Center, and this event was as successful as the previous ones. We rarely have an opportunity to initiate an open dialog with the representatives of expert community, moreover the western experts. So we are ready to contribute such educational programs in every possible way”.

The second round table took place at the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service. It was attended by the representatives from the Department of Internal Affairs in the Primorski Krai, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vladivostok, the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, the Vladivostok Department of Russian Custom Academy, the Naval State University and journalists .

The participants discussed a liability of comprehensive approach to the small arms and light weapons un-controlled dissemination problem.

According to all accounts the programs of marking and tracing weapon aren't financed adequately yet. There isn't a clear understanding of the problem's importance in the mass consciousness. So the PIR Center and *Saferworld* joint project is to attract the attention of the general public and become a connecting link between government and civil society.

**Vadim Kozyulin** told that Primorski Krai is facing an acute problem of the illicit arms transfers determined by the lots of military and not always protected well storages located there. As Mr. **Kozyulin** noticed “Primorski Krai is second only to Northern Caucasia in the field of SALW un-controlled dissemination”.

Director of the international relations faculty in the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service, **Mikhail Shinkovskiy** said that from the Soviet times the city was a territory of direct military presence, so there are still a lot of stockpiles which are not under firm control. Like a special issue, requiring an attentive investigation, Shinkovskiy detached a problem of hand-held radiological type explosive devices.

Candidate of Political Science, the PIR Center Summer School 2005 participant **Andrey Gubin** clarified the issue of military-technical cooperation in the sphere of small arms and light weapons transfers in the countries of Asia-Pacific Region.

By the end everyone agreed that it isn't possible to procrastinate the resolution of small arms and light weapons problem more. It's necessary to develop a program at the governmental level to tackle illicit small arms and light weapons dissemination.

The circle of the public events was finished with the training-seminars on May 17-19. As usual all the seminars were interactive. All the participants had an opportunity to work as individually so in groups, develop their own view on small arms and light weapons problem, propose and prove their own program of its solution.

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