

We, Parliamentarians from the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and the Republic of Montenegro;

Aware of the immediate threat to human security posed by small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse, both within our societies and between our nations, in Europe and globally;

Recognizing the work of the various stakeholders – local, national, regional, and global – in the field of small arms and light weapons control, the work of which has been expressed in amongst other several instruments which demand timely implementation;

Asserting our complete dedication as parliamentarians, and elected representatives of the people in our respective countries, to work for greater control of small arms and light weapons; and,

Affirming that Parliamentarians have a unique and instrumental function in the advancement of the small arms and light weapons control agenda;

Adopted, the 23rd of May 2007, in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, the following:

**Inaugural Declaration
of the
Western Balkans Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons**

Constitutive principles

Our Forum is constituted on the following principles: voluntarity, which means that membership is acquired individually and springs from commitment to small arms and light weapons control; parliamentary identity, which means that members participate in the Forum in their specific capacity as parliamentarians; parliamentary ownership, which means that the Forum's activities are conducted by and respond to the needs of the members; and parliamentary exchange, which means that exchange between members should be the guiding methodology of the Forum.

Aims and objectives

Our Forum strives to enhance our parliamentary outreach on the issues of small arms and light weapons control; this can be achieved through, amongst other, strengthening our capacity to exercise the parliamentary functions relating to legislation, oversight and awareness-raising.

Openness

Our Forum shall be open to every parliamentarian in the Western Balkans that abide by our constitutive principles and share our aims and objectives; in that spirit, the Forum specifically encourages parliamentarians from the Republic of Serbia, which for pressing parliamentary tasks were unable to attend the constitutive meeting, to acquire membership in the Forum; equally, the Forum shall seek to liaise, when appropriate, with parliamentarians in countries neighbouring to the region.

Partnerships

Our Forum will entertain partnerships with those actors and stakeholders who wish to support the Forum; in that vein, the Forum underscores its close relationship with South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and its immediate affinity to the global Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, while expressing its firm wish to consolidate work with both institutions.