



**WFSA**

The World Forum  
on the Future of  
Sport Shooting Activities

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**United Nations General Assembly, 64<sup>th</sup> Session  
First Committee, October 23, 2009**

**The World Forum on the Future of  
Sport Shooting Activities**

Statement of  
Ted Rowe, President

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. I am Ted Rowe, President of the World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities (WFSA), an ECOSOC/ NGO comprised of the major international hunting and sport shooting associations and civilian firearms industry trade associations. We speak for more than one hundred million hunters and sport shooters throughout the world.

I want to express my appreciation to you, and the Bureau, for extending a gracious invitation to NGOs to address this august body.

Mr. Chairman, the WFSA and its member associations have appeared at UN meetings and conferences on the small arms and light weapons issue for the past 14 years. My presentation today is consistent with the WFSA's longstanding position but it is a message which bears repeating.

Mr. Chairman, the paramount fact that cannot be ignored is that 60% of the small arms, as defined by various UN documents, are legally-owned and possessed civilian firearms. Some may be uncomfortable with this, but it is accurate and not going to change.

Mr. Chairman, these firearms, these legally-owned and possessed civilian firearms, play legitimate roles in numerous national jurisdictions. One example, Mr. Chairman, is the role hunting-related tourism plays in many countries, on many continents.

*NGO in Roster Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

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In September 2009, the WFSA held a symposium in Windhoek, Namibia, on the ecological and economic benefits of hunting. The final report of this Symposium will be distributed at the Biennial Meeting of States in June 2010 (BMS4). Experts proved that hunters and the revenue generated by hunting are a critical tool to end poverty in rural communities. The UN has clearly recognized the link between poverty and violence. Hunters—lawful civilian firearms owners—are a significant part of the solution to end crime and conflict.

Mr. Chairman, during this Symposium we learned that 3% of Namibia's GNP comes from tourist hunting and is increasing at 12% per year. This is a substantial figure. Furthermore, hunting tourism generate 30 times the revenues that photographic tourism does. The benefits in other countries are similar.

The CAMPFIRE program in Zimbabwe provides 95% of the revenue for nearly three million communal people. CAMPFIRE is the "Communal Areas Management Program" which uses hunting fees to directly benefit and empower indigenous peoples. The LIFEPLUS Community Project, in Namibia, conserves 49 million acres and supports nearly 300 thousand indigenous peoples. The renowned Markhor, a mountain goat, program in Pakistan has benefited both the species and furnished a generation of local employment – the annual fees of close to 450 thousands US dollars from the permits for these mountain goats support the conservation program in the area.

Finally, 85% of conservation moneys, for over a hundred years, in the United States have come from hunting fees and dollars.

Hunting, and its benefits, are just one example of the utility of legal civilian firearms possession and ownership. Hunting is the primary support for science based management of ecosystems. The acquisition of food and the inhibition of the spread of disease by migratory birds are all part of the benefits of civilian firearms ownership. Mr. Chairman, time precludes me from going into these and other benefits in detail today.

Mr. Chairman, the reality of civilian firearms ownership – legal civilian firearms ownership – creates a conflict with several continuing UN efforts, specifically: the Programme of Action (POA) on small arms, the effort for an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and any other U.N. effort on small arms.

Mr. Chairman, as these endeavors move forward I would make three recommendations.

First, we ask that the POA, at BMS4, finally acknowledge the legitimacy of civilian firearms' possession and ownership.

Second, Mr. Chairman, we ask that the resolution which establishes the parameters for future ATT work exclude civilian firearms ownership, possession and transportation from the scope of the ATT. We have made this position known to the Open Ended Working Group and will continue to do so.

And last, Mr. Chairman, that any other U.N. effort should avoid any standard which assumes or suggests that any reduction in the number of civilian firearms is *per se* or *de facto* a good thing. In fact, Mr. Chairman, this fallacious argument that reducing the number of legal firearms is desirable in and of itself is perpetuated in many government and NGO statements. This is despite the volumes of independent scholarly, criminological and sociological evidence that such reductions do not lower crime.

We, the hundreds of millions of civilian firearms owners: hunters, sport shooters and antique collectors reject the idea that there is any need to reduce the number of legally-owned civilian firearms. It serves no helpful purpose and harms much legal and productive activity.

This is not to say, Mr. Chairman, that there are not issues needing to be addressed. Marking and tracing, the control of illicit traffic, efficient and effective import procedures – these are areas where we have offered our support and we will continue to do so.

Thank you.