## Enhancing the Practical Application of ISACS—
## Technical Assistance Tool

The United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism began its work to develop the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) in 2008 with the goal of providing standards to assist the international community in implementing the norms and commitments set forth in the United Nations Programme of Action, the International Tracing Instrument, and the Firearms Protocol. These standards are voluntary, technically validated, and follow International Organization for Standardization (ISO) language (referred to as "level of obligation": Shall, Should, May, Can).

In preparation of the adoption of the ISACS, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS) initiated a **Proof of Concept** project (Phase I, January–August 2012) to develop a software tool to assist United Nations agencies, states and civil society in implementing their small arms control commitments through the use of these standards. During Phase I, UNIDIR and MIIS developed a prototype of this tool aimed at enhancing the practical application of the ISACS, and assisting stakeholders in measuring, prioritizing, and evaluating the implementation efforts of their small arms control commitments.

In January 2013, UNIDIR began Phase II of the development of the ISACS software tool. The objective of Phase II (January–December, 2013) of the project is to **validate, finalize, and launch** the ISACS tool, in order to facilitate uptake and application of the ISACS by interested users. In enhancing the utility of the software tool to its highest capacity and ensuring its effective application by users, Phase II will conduct field-testing activities to validate the utility of the software, and finalize the tool for launch based on feedback received from testing missions.

The tool has many applications:

• Agencies can use it to identify priority areas for national efforts on small arms and light weapons and better develop and target their programming and activities to the highest level of obligations codified in the standards.

• States can use it to conduct internal "self-evaluations", monitor progress of their implementation efforts, and generate data for strategic and policy planning as well as reporting.

• Donors can use it to generate baseline data at the beginning of an assistance project and as an evaluation tool at the end, prioritize assistance projects, and evaluate results over time.

• Assistance recipients can use it to develop assistance requests by identifying priority areas and ensuring alignment between needs and assistance requests. The tool can also help generate specific data to be used in national reporting exercises, thereby raising the quality of information reported.

The tool is expected to be launched and available to users in December 2013. UNIDIR's website will host relevant project documents, including briefing papers and research related materials.

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Project description