The African Union (AU) Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020 was adopted in January 2017 and sets out practical steps to address the underlying drivers of conflict as well as the tools and enablers of violence. Preventing the illicit flows of weapons within Africa, including to conflict zones, is a vital component of the AU Roadmap. In July 2019 in Addis Ababa, the AU Commission and the Small Arms Survey released 'Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa*’, the first-ever continental study of its kind. The report provides AU member states with evidence-based analysis of the scale, availability, characteristics, and supply patterns of illicit small arms in Africa. It also identifies practical recommendations for AU member states to tackle illicit arms flows.

This side event—co-organized by the African Union Commission and the Permanent Mission of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations—offers delegates to the First Committee of the General Assembly the opportunity to hear key takeaways and recommendations from the AU and the Small Arms Survey based on the study, as well as to discuss priorities for the implementation of the Silencing the Guns Roadmap. The side event also will focus on the AU Commission’s efforts to manage weapons and ammunition recovered in AU-mandated and authorized peace operations, which the AU also worked on with support from the Small Arms Survey.

*‘Weapons Compass’ is available in Arabic, English, French, and Portuguese on the websites of the AU Commission and the Small Arms Survey