



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

STATEMENT BY

HON BEATRICE KIRASO, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL POLITICAL FEDERATION
AND HEAD OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY DELEGATION

AT

THE FOURTH BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES TO CONSIDER PROGRESS IN
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAM OF ACTION TO
PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND
LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.

New York

16th June 2010

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Mr. Chairman, it is my honor to congratulate you and the entire Bureau for your election to guide this important meeting. I want to assure you of our support towards achieving the objectives of this meeting.

Mr. Chairman the East African Community, comprising the Partner States of the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania also associates itself with the statements that have been made on behalf of the Africa Group and its individual Partner States.

Mr. Chairman,

Within the context of the region where the EAC is situated, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons remain of utmost concern to Peace, Security and stability therefore, to development in the region. The lack of adequate capacity by Partner States to effectively police and monitor both maritime and land borders has left the region exposed to illicit circulation of SALW. The EAC Partner States are collectively working on joint land and maritime control mechanisms anchored on greater engagement of border communities in border management through community policing; better coordination of law enforcement agencies and enhanced technical capacity to better control the two main sea port entries into the region.

Whereas a lot of attention has been accorded to land and maritime frontier security, little has been done to provide reciprocal support to strengthening aviation controls. Being a favorite method of avoiding and busting sanctions, the EAC calls for support in this area. We are aware that the EU is in the process of working with a number of Great Lakes Region and horn of Africa States on this concern, the EAC renews its offer to support the implementation of such initiatives covering the EAC Region through the EAC Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA).

Mr. Chairman,

The effective implementation of the UNPoA must be viewed from the perspective of elimination of practices that create fertile grounds for criminal groupings to operate and facilitate poor management of State owned stocks thus exposing these to leakages and misuse. Such practices include the scourge of corruption and poor

record keeping among others. The EAC has over the last two years developed mechanisms to enhance governance through better accountability and elimination of corrupt. This has been augmented by deliberate and targeted measures aimed at better record keeping through arms marking and permanent removal from circulation of surplus as well as recovered/surrendered stocks to prevent any recirculation .So far over 20,000 arms have been marked in the region and another 120,000 destroyed publicly to build confidence, create awareness and enhance transparency in the process. These initiatives are also intended to facilitate effective implementation of the International Instrument on Marking and Tracing. These efforts therefore need to be complemented with Security Sector Reforms.

Mr. Chairman,

The Year 2010 was designated as the Year of Peace for Africa by the Summit of the Africa Union. EAC views this with significance, has used the opportunity to emphasize the need for enhancing the pace of implementation of the Nairobi Protocol on SALW. The EAC region is vulnerable because of the ease with which SALW are proliferated in the region. SALW have in turn played a role in undermining legitimate governments, promoting armed crime, facilitating gender based violence, in particular sexual abuse as a tool of war and conflict. The EAC has over the last four months held a number of high profile events to observe the Year of Peace with reaffirmation of the commitment of the region towards eradication of illicit arms and mobilization of the communities towards supporting law enforcement agencies in this process. Political support in this regard has been unequivocally demonstrated towards sustainable response to the SALW problem through promotion of the culture of peace and dialogue, deeply ingrained in African socialism.

Mr. Chairman,

International Cooperation and assistance remains critical towards supporting full implementation of the UNPoA. There are inherent resource and capacity gaps that need international cooperation and support to be closed. The EAC takes note with appreciation the efforts that have so far been made by the UNODA to link needs with resources. It is our wish to see proposals that have already been submitted being effectively supported for implementation.

At regional level, we acknowledge the support that has been extended to the EAC by the EU and the German Government, both of which have made a notable impact in supporting better coordination and regional convergence towards SALW control initiatives in support of other regional integration initiatives. We are open to working with other partners who would wish to support us in seeing a peaceful and prosperous EAC region. We will also continue working with other regional organizations and mechanisms to enhance cooperation in the implementation of the UNPoA and other regional instruments. In recognition of this need, we have entered into cooperative arrangements with RECSA and are in the process of formalizing arrangements with other regional organizations and partners that include INTERPOL, UNODC, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region(ICGLR),Eastern and Southern Africa Anti Money Laundering Group(ESAAMLG) among others to collectively coordinate our efforts and optimize comparative advantage towards enhancing regional security through a *strength in diversity* approach.

Mr.Chairman,while acknowledging and emphasizing that SALW control is a primary responsibility of Governments ,experience in some regions still reflects a predominantly donor driven process. The EAC continues to encourage Partner States to demonstrate this responsibility through financial and human resource facilitation to the extent that external support provides complementary rather than primary support. This is the only avenue towards ensuring sustainability of the SALW control interventions, which are of long term nature. The EAC also continues to encourage active engagement and nurture of synergy with civil society and other players in the SALW control dialogue and processes.

In conclusion,Mr. Chairman, it is our hope that the outcome of this meeting will provide additional impetus to the fight against illicit SALW and enhance cooperation, coordination and complementarity among all involved.

I thank you.