



UGANDA

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STATEMENT BY

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ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS, AND LEADER OF UGANDA'S
DELEGATION

AT

THE FOURTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF STATES TO
CONSIDER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF
ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT
TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS
ASPECTS

New York,

June 14, 2010

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Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate your Excellency Pablo Macedo on your assumption of the role of chairmanship of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States. I also congratulate the members of the bureau upon their election to their respective roles. We are confident that you will steer the fourth Biennial Meeting of States to a successful outcome, and my delegation will work constructively in this endeavour.

Mr. Chairman,

The Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa have had bitter experiences as a result of conflicts perpetuated by the Proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The adoption of the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the proliferation of illicit small Arms and light weapons in March 2000 attests to the great importance countries of the two Regions attach to global efforts on the need to eradicate Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Countries of the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa adopted a strategy that reinforces and complements national, regional and global efforts in Preventing and Combating the proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. To coordinate their joint efforts, a Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons was established in Nairobi. Each of the ten countries in these two regions subsequently established their National Focal Points on Small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Uganda's efforts to combat SALW are focused on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action and the Nairobi Declaration. Uganda established her National Focal Point (NFP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2003. It is also charged with exchanging information with other states on systems, mechanisms and practices to combat SALW.

Uganda also passed and launched the National Action Plan (NAP) on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2004 and 2005 respectively. The NAP focuses on three areas: (1) the control and management of existing SALW; (2) the reduction of the number of SALW in circulation; and (3) the prevention of proliferation of SALW in the future.

A Draft Policy and Draft Bill have been completed and forwarded to the Ministers responsible for tabling before Cabinet, and thereafter Parliament. The Draft Bill provides measures to regulate import, export, transport, transit, brokering, possession, transfer, etc, of Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Bill seeks to repeal the 1970 Fire Arms Acts and aligns it with existing International Instruments on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

In line with the provisions of the Nairobi Protocol, the UN Programme of Action and ITI, Uganda procured technical assistance (electronic marking machines) from the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA) and a nationwide Firearms Marking Exercise is ongoing.

Firearms belonging to the Uganda Police and Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces are now being marked. The exercise will later roll out to include other armed groups including private security guards and the civilians. Alongside the marking exercise, a country-wide firearms stocktaking exercise is also being conducted in the Uganda People Defence Forces and Uganda Police Force. This will help determine surplus stocks, unserviceable and decommissioned SALW for disposal.

Since 2005, the Uganda National Focal Point has been working closely with the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the implementation of Uganda's national strategy to combat the Proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Civil Society Organizations' main areas of focus are on sensitizations of the general public and capacity building of the Uganda task forces on the subject matter. The NFP has also conducted a number of training programmes aimed at enhancing competencies of Law Enforcement Agencies in the management of SALW, raising general awareness on the dangers of SALW.

Mr. Chairman,

Uganda has made tremendous progress in the implementation of the UN Programme of Action. Since 2008, a total of 778 tons of redundant Explosive Ordnance Devices and 4700 assorted illicit SALW have been disposed of. The Uganda NFP is working in collaboration with stakeholders to establish verifiable data on SALW in state possession and use this data to develop an electronic Central Firearms Registry.

In this respect, assortments of equipment have been acquired to facilitate the establishment of Central Firearms Registry (CFR) within Uganda Police. Uganda has also completed developing a Fire Arms Information Management System and soon this will be deployed to kick start the operation of the CFR.

Mr. Chairman,

SALW issues cut across borders due to illegal activities of traffickers. With the support of the international community and neighboring states, Uganda has been able to conduct operations across international borders. In the Karamoja region, the bi-lateral cooperation

with Kenya has led to joint and simultaneous operations for recovery of stolen animals and curtailing cross border cattle raids.

Successful efforts to combat illicit proliferation of SALW require regional stability and cooperation among the Member States. Uganda participation in the African Union peace keeping Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is part of our contribution to regional stability and combating SALW.

There is need for adequate resources to implement measures to combat proliferation of SALW. With the limited resources available, we appreciate the support (both technical and financial) extended by European Unions, the Governments of the Netherlands, Germany, Japan, UNDP and non-organisations such as Saferworld.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Uganda is on course in the implementation of the UN programme of Action and the Nairobi Protocol. My delegation wishes to reiterate Uganda's firm support for all national, regional and global efforts directed at Preventing, Combating and Eradicating the Proliferation of Illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects.

Thank you.