



**STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
THE GREAT LAKES REGION (ICGLR) TO THE 4th BIENNIAL
MEETING OF STATES ON THE UN PROGRAMME OF ACTION
ON SALW, NEW YORK 14-18TH JUNE 2010**

1. Mr. Chairman, let me join my colleagues in congratulating you for being elected Chairman of this important meeting, and for your excellent performance in that role.
2. I speak on behalf of the 11 member states of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) namely Angola, Central African Republic, Burundi, Rwanda, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, and Zambia
3. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region is a regional Intergovernmental mechanism that promotes inter-state cooperation to enhance Peace and Security in the troubled Great Lakes Region of Africa.
4. ICGLR is spearheading a project focusing on coordination of activities and reinforcement of capacities in the Great Lakes sub-region to fight the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, within the framework of the UN Plan of Action on SALW. The objective of the project is to contribute to the control of illicit small arms in the Great Lakes Region through better coordination and the strengthening of capacities, hence improving security, stability and development.
5. Over the last two years since the last BMS, progress has been made in various respects. In partnership with the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA), three member states of the ICGLR namely Zambia, Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo concluded cooperation MoUs with RECSA. In this regard

- SALW electronic marking machines were supplied to these countries, and training of the officers involved in Arms Marking concluded. Electronic marking of SALWs in these and other RECSA member states is ongoing, and aims to strengthen stockpile management and tracing of SALW.
6. In partnership with the Institute for Security Studies of South Africa, Studies focusing on Disarmament of Armed Pastoralist communities in the Karamoja Cluster, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia (What we call Zone 3 in ICGLR) were concluded in April 2010. Community awareness and outreach programmes are also ongoing along the border areas of the four member states. Uganda and Kenya are working closely together in simultaneous disarmament efforts.
 7. A Regional Disarmament Committee made up of the member states of Zone 3 and partners has been operationalized.
 8. In partnership with RECSA, the process of developing Best Practice Guidelines on Practical Disarmament has started. These will be used to guide joint disarmament efforts by member states.
 9. In the context of strengthening international cooperation, the ICGLR is a member of the AU Regions Steering Committee on SALW, together with RECs and other regional bodies. The committee seeks to coordinate and harmonize all SALW related interventions across the African continent. ICGLR is also a member of the AU-Border Programme, which has a strong component on Transborder Cooperation on challenges such as SALW arms proliferation, Human Trafficking etc, to enhance border security.
 10. In Zone 10 (Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi) in collaboration with Economic Community for Great Lakes States (CEPGL), member states recently concluded a process of prioritizing joint transborder security and development projects. The projects focus on areas that enhance security while promoting development of the border areas of the three member states to stem demand for SALWs and stabilize the border areas.
 11. Mr. Chairman the link between proliferation of SALW, insecurity and underdevelopment is getting ever more pronounced in the Great lakes region. The fight against SALW is therefore key to our ongoing efforts to ensure

sustainable peace and security, and to resolve the simmering conflicts that still remain a stumbling block to progress in these efforts.

12. Mr Chairman, I wish to stress that to enhance international cooperation and assistance, member states should hasten efforts to integrate their economies, remove roadblocks for free movement of goods and people across borders, strengthen civil society, allocate more resources to law enforcement agencies, broaden efforts to sensitize communities on the negative effects of SALW, effectively address demand factors, and proactively deal with criminal networks that thrive on the illegal global arms trade. Some of these efforts are being made with varying degrees of success in some regions. For instance the “ Kazi kwa Vijana initiative designed to provide jobs and livelihoods to the youth in Kenya, anti-armed violence public campaigns in Burundi and pastoralist development programs in Uganda.
13. In conclusion, bottlenecks that still exist in the fight against SALW call for the active efforts of all of us. We acknowledge the technical and financial support extended to our partners in this project, and wish to underline the fact that sharing of lessons learned among all stakeholders is key to the success of our efforts. It is imperative that efforts be strengthened to counter illegal dealers and transfers of SALW by manufacturers at the international level.