



**STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE  
EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY TO**

**THE UNITED NATIONS REVIEW CONFERENCE ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION TO  
PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT  
TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL  
ITS ASPECTS.**

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OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL AFFAIRS  
AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION OF THE EALA**

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**Mr President,**

May I, on behalf of the East African Community, congratulate you on your election to preside over this landmark meeting. Under your experienced and able leadership, this conference should be able to achieve the desired objectives.

**Mr. President,**

The EAC associates itself with the statement by the Head of Zimbabwean delegation on behalf of the Africa Group and identifies with the African Common Position to this Conference as agreed upon in Windhoek, Namibia in December 2005.

**Mr President,**

The East African Community acknowledges the substantial gains that have been made in the implementation of the UNPoA since its signing in 2001. Indeed I must state that the three sister states of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have collectively made substantial strides in domesticating the UNPoA provisions under the very able and professional guidance of the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA). Being in a region beset with internal conflicts, the importance of the UNPoA to us cannot be overemphasized.

**Mr President,**

While none of the three EAC Partner States is a major arms producer, armed conflicts remain a regular feature in the region particularly among the Armed Nomadic Pastoral Communities who straddle common borders. The EAC Partner States are also conscious of their proximity to the most conflict prone zone in Africa hence view SALW proliferation not just as a security but also a major developmental concern. It is against this background that the EAC Partner States remain strongly supportive of initiatives that would facilitate adoption of international guidelines on transfer controls. Statements from the three states have been consistent in this regard.

**Mr. President,**

While poverty may not be explicitly linked to SALW proliferation, the EAC delegation recognizes the need to address issues of development concern, which catalyse demand for illicit arms. In this regard, it is our hope that this review conference will, in the outcome document, accord specific emphasis

to developmental support consistent with the OECD, TICAD and the Geneva Conference on Armed Violence and Development vision.

**Mr. President,**

The EAC states entered a customs union in January 2005 and are working on a Protocol on Common Market that will further integrate the economies and facilitate Free Movement of Persons and Labour across the Partner States. Through the initiatives of the three Heads of States, a fast-tracked Political Federation of the Partner States is envisaged by the year 2014. It is with this in mind that the EAC has established a Regional Small Arms Desk at the Secretariat to facilitate uniformity at the pace of implementation of the UNPoA. The EAC would, in this regard, wish to acknowledge the support by the German Government and will work in close collaboration with RECSA to achieve the envisaged objectives.

**Mr President,**

Plans are underway for Rwanda and Burundi to join the EAC not later than 2007. This will bring with itself challenges but also opportunities for these States to work more closely on Regional Security Arrangements. The EAC will continue working with these States on SALW demand reduction measures that include support to reconciliation efforts and inculcation of the culture of dialogue. The recent conclusion of a peace deal for Burundi is just a case in point.

In conclusion, I would wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Regional block to the UNPoA and restate the need for development support that would help to strengthen governance, facilitate inclusive leadership and ensure economic growth as measures towards sustainable Peace and Security in support of development.

**I thank you.**