



*Co-operating to Disarm*

## RECSA Update

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### **Development of RECSA's Regional Implementation Strategy**

In an endeavour to better address problems posed by small arms in its member states, RECSA is in the final stages of developing an implementation strategy to guide programme design and implementation. The strategy will take into consideration the specific situation of each of its Member States in regards to small arms and light weapons.

This need is informed by cultural, political, economic and social differences that exist between countries. These issues either contribute to or hamper efforts to address small arms related challenges. For successful interventions, it is important to ensure that the uniqueness of each country in these areas is taken into consideration during programme design and implementation.

The absence of a clear engagement strategy for RECSA for each country has meant that past interventions have been undertaken in a uniform manner across all Member States. This has resulted in varying levels of success. There is a need, therefore, to change this approach to enhance effectiveness of programmes to ensure they deliver results that ultimately contribute to the reduction of the number of arms held illegally.

The regional implementation strategy under development is further expected to provide clarity on areas where States can undertake cross border cooperation and operations to jointly address the common problem of small arms. These joint efforts are ultimately expected to link into the Africa Peace and Security Architecture.

In addition to studies undertaken by national researchers, during the month RECSA staff undertook baseline surveys on small arms and light weapons in Burundi, Djibouti, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The aim was to gather additional information to feed into the envisaged strategy.

## **Member States Updates**

## Rwanda



A picture of pieces of firearms after destruction using the Macyntire MC 4000 Shears machine

- The **arms marking** exercise is on-going. Over **1300** firearms have been marked by Rwanda National Police to-date using the MC 2000 electronic marking machine donated to the Government by RECSA. The Defense Forces are yet to start the marking exercise with equipment also provided by the Secretariat. The two electronic machines will facilitate and accelerate the arms marking in Rwanda and enhance record keeping and tracing of small arms and light weapons as elaborated under Article 7 of the Nairobi Protocol.
- A firearms inspection exercise has been carried out in the parts of the country affected by insurgents and firearms-related crimes. These include the Western Region and some parts of the North. The core objective of the exercise is to inspect the government arsenals and ammunition stores for purposes of updating records. This will assist in the identification of obsolete, surplus and redundant arms and ammunitions which are then earmarked for destruction. The overall aim is to enhance management of Government stockpiles.

Community policing and sensitization exercises are being carried out in the same areas. Through these exercises the citizens are encouraged to engage in voluntary surrender of arms held illegally. They are informed of the need to actively participate in national developmental and social programs particularly those geared at poverty reduction and the promotion of collective good health in the community (locally known as *mutuelle de santé*). Furthermore income generating activities are promoted in view of the fact that armed violence

hinders and retards sustainable development while at the same time poverty increases the potential for armed violence.

- Rwanda has carried out arms destruction exercises with the support of Mines Advisory Group (MAG-Rwanda) under the Conventional Weapons and Ammunition Disposal & Stockpile Management (CWMD) project. Since January 2009, over **16,000** obsolete, surplus and illegally held firearms have been destroyed with the **Macyntire MC 4000 Shears** machine which renders them completely unusable by cutting them up into tiny pieces.

## Uganda

- The Uganda National Focal Point (UNFP) conducted a workshop for Senior Officers of Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) on their role in implementing the National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons
- During the month, the UNFP collaborated with UPDF in an arms marking exercise in which 4,999 weapons were marked. The arms marking exercise is being conducted concurrently with stock taking of small arms held legally by civilians.
- UNFP hosted a RECSA-organised regional implementation strategy development workshop for NFP coordinators and researchers from the RECSA Member States