



Co-operating to Disarm

September Report

Development of National Action Plans: Djibouti

The drafting of the Djibouti small arms strategy has been finalised. Drafting of the national action plan was informed by a national survey on the small arms situation in the five regions of the country.

The document now awaits comments from the NFP who will consult internally before the National Action Plan is finalised. The document will then be taken through the necessary channels towards approval by the Djibouti Government.

RECSA at SARPCCO, EAPCCO Meetings

RECSA has had a long standing relationship with the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO) and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Corporation Organisation (EAPCCO). The organizations collaborate closely and share experiences from their efforts to control the proliferation of illegal small arms in the regions they cover.

During the month, the Regional Centre was represented at a meeting hosted by SARPCCO. RECSA's expertise was called upon to share Best Practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol. The presentation further highlighted the areas of collaboration between the two organizations.

The 11th Annual General Meeting of Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Corporation Organisation (EAPCCO) was held in Djibouti on 29th and 30th September. The Executive Secretary of RECSA briefed the meeting on the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol in EAPCCO Member States. Police Chiefs in attendance urged the Centre to collaborate with the EAPCCO Secretariat to enhance the capacity of law enforcement agencies.

RECSA at Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Experts' Meeting

The meeting held in Addis Ababa brought together experts in SALW in the Horn of Africa to discuss pertinent issues.

Various resource persons made presentations on topical issues relating to SALW in the Horn of Africa. RECSA briefed the meeting on its coordination of small arms work in the region.

5th Regional RECSA-NFP-Civil Society Forum

The meeting was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 27 to 28 September 2009.

The main aim of the meeting was to provide a forum for the exchange of information and for the fostering of closer collaboration between RECSA, NFPs and civil society organizations. The forum further explored the opportunities that exist for working together, and addressed any challenges that may hamper the collaboration.

Induction for 13th RECSA Member State

The Republic of Congo was admitted into RECSA Membership during the 5th Council of Ministers' meeting held in Bujumbura, Burundi in April 2009.

During the month, the RECSA Deputy Executive Secretary visited the country to brief Government officials about the Centre and its work in the region in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol. He further reiterated commitment by RECSA to extend its small arms work to the country.

The Government officials were further briefed on the necessary steps that need to be undertaken by a new RECSA Member State, that is, establishment of a National Focal Point on Small Arms Control and Management, ratification of the Nairobi Protocol, the obligation by Member States to make an annual contribution to support the functions of RECSA Secretariat, among others.

The Republic of Congo is committed to comply with all the Centre's requirements and to participate fully in programmes and activities. Government officials further requested support in the establishment of an NFP.

Gender Policy for RECSA

With funding from the Norway Government, the Regional Centre has started the process of developing a gender policy. The policy is expected to guide the Centre in mainstreaming gender in its small arms work.

RECSA is collaborating with the Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI) in developing the policy.

Public Awareness

RECSA was invited to participate in the Public Service Week organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya. The aim of the Week observed

between 24th and 26th September was to raise awareness among members of the public about the work of the Ministry and Diplomatic Missions that fall under it.

RECSA used the opportunity to distribute a wide range of information materials – newsletters, annual reports, information kits and other publications and branded items – to raise awareness about its small arms work in the region.

RECSA at ACSS meeting

RECSA is recognised as having advanced greatly in small arms work in the African region. For this reason, the Secretariat was called upon to share experiences and best practices in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol at a meeting organised by Africa Centre for Strategic Studies (ACSS) in Namibia.

The workshop themed *Enhancing Capacity for Tackling Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Proliferation in Southern Africa* brought together senior civilian and military officials and leaders from Southern Africa, international experts, and European and American government officials. The forum discussed the challenges that small arms and light weapons pose to peace and security in the sub-region. The meeting explored multi-faceted strategies to enhance capacity building at the sub-regional and national levels to better tackle the problem of small arms.

It was acknowledged that conflicts and the devastating impact of SALW proliferation is threatening millions of lives, domestic and regional security and economic integration. This necessitates measures to be put in place to enhance the capacity of SADC member states at both Regional and National levels to tackle the problem.

Participants assessed current strategies aimed at tackling SALW problems in the SADC region. Mechanisms to tackle SALW proliferation in the South African region were agreed on. These include proper governance (political, legal, economic and social); Information, education and Public awareness creation; institutional cooperation and coordination; and management of supply and demand of SALW (stockpile management).

The meeting further called on the AU, RECSA, SADC and other Regional bodies to support the development of a Continental strategy on SALW.

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Country Briefs

Burundi

During the month, the Burundi NFP on SALW in collaboration with MAG destroyed 138 bombs, 745 grenades, 116 rockets and 30,000 ammunitions.

The NFP collaborated with the Ministry of Human Rights and Gender to mark the World Day of Peace held on September 21st. Several awareness raising activities were undertaken in collaboration with members of the community, including bike

riding and a walk dubbed *Walk for Peace*. Citizens were encouraged to surrender illegal weapons in their possession.

Songs, dances and sketches were on show during the ceremonies, revolving around the theme *We must Disarm*.

A symbolic arms destruction of surrendered weapons was held to wrap up the day's event.

Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Police with the support of the US Government has trained a squad of 15 specialists in handling bombs. The training will enhance response by law enforcement agencies in the event of incidents involving explosives in the country.

During the training the squad collected about 82 different unexploded ordnances in a market and destroyed them. The Ethiopia National Focal Point on Small Arms Control & Management participated in the training.

Kenya

During the month, the Kenya NFP in collaboration with the Armed Violence Reduction and Development project supported celebrations to mark the World Day of Peace in a number of districts in the country. The celebrations were used to create awareness on the dangers of illicit small arms and light weapons. Members of the community who own illegal arms were encouraged to surrender them to the Government.

To mark the World Day of Peace the Kenya NFP included a message in a newspaper supplement published by the Government to mark the day. In addition awareness materials were distributed to the communities.

The KNFP facilitated the reconstitution of Provincial Task forces in Nyanza and Western Province. The task forces will address SALW issues in the regions and along the cross border areas.

The NFP participated in the development of the Conflict Prevention Strategic plan organized by a sister unit - National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management. The Strategy also addresses the issue of SALW in line with the Kenya national action plan on small arms control and management.

Rwanda

Rwanda has marked all the firearms in the Police General Headquarters. The arms marking project has now extended to regions outside Kigali.

Between January 1st and 30th September 2009, the Rwanda Police had marked 2,263 firearms. Between 1st April and 30th September 2009, 2,604 firearms, 50,000 rounds

of ammunition and 780 ammunition cases had been destroyed (data source: Central Firearms Registry, Rwanda National Police).

In an effort to make Rwanda a country free from illicit small arms flow, a public awareness exercise is being undertaken in collaboration with the media. The Rwanda NFP has secured space in a daily English News Paper, The New Times where an article on SALW is published on a weekly basis. These articles provide awareness to the public on the dangers of SALW, what to do in case they come across them, the legal framework within which small arms are controlled. The newspaper articles also teach citizens about better means of survival. They give income generation ideas in line with Government strategy on poverty reduction. The ultimate goal is to enlighten the community to better understand the relationship between poverty and conflict.

Seychelles

The country commemorated the World Day of Peace on the same day as the Seychelles Police Day.

The two key events were marked with sporting events with members of the community with the aim of building public confidence in the Police. In addition, members of the Force donated blood to hospitals and health centres, undertook community work, and gave various talks on crime prevention in schools and aspects of small arms. The media was mobilised to support awareness raising during the commemoration.

Sudan

Sudan is in the process of computerising its small arms database for easier retrieval of information. Registration of civilian weapons as part of the electronic database creation process is on-going. Staff members at the NFP have undergone relevant training in the creation and management of electronic databases.

The country has revised its small arms legislation in a process that saw the involvement of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, the Attorney General and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The draft law is under review and discussion before being put through other stages towards its approval and final signing into law.

Uganda

During the month the NFP dispatched officers to conduct an arms stock-taking exercise of Uganda Police Force arms in nine districts. The stock-taking followed a workshop conducted by the NFP for Regional Police Commanders in July to sensitise them about the exercise that would be conducted country-wide by the NFP.

In preparation for an arms destruction on 5th October, the NFP conducted preparatory meetings with stakeholders (including civil society and Development Partners). The destruction was to be part of events to mark the 10th

Anniversary of the East African Community. Obsolete and recovered illegal weapons numbering 3,500 were to be destroyed.

Regional Centre on Small Arms