



Cooperating to Disarm

**OPENING REMARKS AT THE RECSA SIDE EVENT AT THE UN HEADQUARTERS
ON THE OCCASSION OF BMS3**

New York

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By

Dr Francis K. Sang, CBS

(Executive Secretary, RECSA)

**Hon. Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, RECSA Chairman, Council of Ministers, and
Burundi Minister for Internal Security,
Representatives from Development Partners,
NFP Coordinators,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me, on behalf of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA), and on my own behalf to thank you all for sparing time to attend the RECSA side event whose theme is **Arms Marking and Tracing in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.**

I also wish to thank Mr Peter Bachelor from UNDP/BCPR, Geneva, for accepting to facilitate the event.

The objective of this side event is to brief participants on the progress made by RECSA Member States to mark weapons in State possession by the deadline of December 2008 as set out in the *Best Practice Guidelines on the Implementation of the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol on Small Arms and Light Weapons.*

RECSA has made major steps in supporting its Member States towards meeting this deadline.

With the financial support of the US Government and GTZ through the East African Community, RECSA has purchased 12 electronic marking machines for law enforcement officers with which Member States will mark their state-owned small arms and light weapons. Similar machines will be purchased for the Military

The electronic machines which are faster and compatible with computers have been favoured instead of manual ones earlier purchased to hasten the marking process and to simultaneously create databases.

In addition, each country will be provided with two computers with which to maintain databases of records of small arms and light weapons within its borders.

Two workshops have so far been held bringing together National Focal Point Coordinators, the Police and the Military from the 12 RECSA Member States to chart the way forward for the marking as required and to train officers on the use of the arms marking equipment and on the creation and management of databases to maintain records of small arms and light weapons.

Without pre-empting too much, let me now handover to Mr Bachelor to chair the session and invite the various presenters scheduled to make presentations on various issues on arms marking and tracing in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, and thereafter hold discussions

I thank you.