



**5TH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS**

**Hotel Source du Nil
20 – 21 April 2009**

Closing Remarks

By

**DR. FRANCIS SANG, CBS
(Executive Secretary)**

Honourable Yacin Elmi BOUH, the Djibouti Minister for Interior and Chairman, RECSA Council of Ministers;
Honourable Alain BUNYONI, Minister of Public Security, Government of Burundi and outgoing Chairman of RECSA's Council of Ministers;
Honourable Ministers and other Plenipotentiaries from RECSA Member States;
Lt Col Omar Hassan, Djibouti National Focal Point Coordinator and the Chair, RECSA Technical Advisory Committee;
Commissioner Mbazumutima Onesphore, outgoing Chairman of RECSA's Technical Advisory Committee and the Coordinator of Burundi National Focal Point;
National Focal Point Coordinators from other RECSA Member States;
Senior Government Officials;
Representatives from International and Inter-governmental organizations;
Representatives of Civil Society Organizations;
Members of the Media;
Distinguished Participants;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, on behalf of the Secretariat of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA), and on my own behalf, to once again express deep appreciation to the Government of Burundi for hosting the 5th RECSA Council of Ministers review meeting.

Let me also take this earliest opportunity to express sincere thanks to our esteemed Guest of Honour for gracing the closing ceremony of this occasion and to thank all distinguished Participants for their participation at the meeting.

Allow me to further express my sincere appreciation to the Council of Ministers for approving various RECSA strategy documents – five years strategic plan and its budget; the Information, Education and Communication Strategy; the RECSA 2009-2011 Work Plan and Budget; and the RECSA Financial audit reports.

The approval of these documents by the Council will result in their implementation around the region, resulting in a more coordinated and focused approach in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol in the Member States.

I wish to mention to the Council of Ministers that contribution of funds by Member States will demonstrate the commitment of the various countries to the Nairobi Protocol and will encourage donors to continue funding RECSA programmes. As you are aware, donors have expressed reservations about the non-contribution of funds by most countries, which to them continues to communicate a lack of commitment to the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol and the Nairobi Declaration.

I wish to note that the mandate given to RECSA to address the problem of proliferation of illegal small arms and light weapons is an overwhelming one. However, I wish to assure the Council that the Secretariat will do its utmost best to overcome any challenges and see to it that efforts continue towards the goal of preventing, controlling and reducing the number of arms in the wrong hands in the sub-region.

In this regard, let me take this opportunity to thank National Focal Point Coordinators and their offices, and RECSA staff in their tireless commitment to the Nairobi Protocol and the Nairobi Declaration.

May I express my appreciation to the Council, once again, for the confidence they have expressed in me as the Executive Secretary, by extending my term. I wish to ensure the Council of my commitment and will do my best to steer the organisation forward to fulfil its objectives.

Lastly, on behalf of the Regional Centre on Small Arms I wish to thank the following donors for their support to the implementation of small arms programmes: USA, Germany (through the EAC/GTZ collaboration), Norway, Netherlands, Japan and UK.

Special thanks go to the Governments of Netherlands and UK for supporting this particular process of the 5th Ministerial Review meeting.

With those few remarks I thank you