



Cooperating to Disarm

**OPENING REMARKS AT THE RECSA REGIONAL STRATEGY TECHNICAL WORKSHOP
FOR NATIONAL RESEARCHERS**

**Silver Springs Hotel, Nairobi
27th March 2008**

Opening Remarks

By

**Mr Francis K. Sang, CBS
(Executive Secretary, RECSA)**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, on behalf of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA), and on my own behalf, to welcome you all to this two day RECSA Regional Strategy Technical Workshop for National Researchers.

RECSA, formerly the Nairobi Secretariat on Small Arms, is an intergovernmental organization. There are 12 Member States from the

Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa signatory to the Nairobi Declaration and Nairobi Protocol namely:- Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

RECSA's vision is to see a safe and secure sub-region in a peaceful continent free from illicit small arms proliferation. Consequently, our mission is to coordinate action against illicit small arms and light weapons proliferation in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States.

In an endeavour to better coordinate regional efforts to address the problem posed by small arms, RECSA has found it necessary to develop a regional strategy to guide its programmes. This need was informed by the diverse situations in Member States and importance of ensuring that these differences are taken into consideration in programme design and implementation for particular countries.

The objective of this workshop is to build consensus on the methodology to be used in the national studies on small arms which will contribute to the

development of this strategy. The strategy is expected to contribute to a coordinated approach to programme implementation informed by the specific situations of Member States.

The planned national researches in the 12 countries are expected to provide vital information such as the historic, geographic, political, economic and social contexts that touch on the issues of small arms. This information will form the basis of country-specific programmes. RECSA trusts that you will be worthy partners in the pursuit of this noble goal.

It is expected that after the workshop you will domesticate the research tools agreed in this workshop. In addition, before the field studies commence, you will organize national stakeholders' workshops to debate the tools and discuss the important issues to consider in the studies to make them more relevant to your respective countries.

You will then be expected to produce a report on your findings and to recommend necessary issues to consider in the development of a specific approach to the implementation of national programmes on small arms.

This period during which RECSA is developing the strategy marks a time of refocusing for the organization's operations with the aim of enhancing its implementation of the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and bordering states and the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States. This will contribute towards improved measures to combat the proliferation of small arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to welcome all the researchers from the RECSA Member States and wish you fruitful deliberations over the next two days.

I thank you.