



Co-operating to Disarm

**THE HANDOVER CEREMONY
OF
THE RECSA EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY**

**ACCEPTANCE REMARKS BY
MR JEAN PIERRE BETINDJI**

**RECSA INCOMING EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY**

NAIROBI, 22ND APRIL, 2024

- Your Excellency Professor KITHURE KINDIKI, Cabinet Secretary Interior and National Administration of the Republic of Kenya, Chair of RECSA Council of Ministers;
- The Permanent Secretary, Interior and National Administration of the Republic of Kenya
- Mr Josephat Kirimi, the Director of Kenya National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Chair of the RECSA Technical Advisory Committee(TAC) ;
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- Distinguished Guests,
- RECSA Colleagues;
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you today with a deep sense of honor and responsibility as I take on the role of the Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA).

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the member States through the RECSA 10th Council Ministers held in Kinshasa in June 2023, for entrusting me with this important responsibility.

I also want to thank my predecessors for their work dedication in advancing the objectives of RECSA.

RECSA has a huge and vital mission – to promote peace, security, and stability in our region by addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

It is a mission that requires unwavering commitment, cooperation and innovation.

I am fully aware of the challenges we face in achieving our goals, but I firmly believe that together, we can make significant strides in the fight against the illicit small arms.

As I take up this role, I would like to outline some of the key priorities and principles that will guide my tenure as Executive Secretary of RECSA:

1. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** It is crucial that we strengthen our collaboration with member States, International organizations, civil society, and other stakeholders.

Together, we can leverage our collective resources and expertise to tackle the complex issues surrounding small arms proliferation effectively.

2. **Capacity Building:** We must invest in building the capacity of our member States to address the challenges posed by small arms and light weapons. This includes providing training, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing opportunities.
3. **Advocacy and Awareness:** To garner greater support for our cause, we need to raise awareness about the devastating impact of illicit small arms and the importance of disarmament.

Advocacy efforts and sensitization of senior government officials will be instrumental in this regard.

4. **Research and Data:** Sound policymaking requires accurate and up-to-date information. Therefore, we will work to enhance our research capabilities and data collection methods to better inform our initiatives strategies.
5. **Gender mainstreaming in Small Arms and light weapons control :** We will prioritize gender mainstreaming and ensure that the voices of women , men , girls , boys and marginalized

groups are heard in our efforts to prevent and mitigate the impact of small arms proliferation.

6. **Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding:** Small arms play a significant role in fueling conflicts. Therefore, we will work towards conflict prevention and peacebuilding by addressing the root causes of violence and instability.
7. **Resources Mobilization:** Adequate resources are essential to implement Small Arms and Light Weapons management and control interventions effectively. We will actively seek funding opportunities and partnerships to ensure the sustainability of our initiatives.

Your Excellencies distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen; I am committed to leading RECSA secretariat with transparency, accountability and integrity.

I invite all member States and Partners to actively engage in shared mission, to exchange ideas and best practices, and to work together towards a safer and more secure region in accordance to the African Union initiative « **Silencing the guns** ».

I am ready to walk the journey under the guidance of the Chairperson of RECSA Council of Ministers to ensure the full implementation of the resolutions and specifically allow me to single out the Resolution on following up with Member States that are yet to ratify the Nairobi Protocol as it serves as the backbone of RECSA's mission.

As recommended by the RECSA 10th Council of Ministers, I also humbly request the Chair to spearhead efforts in mobilizing other Member States at the African Union to designate RECSA as a specialized Agency for Small Arms and Light Weapons control and management.

This will provide a platform for harmonized, coordinated and sustainable resource mobilization framework, both financial and

technical; to strengthen the capacity of States in Small arms and light weapons management and control.

In conclusion, I am inspired by the potential for positive change and reform that lies ahead 20 years after the Nairobi declaration.

Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of countless individuals affected by the illicit trade in small arms.

Let us embark on this journey with determination, unity, and the shared vision of a more peaceful and secure future for our region and for the world.

Your Excellency the Minister and Chair of RECSA Council of Ministers once again thank you for your trust, and I look forward to working closely with each and every one of you to achieve our common goals.

Thank you! Merci Beaucoup! Shukran!