



*Co-operating to Disarm*

## **STATEMENT AT USALAMA 1, PRE-OPERATION PLANNING WORKSHOP**

**BY**

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**WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

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**Our Guest of Honour, Lt-Gen. Sebastian Haitota, the IGP Namibia and SAPCCO Chairman;**

**Mr. Ernest Quartre, Police Commissioner Seychelles and EAPCCO Chairman;**

**Mr. Chilika SIMFUKWE, the Head of Regional Bureau, Harare**

**Mr. RWEGO Xavier Francis, the Head of Regional Bureau, Nairobi (EAPCCO)**

**Directors of CID from EAPCCO and SARPCCO**

**Chiefs of National Crime Bureaux in Eastern and Southern Africa;**

**NFP Coordinators on SALW from the EAPCCO region;**

**Senior officials from the Government of Namibia,**

**Representative from the African Union....**

**Representative from the European Union.....**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am truly honored to be part of this operation that we are planning ahead to be simultaneously carried out in Eastern and Southern Africa regions by EAPCCO and SARPCCO respectively

The Regional Centre on Small Arms in Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and bordering States (RECSA) has always been a partner of Interpol and the Interpol sub regional bureaux; this has been further concretized by the AU-EU project entitled "The fight against the illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of Fire Arms in Africa";

RECSA is coordinating this project on behalf of the African Union and is co-implemented by the regional economic communities in Western, Southern and Central Africa

### **Our Guest of Honour;**

Conflicts are fueled by the easy availability of small arms and light weapons. While the African Union leads the way in the search for peace in conflict areas on the Continent, implementation of RECSA's mandate of addressing proliferation of small arms also promotes peace and security on the Continent by reducing availability of firearms by militia/rebel groups. It further contributes to peace-building and conflict prevention and hence promotes sustainable development.

### **Our Guest of Honour,**

The Usalama one Pre-operation Planning workshop which is an initiative of the Police Chiefs of the EAPCCO and SARPCCO will target organized cross border crimes: Trafficking in Human beings, Narcotics, motor vehicle theft, Theft of Copper cables, Smuggling of Minerals, and illicit Proliferation of small arms and light weapons;

It is this last component (illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons) which mainly concerns RECSA, however it is imperative to note there is a close relationship between proliferation of small arms and the perpetuation of these other crimes.

Considering that eight million new guns are manufactured every year and at least 1 million of these are stolen or lost worldwide, RECSA's mandate is overwhelming as the number of illegal arms among civilians continues to increase.

In addition, research shows that every minute a person dies from armed conflict. Bearing in mind the magnitude of their negative impact, issues of small arms need to be prioritized on the Continent.

The Eastern and Southern African countries share porous borders that are transit points for illegal goods. Many of these illicit activities are facilitated by the easy availability of small arms and light weapons. These weapons destabilise peace as evidenced by increased gun-related crimes. The two sub-regions recognise the need to co-operate to stamp out cross-border and trans-national crimes affecting both sides

The Usalama one Pre-operation Workshop and the operation thereafter will hence contribute to RECSA's efforts to fulfil its mandate of prevention, control and reduction of illicit small arms and light weapons.

### **Our Guest of Honour;**

I would like to take this opportunity to assure you of RECSA's continued support for the two regions and beyond in fighting cross-border crimes. Our intervention areas will focus on simultaneous joint operations, stockpile management, awareness raising, harmonization of legislation and enhancing capacity of CID in investigative techniques such as

ballistic and arms marking. This will help the law enforcement agencies to get leads on scenes of crime.

Finally, I thank the European Union for funding the AU/EU project Phase II, through which the participation of our National Focal Points on Small arms and light weapons from our Member States have been facilitated to come, participate and give their contributions in this important workshop.

I wish you fruitful deliberations

**I thank you.**