



*Co-operating to disarm*

**RECSA STATEMENT FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE  
SEPTEMBER 2020 AFRICA AMNESTY MONTH  
CAMPAIGN UNDER THE AU'S SILENCING THE GUNS  
INITIATIVE**

**LT GEN. BADRELDIN ELAMIN ABDELGADIR**

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**REGIONAL CENTRE ON SMALL ARMS (RECSA)**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today the regional center on small arms (RECSA) is launching the September Africa Amnesty Month campaign in collaboration with the African Union, the United Nations office for disarmament (UNODA) and with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan.

The September Africa Amnesty month was declared in 2017 by the African Union within the framework of silencing the guns by 2020 initiative and adopted by African member states.

This year, the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in joint partnership with African Union (AU) pledged to support African Member States namely: Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Kenya after their expression of interest to implement Africa Amnesty Month campaign. The Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA) is the implementing partner on this campaign.

Despite the pandemic of Covid-19 crisis that has affected and paralyzed the entire planet, these countries will conduct an effective awareness campaign for the voluntary surrender of weapons held by civilians and for the proper management of weapons and ammunition, as well as collection and destruction of illicit small arms.

The objective of these activities in the seven countries is to:

- Reduce the illicit possession of SALW and their ammunition;
- Reduce levels of armed violence;
- Strengthen the capacity for voluntary surrender of weapons.

These activities will be conducted by the National Commissions on Small Arms and Light Weapons Control in each of these seven countries and will be consistent with national laws and regulations and the countries' commitments to international, regional and sub-regional small arms agreements such as the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Firearms Protocol, the African Union's main roadmap on practical measures to silence guns in Africa in 2020, the Kinshasa convention and 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.

During this month, Members of Public are requested to join this unique opportunity to voluntarily surrender their guns without being prosecuted and according to national laws.

In this month also, Member states, Regional mechanisms, Civil society organizations are requested to participate in the campaign and beyond the duration of the project.

Furthermore, I invite all countries, through their respective National Commissions, to place a special emphasis on the massive participation of women in the various activities, by integrating them in sensitization, media programs as well as capacity building workshops that will be organized for the benefit of members of the Defense and Security Forces with the aim to highlight the negative consequences of illicit possession and misuse of firearms on the young population in both rural and urban areas.

On behalf of RECSA I would like to reiterate our commitment and full support of the September 2020 Africa Amnesty Month campaign under the AU's silencing the Guns Initiative.

Finally, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan for the financial support through UNODA and the African countries that demonstrated interest of implementing the September 2020 Africa Amnesty Month activities.

I would also like to assure you of our full availability to continue supporting the efforts of African governments through their National Commissions on the fight against the proliferation and illicit possession of arms and ammunition in order to contribute to the sustainable peace and development of the African continent.

**I thank you**