

OVERVIEW OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS ISSUE IN AFRICA

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PLAN FOR THE PRESENTATION

- ***INTRODUCTION***
- ***SETTING UP OF MECHANISMS FOR REGULATING SALW AND REPORTING ON PoA***
- ***CSO SUPPORT TO AFRICAN STATES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POA AND OTHER REGIONAL AND INSTRUMENTS***
- ***LESSONS LEARNT FROM WORKING ON REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON ARMS CONTROL***
- ***PRIORITIES FOR AFRICAN STATES FOR BMS8***

INTRODUCTION

- The phenomenon of the illicit proliferation of SALW has remain crucial in Africa thus jeopardizing the peace, security and stability of the continent.
- Conflicts in Africa has also moved from interstate to internal conflicts either cause by terrorists groups such as the Boko Haram and El Shaba, Separatists fighters or coup d'états and undemocratic change of governments (DRC, Cameroon, CAR, South Sudan, Sudan, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger)
- About 40 – 100 millions SALW circulate in Africa making the implementation of the PoA and other regional instruments such as the Nairobi Protocol, ECOWAS Convention, SADC Convention and the Kinshasa Convention a bit difficult.

SETTING UP OF MECHANISMS FOR REGULATION SALW AND REPORTING ON THE POA

- One of the most effective mechanism for regulating SALW recommended by the PoA and all the regional instruments on SALW is the National Commission on SALW (NatCom), unfortunately, out of the 54 African states only 24 has NatComs.
- NatComs facilitate the development of National Action Plans and effective implementation of both regional and national instruments. Unfortunately, very few well articulated NAPS also exist.
- Reporting on the PoA by African states has fluctuated over the years falling from 35 states in 2018 to 24 in 2022.



CSO SUPPORT TO AFRICAN STATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PoA AND OTHER REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON SALW

- Civil society has been involve in engaging African states in the universalization and implementation of various regional and national instruments.
- Provision of technical and operational capacities in the implementation of the various instruments.
- Generating momentum with states on reporting on the PoA (IANSA's national dialogues prior to BMS8)
- Capacity building through trainings. UNSCAR and other Trust Funds have been helpful.
- CAMYOSFOP for example is starting a continental course this September with the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC) and with the support of UNREC, RECSA and ECOSOCC on: Diplomacy of Arms Control, Proliferation and Disarmament.



LESSONS LEARNT FROM WORKING ON REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS ON ARMS CONTROL

- Most instruments are well written but unfortunately, sometimes ratification and implementation is very slow.
- Lack of both technical and operational capacities by most African states is a serious challenge on the implementation of most of the regional and national instruments and by extension this has hampered the regular reporting of most of the instruments ratified.
- Governments will and the process of setting up institutions to facilitate the implementation of Regional instruments is sometimes very slow. For example NatComs and NAPS.
- Very few stakeholders including relevant government institutions, and Members of Parliament are aware of most of the existing instruments and mechanisms.



PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR AFRICAN STATES PRIOR TO BMS8

- Creation of a NATCOM and elaborating a PAN for Cameroon
- Continues collection and destruction of weapons – AU Amnesty Month
- Strengthen border controls to cut off suppliers from insurgents (Boko Haram, Al Shaba, secessionists, gangs, etc).
- Improving the security of stockpiles.
- Engaging Members of Parliament as key players especially in the adoption of legislations.
- Mainstreaming gender in SALW inline with the Women Peace and Security agenda of UNSCR 1325.