

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF ECOWAS SECRETARIAT

BY

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AT THE

**SEVENTH BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES TO CONSIDER
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO PREVENT,
COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT
WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to, on behalf of the ECOWAS Region congratulate you on your election as President and your Bureau to steer this Seventh Biennial Meeting of States to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Be assured of our full support as a Region in this endeavor

Mr. Chairman,

3. We wish to indicate our grave concern that the guns are not remaining silent in our Region although most of us do not have the capacity to produce Small Arms, Light Weapons and their Ammunition. We are experiencing many acts of terrorism and conflicts mainly due some manufacturing States ignoring the key criteria we have agreed should guide the transfer of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition which are just to mention a few whether the arms are likely to be used in the commission of violation of human rights, International Humanitarian Laws, Human Right Laws, acts of terrorism or crime against humanity. We have made significant progress in capacity building of key PSSM personnel and improving the regulatory frameworks in most of our member States. We are also committed to the implementation of the UNPOA and the ITI

Mr. Chairman,

ECOWAS position is that States should take every step necessary to ensure that Small Arms and Light Weapons lawfully transferred from or to their jurisdictions are NOT diverted to unauthorized recipients. Further, Exporting States should endeavor to make End-User Certificates, Post-export verifications and No re-export without the consent of the original Exporting State a condition for transfer of all Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Ammunition.

We note the recent technological developments in Polymer and modular weapons and it is our expectation that this outcome document would take steps to address these developments.

Mr. Chairman,

In accordance with the commitment of States in previous meetings to prevent diversion, and in keeping with section III of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) on markings of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), we call on States to ensure that markings are applied at the time of manufacture, export and import of every SALW even transfer from government stocks to civilian use and use by national armed and security forces.

The ECOWAS Member States have adopted and applying unique secondary marking codes on Small Arms and Light Weapons in our Region, we call on States to consider the adoption of similar unique

marking codes to link every small arm and light weapon to the initial importing State.

The marking codes unique to each State should be embossed on the weapons by the manufacturer before transfer to the importing State. Countries should emboss their unique marking codes on weapons already in their custody.

This proposal would prevent diversion and facilitate easy tracing of weapons at all levels.

Finally, we fully support the GGE Process on Ammunition.

Mr. Chairman, it is our hope that a forum like this should yield outcomes that would make real impact in our communities.

Thank you.