



PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE AU-GERMANY PROJECT ON ENHANCED SALW PHYSICAL SECURITY AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT IN THE SAHEL REGION

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
15 MAY 2015**

SUMMARY REPORT



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I. Background

1. The preparatory meeting for the African Union (AU)-Germany project on enhanced Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) in the Sahel region was held on 15 May 2015 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
2. The primary objective of the project, which is jointly, implemented by the German Federal Foreign Office, within the framework of its Group of 7 industrialized nations (G7) Presidency, the AU, and the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC), is to better coordinate SALW and PSSM initiatives in the Greater Sahel region.
3. The project is being implemented within the framework of the Nouakchott Process for the Enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in the Sahelo-Saharan Region, launched on 17 March 2013, and which aims to facilitate the deepening of security cooperation between the countries concerned to effectively address transnational threats, including terrorism, crime and the illicit proliferation of arms.
4. The preparatory meeting thus intended to launch the project and introduce it to representatives from the G7 nations, the European Union, the relevant Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Regional Bodies with a small arms mandate.

II. Attendance

5. The meeting was attended by representatives of the AU Commission, the German Federal Foreign Office, BICC, Canada, United States, Japan, EU, the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Sub-Regional Arms Control Mechanism (SARCOM) and the Regional Center on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, and Bordering States (RECSA).

III. Presentations and deliberations

6. The meeting opened with remarks from Dr. Tarek Sharif, Head of the AU Commission Defense and Security Division, and Mr. Thomas Göbel, Head of Arms Control Division, German Federal Foreign Office. Both speakers stressed the need for regional organizations to more strongly engage in the work of coordinating SALW/PSSM initiatives, and both emphasized that regional ownership should play an integral part of any future coordination mechanism generated by the project. Mr. Göbel also highlighted that Germany intends to develop a long-term, sustainable process of coordination, preferably one that does not create a new organizational body but, rather, one that bolsters existing institutions and institutional mechanisms.

7. Following these opening statements, the participants in attendance were then given the opportunity to present their current SALW/PSSM initiatives.

IV. Project Presentation and Response

8. During the second half of the preparatory meeting, Mr. Wolf Christian-Paes from the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) spoke of the project's aims and objectives. In particular, Mr. Paes discussed the main problem to be addressed by the project: namely that many organizations often implement SALW activities in isolation, without coordination, something which can lead to a duplication of efforts and suboptimal use of resources. Additionally, Mr. Paes also outlined the next steps to be taken in the project, including a meeting of experts in September, the production of a matching needs and resources document, and the development of a more reflective, "lessons learned" document to be researched and written by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Pretoria.

9. As Mr. Paes explained, the aim of the September experts meeting is to generate recommendations on ways to improve coordination which can then be endorsed during a high-level conference scheduled for October 2015. This high-level conference, as currently planned, will be attended by Ministers of Defence and Ministers of Interior. In closing, Mr. Paes also stressed the need for regional organizations to play a more active role in coordinating SALW/PSSM initiatives in the Sahel.

10. After the presentation of the project, the attendees were then provided with an opportunity to respond. This short feedback session indicated that the participants were in favour of the initiative and recognized the need to improve the coordination of SALW/PSSM initiatives in the Sahel region. Mr. Salah, a representative from SARCOM, remarked that countries needed to be pushed to identify their own priorities and needs.

11. The RECSA representative, Francis Wairagu, also stated that there was a need to enhance capacity at the AU, which could in turn be used to support the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other regional mechanisms. Mr. Wairagu also noted that while he had other comments, these would best be reserved for the upcoming experts meeting. His remarks were echoed by Mr. Giorgio Romano, a member of the EU delegation to the AU, who concurred in the need for an approach that dealt with all levels – national and regional – all the way up to the AU echelon.

V. Next Steps

12. After the conclusion of the project's preparatory meeting, a short meeting was held between the AU Commission, the German Federal Foreign Office, and representatives from BICC to discuss and agree on the way forward. The meeting thus agreed on the following:

- a) The next component of the project – the meeting of experts – will be held from 3 to 4 September 2015 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The invitations, concept note and draft agenda will be sent out in early July.

- b) The tentative agenda for the meeting of experts was discussed, and it was decided that an extra introductory session laying out the objectives of the two-day meeting should be added prior to the panels centred on specific countries. The panels will also include a broader cross-border panel on Libya, Chad, and Sudan that could potentially include either a border force representative or a speaker from SARCOM. It was further agreed that MISAHEL will take part in the meeting.
- c) The Steering Committee on SALW and DDR will be briefed on the project during the 5th meeting scheduled to take place from 23 to 24 June 2015.
- d) The German Federal Foreign Office will follow-up on the possibility of organizing a meeting of the Parliamentary Forum on SALW alongside the high-level conference, tentatively scheduled for 2 October 2015.

Annex: List of participants

Organizers

- Dr. Tarek A. Sharif, Head of Defence and Security Division, Peace and Security Department, AU Commission
- Ms. Einas Mohammed, Senior Policy Officer for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, AU Commission
- Mr. Peter Otim, Expert on the Common African Defense and Security Policy, AU Commission
- Mr. Thomas Göbel, Head of Arms Control Division, German Federal Foreign Office
- Mr. Wolf-Christian Paes, Head of Technical Advisory Services, BICC
- Dr. Joanne Richards, Technical Advisor DDR/SALW, BICC

Attendees

- Ambassador David Usher, Head of the Canadian Embassy in Addis Ababa
- Mr. Daniel S. Hadley, US Mission to the AU, US Embassy in Addis Ababa
- Toshihiko Nishimura, Military Attaché, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
- Mr. Giorgio Romano, Rule of Law Advisor, EU Delegation to the AU
- Dr. Marco Kalbusch, Director, UNREC
- General Hammid Mannan, Head of the Sub-Regional Arms Control Mechanism (SARCOM)
- Idris Salah, Sudan DDR Commission, SARCOM
- Francis Wairagu, Team Leader, Programs and Operations, Regional Center on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, and Bordering States (RECSA)
- Dr. Souley Hassane, Head of Peace and Security Department, Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)
- Mr. Matthew Brubacher, Political Affairs Officer, United Nations Office to the AU.

Absent:

- Dr. Sani Adamu, Political Officer – Small Arms, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Dr. Adamu missed his flight and was unable to attend.

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