

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat

CARICOM DECLARATION ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS, ISSUED BY THE THIRTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, 30 JUNE - 4 JULY 2011, BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

The Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM),

Recalling that Security has been established as the Fourth Pillar of the Community,

Also recalling the important role being played by the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, IMPACS, established to manage the region's agenda on transnational organized crime, security and related matter,

Further recalling the Statement issued at the conclusion of the Thirteenth Special Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 4-5 April 2008, dedicated to all aspects of crime and violence in the Region,

Deeply concerned with the prevalence of illegal firearms and ammunition in perpetrating acts of crime and violence in the region, and its attendant effects, including loss of life, widespread human suffering, and the spread of fear and insecurity in our societies,

Gravely concerned with the continuing negative impact of crime and violence on the socio-economic development and economic viability of CARICOM States,

Strongly deploring the ease of access to illicit small arms and light weapons and ammunition, particularly given that the region does not manufacture, export or re-export these weapons, nor import them on a large scale,

Emphasizing the important role to be played by States that manufacture small arms and light weapons and ammunition, in preventing their diversion to the illicit trade,

Recognizing also that a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach is necessary to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition,

Aware that the delivery of justice to the victims of armed violence is an essential element of measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons,

Acknowledging the importance of technical assistance in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition, as well as other elements of transnational organized crime,

Emphasizing that cooperation at the regional, sub-regional and international levels is an important factor in addressing this trans-border problem,

Recalling in this regard, the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects which remains the only international process that addresses solely the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons,

Recalling also, the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisition, and the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other related materials,

Cognizant of the significance of the International Instrument on Marking and Tracing in preventing, eradicating and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons,

Committed to ensuring the region's full and active participation in regional and international meetings related to the issue of small arms including in particular, the 2012 Review of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, and the 2012 United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, and all relevant preparatory meetings

Reaffirming our commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate the proliferation of and the illicit trade in small and light weapons and ammunition in all its aspects,

Strongly desirous of establishing stable, just, and developed Societies, based on the rule of law, democracy, the principles of justice and fairness,

Solemnly commit to:

1. implement all necessary actions at the national and regional level to fully combat the illicit trade in

small arms and light weapons and their ammunition;

2. take all necessary measures to ensure full compliance with the 2001 Programme of Action to Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, including through the development and implementation of national action plans to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;

3. empower national and regional security entities, with the necessary capacities to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, as well as other elements of transnational organized crime, including in the areas of border control, intelligence gathering, and forensic analysis etc;

4. support the implementation and enforcement of policies and legislation against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition at the national level as well as harmonisation of legislation in the fight against illicit transfers at the regional level;

5. work together in enhancing the management and security of small arms and light weapons and ammunition stockpiles, including the identification and destruction of surplus;

6. intensify and sustain engagement in the United Nations effort for the conclusion of a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty;

7. continue to accord the highest national and regional priority to matters related to combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

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