

**REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY-CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE ON CONFLICT PREVENTION  
AND FIGHT AGAINST SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS.(SALWs)**

**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

**VENUE:** PANAFRIC HOTEL NAIROBI.

**INTRODUCTION AND OPENING REMARKS.**

The meeting begun by introduction of participants. Hon Kiema Kilonzo, AMANI Forum Kenya chapter Secretary General introduced the Speaker of Kenya national Assembly and elaborated the structure of Kenya parliament to be composed of 222 members of Parliament of which 210 are directly elected. He then invited Hon Ekwe Ethuro, AMANI Forum-Kenya chapter Chairman to deliver his opening remark.

**Opening remark:** Hon Ekwe Ethuro-AMANI Forum Kenya chapter chairperson.

Hon Ekwe Ethuro welcomed the participants to the dialogue and reiterated that the dialogue should stimulate discussion about issues of common concern in the field of peace building and conflict management. He noted that the delegates has been both direct and indirect victims of conflict and proliferation of Small Arms and light weapons; it is hence necessary for parliamentarians to push forward relevant review of legislations and to allocate resources to promote peace and safeguard human life.

Hon Ekwe pointed out that a common tune for tackling the proliferation of small arms has never been developed, for instance, laws are passed in parliament without political will to implement; and resources are allocated in a manner that promotes economic instability, social disparity and feeling of rebellion among the citizens.

It is important to tie conflict prevention to such issues as alleviation of poverty, inequality, resource management among others. Mechanisms for strengthening weak state security structures should be developed in order to contain ineffectiveness that gives room to lawlessness.

*How to tackle Small Arms Light Weapons challenges:*

- Porous borders should be monitored.
- Small Arms Light Weapons campaign must be long term and root causes be addressed.
- Strong domestic legislations on SALW should be enacted.

**Conclusion:**

In his conclusion, he emphasized that conflict prevention is a step towards achieving sustainable peace. The government should work towards improving security sector and review relevant laws in order to effectively tackle small Arms problem.

**Opening remark:** Hon Nkaissery Joseph-Vice President Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms.

Hon Nkaissery welcomed the participants on behalf of Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and thanked the Speaker of Kenya National Assembly Hon Kenneth Marende for accepting the invitation to officially open the dialogue. He indicated that the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons is the only global organization for the Parliamentarians with the specific objective of preventing armed violence and small arms proliferation. Preventing, combating and eradicating SALW is no longer the preserve of the Executive Arm of the government alone.

The proliferation of small Arms constitutes a threat to human security, development, good governance and democratic consolidation. It should be noted that fewer weapons mean higher levels of human security and lower probability that conflicts escalates and become violent. Hon Nkaissery noted that there are both direct and indirect effects of the use, trade and proliferation of Small Arms; Small Arms kill more than half a million people every year. These weapons are cheap, easy to maintain and last long. It is also true that SALW are recycled from one conflict to the other.

In his conclusion, he asserted that Parliamentarians must work together in order to solve SALW proliferation. It is through initiatives like AMANI Forum and Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons that human security threats can be identified and managed.

**Key note address:** Hon Kenneth Marende, the Speaker Kenya National Assembly.

The Honourable Kenneth Marende welcomed the participants to the dialogue and mentioned that the topic was of great interest and magnitude to the world. He emphasized that the topic was close to his heart and it came at a time when Kenya was slowly recovering from post-election violence. He reiterated that Kenyans have now learnt not to take peace for granted and must work for it.

Proliferation, easy access ,availability and illicit trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition is the most dangerous challenge and threat to global stability and security as well as to economic and social development.

Members of parliament were urged to strengthen early warning mechanisms at the constituency level by cooperating with civil society to contain conflict from getting violent. Honourable Marende also noted that conflict in Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa are interlinked hence the need to embark on a joint venture involving all key actors including States, Private sectors, None governmental organizations and individuals. Increased inter-government and inter-parliamentary cooperation in control and management of Small Arms and Light Weapons is crucial in measures to control supply and demand. Parliamentarians were urged to enhance oversight of the Executive in terms of sale of arms, illegal transfer of weapons to fuel conflicts as well as purchase of Arms by non-producing countries.

It was indicated that AMANI Forum and Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms should support proposals on establishment of common Regional and International Agreements for the trade in all conventional weapons. This agreement can be negotiated within the African Union and United Nations ambit.

Hon Marende paid tribute to all members of AMANI Forum and Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons for their consistent effort in sensitizing the public and building capacity among Parliamentarians on issues relating to peace building, conflict resolution, democracy and governance.

He pointed out that pastoral communities problem have taken a regional basis thereby hindering peaceful relationship among the neighboring communities.

The Speaker concluded by urging the delegates to focus on the following areas during their deliberation:

- Sharing experience on conflict prevention and SALW control.
- Strengthening the North-South relationship in conflict prevention and management.
- Identifying challenges and opportunities in SALW control.
- Strengthening the capacities of parliamentarians to oversight the Executive.

With the few remarks, the dialogue was officially opened at 10 am.

**Theme:** *Small Arms and Light Weapons and cross border crimes: strengthening regional and international controls.*

**Presenter:** Mr Peter Cross.

**Institution:** Saferworld.

Mr Cross began his presentation by introducing Saferworld, as an organization that works to prevent and reduce violent conflict and to promote cooperative approaches to security. Saferworld works with governments, international organizations and civil society to support effective policies through research, advocacy and policy development.

The following were identified as impacts of uncontrolled Arms:

- Violent crime.
- Development.
- Conflicts.
- Militias/armed gangs.
- Cattle rustling.
- Poaching

It was noted that East Africa is leading on strengthening arms control internationally and regionally. The States are party to numerous international agreements, including the United Nations Programme of Action, UN Firearms protocol. Other initiatives are: Nairobi declaration, Nairobi protocol and Regional Centre on Small Arms.

#### **Regional efforts to Strengthen Arms Controls nationally.**

- East Africa countries have all established National Focal Points on SALW.
- Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda conducted national mapping of small Arms in 2002/2004.
- Rwanda and Burundi currently conducting mappings and developing National Action Plans.
- Kenya and Uganda are drafting National Policies on SALW.

The major set back has been in the implementation process, for instance Kenya developed a draft policy on SALW, however no real progress to implement the NAP which expires in July 2009. Tanzania developed a new registration process and has re-licensed civilian-owned firearms.

It was indicated that the international Arms transfers are out of control due to the lack of legally binding agreement covering the international transfer of conventional arms, regional, sub-regional

and multilateral agreements controlling international transfers of conventional arms that does not reflect states existing obligation under international law.

#### **Five Golden Rules for exporting Weapons:**

States shall not authorize international transfers of conventional arms where they will:

- be used for gross violation of international human rights law or serious violations of international human rights law.
- have an impact that would clearly undermine sustainable development or involve corrupt practices.
- provoke or exacerbate armed conflict in violation of their obligations under the UN Charter and existing treaties.
- contribute to an existing pattern of violent crime.
- risk being averted for one of the above outcomes or for acts of terrorism.

#### **Parliamentary Action.**

The presentation identified the below factors as some of the measures Members of parliament can engage in to contain the proliferation of SALWs:

- Ensure that commitments on paper are implemented.
- Ensure that legislations on SALW, particularly import, export and transit are reviewed and are consistent with international law.
- Encourage respective governments to co-sponsor the ATT in the upcoming General Assembly.
- Participate in the open Ended working group 2 session planned for 2009 in Nairobi.

### **2.1 PRESENTATION 2.**

**Theme:** *Cattle rustling-a cross border crime.*

**Presenter:** Mr Kimani M. J.

**Institution:** Institute of Security studies.

Cattle rustling was defined as a process that involves, the stealing, organizing, attempting, aiding or abetting the stealing of livestock by any person from one community or country to the other through violence. The problem of cattle rustling has taken a cross border dimension and it's more sophisticated than before. It was observed that problem corridors cut across States which host communities share a common culture.

The actors include youths, elders, women and political leaders. Cattle's rustling is posing serious security threat within the community and across the borders. The practice is no longer cultural due to its transformation into a violent activity.

#### **Impact of cattle rustling.**

- It has led to poverty and natural resource management changes.
- Ethnic and inter-state tensions.
- Breakdown of traditional authority and gender systems.

#### **INTERVENTIONS.**

It was proposed that the community be involved in peace agreements and destruction of weapons at local level. Collaboration between the security agencies and the local community is encouraged at all levels.

The governments of the affected communities were urged to conduct a coordinated disarmament process, livestock recovery, branding of livestock and prosecution of those found guilty. Peace committees composed of religious leaders, community elders and civil society representatives should be actively involved in reconciliation efforts and educating the society on importance of peaceful co-existence.

#### **Regional Initiatives:**

- Protocol on prevention, combating and eradicating cattle rustling in Eastern Africa should be domesticated and implemented by member countries.
- There is an urgent need for regional conflict mitigation mechanism.
- Establishment of a joint border Commissions and operations.

#### **PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.**

- Parliamentarians should enact appropriate laws and policies to combat cattle rustling and SALW proliferation.
- Public education and public awareness.
- Enhancing national coordination between respective concerned ministries and departments.
- Inter-parliamentary collaboration and joint initiatives.

#### **Conclusion.**

It was established that there is a link between cattle rustling as a cross border crime and SALWs problem; it is hence advisable to engage in cross cutting interventions to meet the multi-faceted nature of the problem. The proposed intervention must be regional and include many stake holders.

**Plenary comments and questions.**

It was pointed out that cattle's rustling is a real problem; it is hence important to change the livelihood of the communities involved in cattle rustling.

**Kenya's perspective:**

Parliamentarians from the affected communities were urged to visit their constituencies and engage in dialogue openly so that the locals are educated on security threats posed by use of Small Arms Light Weapons.

The inflow of small arms at Karamoja border is one of the major causes of cattle rustling and insecurity among the community, the situation is worsened by lack of protection from the government. The Pokot of Kenya and Karamojong of Uganda are neglected by their respective governments. These communities do not have any productive activity; many youths are out of school hence they are easily manipulated to take part in cattle rustling.

In order to change the community attitude, the government should improve the overall living standard by tackling the root causes of conflict.

**DRC's perspective:**

It was indicated that cattle rustling problem is common within the Bororo community and the motive of the crime is driven by same problems as in the case of Kenya. There is hence a need to come up with a grand strategy program that cuts across communities.

**Costarica's perspective.**

Hon Elizabeth Fonseca observed that SALW problems are the same especially in Central America. She went further to explain that Central America is a link between South America and the USA whose border is used to smuggle drugs and arms.

The arms which were used during the civil wars of 1980s in Central America have been circulated for sell in black market. Civilians have used the readily available arms to commit crime and murder innocent people within the region.

It was reported that the Parliament of Costa Rica recently proposed a new law to control SALW. The law will allow for registration of arms even at a later stage.

#### **Uganda's Perspective:**

It was noted that most of the Arms used for cattle rustling by the Pokot and Karamojong community comes from porous neighbouring countries like Sudan and Somalia. Multilateral approach needs to be used in order to stop the ongoing Karamojong-Pokot cattle rustling problem.

Members of parliament should also ensure that the communities are socialized to a new lifestyle by diversifying the economic activities.

#### **ZAMBIA's PERSPECTIVE.**

The Angola conflict led to the proliferation of Small Arms throughout Western Zambia. The situation became serious to the extent that the weapons were used to kill and conduct cattle rustling.

It was noted that a gun can be bought at a price ranging from USD 5-10 for an AK47. The cheap cost and accessibility of light weapons in Western Zambia is a major threat to security.

#### **Questions:**

- How do we move to a more solution focus?
- Why are there cross border thefts?
- What strategies can we put in place to combat SALW proliferation and cattle rustling in Great Lakes Region?

#### **Answers.**

It was indicated that the challenge is in the implementation of the available solutions. It is upon the Parliamentarians to hold the Executive accountable and to lobby for the implementation of the existing protocols on SALWs.

#### ***Factors hindering cross border security.***

- Poor infrastructure.
- Unemployment and idle youths.
- Marginalization.
- Poverty.
- Political interference.



Finally, in order to combat SALWs proliferation and cattle rustling in Great Lakes Region, strong policy on cattle rustling and control of SALW should be enacted. Parliamentarians were called upon to lobby for implementation of existing protocols on SALW within their respective parliaments. The fight against SALWs and cattle rustling can only be won if regional leaders work together in a more coordinated approach.

## **2.2PRESENTATION 3.**

**Theme:** Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation.

**Presenter:** Erastus Ethakon.

**Institution:** UNDP-Kenya

Mr Erastus noted that SALWs are dominant tools of violence worldwide. Taking an example of Kenya's post election violence scenario, he explained that a once generally stable country with high level of latent violence and unresolved grievances could quickly degenerate to violence. He observed that the low-level conflicts in pastoral communities, combined with high rate of crime and banditry account for the increasing level of armed violence in northeast and northwest of Kenya. This trend feeds of the ready availability of illicit arms trafficked across the border.

### **Armed violence in pastoralist context:**

Kenya's pastoral communities are the most affected by armed violence, the region includes: Garissa, Samburu, Marsabit, Isiolo and Moyale in upper Eastern Kenya. These regions are characterized by drought-prone environment in which basic resources are scarce.

It was noted that the absence of effective border control and proximity to the number of the regions conflict zones has rendered the area easy trading and passage point for illicit arms.

### **Factors increasing proliferation of SALWs in Pastoral region.**

- Scarce basic resources.
- Environmental degradation which has increased competition for access of resources.
- Access to water which impact on capacity to keep livestock and generate income.

### **National initiatives to control SALW proliferation.**

Mr Erastus observed that the government of Kenya has reorganized the problems associated with armed violence and escalating use of small arms and is currently

working with international organizations, civil society, government ministries to control the problem.

In March 2000, the government of Kenya signed the Nairobi declaration on SALWs and hosted its secretariat in Nairobi to coordinate all Small Arms issues of ten countries. Further to this, the government also established the National Focal Point to be responsible for Small Arms Light Weapons issues. The government finally adopted a national plan of action to respond programmatically to Small Arms issues in Kenya.

### **UNDP VIOLENCE REDUCTION INITIATIVES IN PASTORALIST CONFLICTS REGIONS.**

The UNDP-Kenya commissioned a pilot report in Garisa on Armed Violence reduction in pastoral conflicts in the year 2004. The programs objective was to achieve a stable and lasting relationship through raising awareness and education, introduction of alternative livelihoods, enhanced availability of water and advocacy for voluntary surrender of illegal Arms.

#### **Key Activities:**

- Support for the construction of an armory facility to provide for adequate storage space for both surrendered and police guns.
- Strengthening traditional conflict resolution structures in the District.
- Training of elders, teachers, religious leaders, youths and women on how to facilitate weapon collection, registration and storage.
- Providing alternative livelihood; this includes micro-finance grants to the community.

#### **Lesson Learned from the Garisa Pilot Project.**

- Involvement of the community from the beginning of the project broadens their acceptance and ownership hence sustainability.
- There is a need to be patient with communities since it takes time to develop trust and negotiate and arrive at workable long term security arrangements.
- Prudent coordination and participatory collaboration among all partners is crucial for the success of similar projects.

- The government should support women peace Forums to ensure that women are heard by the DPC and inform the content of Community Action Plans.
- The identification and destruction of Small Arms requires close cooperation between the communities and security agencies.
- SAWL control needs to be a continuous process due to the volatility of borders.

### **Conclusion:**

The United Nations Development Kenya is a keen supporter of initiatives to reduce Small Arms Proliferation, some of the achievements includes:

- Good community participation in all the processes.
- National Action Plan on Small Arms.
- Stakeholder ownership and engagement.
- Multiplier effect based on an integrated approach.

### **2.3.PRESENTATION 4.**

**Theme:** *Small Arms Light Weapons and Election related Violence: East Africa-Kenya's Experience.*

**Presenter:** *Philip Ochieng.*

**Institution:** *Peace Net-Kenya.*

Mr Ochieng began his presentation by giving a brief political history of Kenya. He contended that for the first time in multi-party system, the campaigns were issue based on pertinent national concerns. The voters turn out on the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007 Kenya's election was impressive and slightly over 9 million people casted their votes. Just before the Election Day, there were claims of planned rigging, plans to reject the results if a particular party lost unjustly and covert involvement of State security agencies in rigging; live coverage of the proceedings at the national tallying centre also raised tension in the country.

#### **Small Arms and Election related violence: Kenya's perspective.**

Since the year 2000, Kenyans have always been worried about widespread SALW in Northern Pastoral areas, the recent post election violence in Kenya is a clear indicator that presence of illegal arms provides fodder for increased violence. It was reported by the media

during post election crisis that some illegal arms were transported from northern Kenya to some regions in north Rift.

The legal arms were also used to kill and harm the civilians by the police; this was reported by the commission of inquiry on Kenya's post-election crisis report in page 342.

**Reasons for the use of Small Arms and Light Weapons.**

- Thinly spread security agencies that led to the locals embarking on self help security mechanisms, the urge for illegal weapons was publicly pronounced.
- Hostile security agencies led to the locals demanding from their leaders more superior weapons to counter the excess force.

**PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.**

- Legal reforms and resource allocation to enhance capacity of the Firearms bureau.
- Legal reforms to ensure police are accountable to the people through parliament.
- Ensure equitable distribution of police services through adequate allocation of resources.

**Plenary questions and comments.**

- What steps are being made to make sure that the coming Kenya election is peaceful?
- How do Northern Kenya people purchase guns while they are poor?
- Did the use of mobile phone contributed to post-election violence in Kenya?
- What is the source of guns in Northern Kenya?
- Does the government of Kenya have social and economic program to contain the use of Small Arms Light weapons?
- Was there any external intervention that came in to destabilize Kenya?
- Is Africa experiencing a new paradigm of post-election violence?
- How should disarmament be conducted?

**Answers:**

It was observed that the use of mobile phones and sending of inciting messages contributed to the wide spread violence in Kenya's post-election crisis. Some people used the mobile technology to mobilize their community in seeking revenge attacks. Participants were however reminded that the use of mobile phones can be a positive tool for social change.

Many of the weapons in Northern Kenya came from the neighboring countries conflicts. For instance, the war in Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia and Uganda after Idi Amin took over power led to proliferation of Small Arms. These arms are very cheap and the locals exchange cattle to acquire them.

Destruction of SALW has been a major challenge to the government of Kenya, it has proved difficult to collect and destroy all the illegal Arms. Another challenge is the failure of government to offer alternative livelihood to the pastoral community and to distribute resources equitably; this has led to certain community feeling marginalized.

It was agreed that the critical issue of impunity should be addressed by the government of Kenya. People owning illegal firearms should be charged in a court of law to prevent others from committing same crime.

Africa is witnessing a new paradigm in post-election management, it was noted that Kenya used to file election petitions when one party felt shortchanged; the recent crisis in Kenya and Zimbabwe followed by formation of coalition governments is largely seen as new political development.

### **Haiti's Experience:**

Hon Oglie explained that Africa share same culture with Haiti and it has experienced a lot of armed violence. The government has made progress in trying to contain the use of illicit Arms through community dialogue and other government initiatives.

Small Arms and Light weapons were used by civilians to fight the police during the conflict period in Haiti. Many of these weapons were obtained through illegal trafficking. The fight against SALW should be given an international approach and all the countries need to cooperate and come up with long lasting mechanism to stop the proliferation and misuse of SALW.

**DAY TWO:** October 24<sup>th</sup> 2008.

**Theme:** *Extra-territorial Engagement and International Contracts: the contribution of SALWs in Natural resource conflicts.*

### **2.4. Presentation 6.**

**Presenter:** Hon Adia Leti.

**Institution:** Member of Parliament DRC.

Hon Adia thanked the participants and organizers of the workshop for giving him an opportunity to share his experience on SALWs in relation to extra-territorial engagement and national resource conflicts. He indicated that the theme is very relevant and the problem of SALW is a real threat to human security in DRC.

**Current situation of SALW in DRC.**

During Armed conflicts, SALWs has led to displacement, rape, death and high rate of internally displaced people in the country. The illegal trafficking of SALWs remains a major challenge facing the DRC government.

The proliferation of SALWs is posing a threat to development of DRC. In North and South of Kivu, SALWs have been used to fight over the control of natural resources. The presence of Uganda rebel movement at Tumbo in the north is another threat and factor increasing SALWs use in the region.

It was reported that the demobilization process is still ongoing and the objective has never been achieved. The residents surrender a portion of their weapons and hide the rest for future use; it is hence difficult to control the accessibility of the weapons.

The available statistics can prove that every year, more than 350 thousand people are victims of misuse of SALWs with an average of 1000 people per day.

#### **Effects of SALWs.**

- Women, children, girls and the old are sexually molested.
- The Lords resistance Army continues to terrorize the DRC civilians.
- Destruction of social and economic infrastructure.

#### **Control measures:**

- The democratic Republic of Congo has harmonized SALWs instrument.
- Two (2) laws on SALWs control is already presented in Parliament.
- Several Arms have been collected and destroyed by the government.
- DRC is a signatory to Nairobi protocol on SALWs.
- DRC continues to participate in International foras to discuss SALWs problems.
- DRC is committed to stay attached to United Nations and Africa Union charter peace tenet.

It was noted that the Eastern Congo is still at conflict, the Bororo pastoralists have also taken control of northern part of the country. The international community was urged to assist in containing the ongoing insecurity in DRC. Sincere collaboration with international community is hence an urgent need.

## **2.5.PRESENTATION 6.**

**Presenter:** Francois Grignon.

**Institution:** Institute of Security Studies.

**Theme:** *Extra-territorial Engagement and international contracts: the contribution of SALWs in Natural Resource Conflict.*

Mr Francois explained in his paper that conflicts in Great Lakes region are political and they are linked to sentiments revolving around historical injustices. The exploitation of natural resources particularly in the DRC has led to conflict between competing groups. Management of natural resources in Great Lakes region is hence a major source of conflict.

The conflict in DRC has three dynamics; conflicts between countries in the region, illegitimacy of certain institutions and governance crisis. The governance crisis arises from the denationalization of Tutsi communities living in Eastern DRC; this has led to Gen Lauren Nkunda's revolt.

It was reported that the government of DRC has launched a new constitution which should assist in fostering national unity. The foreign troops have also been stopped from crossing into the DRC border as a measure to enhance peace.

The government of DRC has deployed troops to control mines; there is hence less conflict at the mine grounds.

**Challenges:**

- Poor management of natural resources.
- Occupation of Northern Kivu by SLDP.
- Lack of clear political objective.
- Militarization of resource exploitation.

**Conclusion:**

It was concluded that there is need for the DRC government to put in place sustainable mechanisms in order to restore peace. The problem of trafficking minerals from Congo to Burundi can only be controlled when the people concerned are arrested and charged; this requires political will from the two governments.

Generally, the institutions in DRC should be democratized and strengthened.

**2.6. PRESENTATION 7.**

**Presenter:** Margaret Shava.

**Institution:** International Alert.

**Theme:** *Small Arms Light Weapons in Natural Resource Conflicts.*

Ms Margaret Shava indicated in her introduction that Great Lakes region have experienced cycles of conflicts lasting over 50years. The conflicts includes cross border that involves countries of Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and to lesser extent Kenya. Another characteristic of Great Lakes conflict is the cyclical nature; for instance, the assassination of Burundi President Ndadaye in 1993 and Rwanda genocide in 1994.

#### **Great Lakes Region conflict context.**

- Fighters and their weapons recycled from on theatre of conflict to the other.
- Conflicts in GLR are mainly over the control and use of natural resources.
- The lack of security in the region has led to poverty and underdevelopment.

#### **SALWs AND GENDER.**

Small Arms and Light Weapons have been used to facilitate the perpetration of sexual violence against women. This has led to psycho-social disorders, physical injuries and HIV AIDS infection.

It was noted that due to the stigma associated with raped women, many men refused to take back their raped spouses thereby impacting on community's socio-economic development. The trauma caused by violent conflict has led to a culture of dependency among men.

There is an assumption that when the State and armed groups loses their monopoly on violence, the all and sundry take up violence because the weapons are available. This is a situation referred to as proliferation of "Small Men."

#### **Conclusion:**

It is important to understand the causal social dynamics around the use of SALWs, this can pave the way to addressing the causes of SALWs proliferation.

#### **PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.**

- Mps should engage with civil society to devise approaches of containing SALW proliferation.
- Mps should promote development of culturally appropriate strategies for curbing SALW proliferation.
- Identify the local problems arising from SALWs use at constituency level.



## **PLENARY:**

Participants observed that, until 1995, Uganda and DRC lived in harmony. The politics of scramble for resources has led to conflict in Great lakes region.

The delegates were reminded to always take into account the geopolitical system of Great Lakes Region when trying to contain conflict and attain sustainable peace.

The invisible hand of the west continues to affect peace initiatives in Africa; In Angola for instance, the USA-Soviet Union power game led to Savimbi's rise to presidency. The murder of Patrice Lumumba was also linked to the western power politics.

It was reported that some of the rebel groups in the region are secretly backed and financed by the West. It is therefore difficult for the affected governments to bring to an end the activities of rebel movements.

## **2.7. PRESENTATION.8**

**PRESENTER:** Hon Dr Chegeni Raphael.

**Institution:** AMANI Forum-Vice-Chairperson.

**Theme:** *Policy reform and implementation: Challenges and Opportunities in the fight against Small Arms and Light Weapons.*

Hon Chegeni thanked the organizers for giving him the opportunity to share his experience on SALW policy reform and implementation. He elaborated that his presentation will focus on the current status of SALWs in GLR, the obstacles to achieving a free arms and light weapons region and policy reforms to be considered in the fight against SALWs.

### **Status of Small Arms Light Weapons in Great Lakes Region.**

The global estimate put the figures of Small Arms and Light weapons in circulation at 640 million of which 60% are held by civilians. Majority of these guns are used and abused in Africa.

The weapons have been used for gender based and sexual violence in Great Lakes Region, their availability hence places women and girls at an increased risk of injury or death during an assault.

### **Factors contributing to the spread of SALWs.**

- Existence of a thriving market for SALWs.
- Unequal distribution of resources.
- Poverty and economic stagnation.

- Unstable countries in GRL.

#### **Challenges facing SALWs campaign.**

- National laws are weak and less harmonized.
- Lack of adequate police capacity.
- Missing link in cross-border cooperation between police forces.
- Poor demobilization and demilitarization of former combatants.

#### **Recommendation on SALWs campaign.**

- Partnerships and networks that allows for exchange of information on best practices of SALWs management should be built.
- Strong political and administrative leadership should be established to enhance the growth of networks.
- Adequate follow up on SALWs conferences and recommendation should be encouraged.

#### **Conclusion:**

The delegates were encouraged to promote social cohesion, reconciliation and trust among communities, this should involve the locals in identifying their various special needs. The regional conflict prevention measures including early warnings and actions should be promoted and supported by the government.

Finally, Great Lakes region should embrace collective responsibility in search for sustainable peace and prosperity in the region.

## **2.8. PRESENTATION 9.**

**Presenter:** Hon Benita Lara.

Hon Benito noted with concern the importance of doing a general diagnostic on SALWs problem and sharing the information gathered worldwide. SALWs trade is booming business conducted at the expense of many suffering people. The United Nations world program

recently established that, over 10 homicides are committed in South America and 5% of the homicides are due to SALWs use.

The world is currently faced by many challenges which include; accessibility to clean water and sufficient nutrition. These problems are worsened by the proliferation of SALWs which poses major human security threat.

In Latin America, SALWs problem is closely linked to the proliferation and trade in drugs such as narcotics.

**Factors hindering SALWs control in Latin America.**

- Lack of political will to stop the proliferation and trade in SALWs.
- Insecurity that leads to people acquiring Arms for self defense.
- Slow democratization process.

**Way forward in SALWs management.**

There is urgent need to establish integral policies to combat SALWs proliferation and drug trafficking in Latin America and the entire world. SALWs proliferation can only be contained when nations work together in a more coordinated way. The global and regional conventions on SALWs should be implemented by various States; the gaps hindering the implementation of the pacts particularly in fragile states should be identified and addressed.

**2.9. PRESENTATION 10.**

**PRESENTER:** Ambassador Tharcisse Midonzi:

**Institution:**Regional Centre on Small Arms.

**Theme:** Link between SALWs and proliferation.

Mr Midonzi introduced the Regional Centre on Small Arms as an organization whose mission is to fight against the illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. It is composed of mostly Great lakes nations which include: Burundi, DRC, Eritrea, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and Tanzania.

**Challenges:**

- Slow pace in adoption of Nairobi protocol by member States.
- The Great Lakes Region has not harmonized policies for tackling harmonization of SALWs.
- Lack of political will by political leaders to pass SALWs legislations in Parliament.

- Inadequate coordination of programs on SALW, the army is not willing to give information to the civil society.
- Little financial and human resources to manage national focal points.

**Proposal for way forward.**

**1.0**

**PRESENTATION 11.**

**Presenter:** Hon Hans Raidel.

**Institution:** Member of the Bundestag and Parliamentary Forum Board.

**Theme:** *Policy reform and Implementation-Challenges and Opportunities in the fight against Small Arms and Light weapons.*

Mr Raidel reminded the delegates that it was upon all the Members of Parliament to advance the United Nation's disarmament agenda. SALWs were noted to be the most destabilizing conventional weapons. There are an estimated 550 million Small Arms and Light Weapons in circulation worldwide. The lack of effective control to regulate the transfer, possession and use of Small Arms makes their global spread difficult to manage.

**Factors hindering SALWs control.**

- Illegitimate trade in SALWs.
- Stocks of SALWs are plenty, accessible and cheap.
- The demand of SALWs is high especially in Fragile States.

**Effects of SALWs.**

- Social dislocation as evident in South Africa.
- High crime rate.
- High level of economic and political instability

**Proposed control measures:**

- The resources should be distributed equitably.
- Security sector reform should be carried out to contain security gaps that lead to proliferation of Arms.
- Establishment of universal system to mark and trace weapons.

- Increase the effectiveness of border and custom controls.

**Conclusion:**

It is important to collect and destroy SALWs during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes; to encourage the surrender of surplus or illicit weapons held by civilians in post conflict societies and to encourage safe storage.

The European States are working to secure comprehensive and progressive agreements on SALWs in regional fora, such as the European Union and International for a like the United Nations.

**PLENARY.**

It was observed that the role of women in conflict continues to be ignored by peace actors. Participants were hence urged to find ways of creating gender balance and initiating inclusive policies.

Secondly, the regime change conflicts in Africa were reported to be responsible for the proliferation of SALWs. Many Arms circulate from one conflict zone to the other. The parliamentarians were urged to review their constitutions and come up with a political system where the winner does not take all the power. Politics that accommodates all the parties can reduce regime conflicts and the proliferation of SALWs.

**3.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS:**

**Speaker:** Peter Weiderud.

**Institution:** Parliamentary Forum.

Mr. Peter thanked all the delegates and observed that the meeting was meant to mobilize ideas that can positively change human life. He summarized the meeting under the following five broad themes.

1. Dig where you are-take action:

It is crucial to implement the existing protocols such as, Nairobi Declaration, the Nairobi Protocol and other regional instruments. Parliamentarians should take a lead in lobbying for domestication and implementation of the available protocols.

Parliamentarians should strengthen the early warning mechanisms and cooperate with the civil society in order to sustain peace and development.

2. National legislation.

The need to harmonize national legislation in Great Lakes Region is urgent. This can be done by reviewing the existing SALWs laws, institutional reform and police reform. It was proposed that the private security sector be regulated with national legislations and the code of conducts be put in place to guide their operation.

3. Regional cooperation.

Regional problems need regional solutions; SALWs proliferation can only be contained when regional leaders work together. Regional organizations like AMANI Forum and Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms were commended for the good work.

4. International Agreements.

There is a need to come up with internationally binding instrument on management of SALWs; there is also a need of United Nations guidelines on stockpiling of ammunition. Conventions on private security cannot only be handled nationally since companies operate internationally.

5. Funding.

Parliamentarians were urged to allocate more budgets to security sector in their respective parliaments. The budget allocation should address security preventive initiatives.

**4.0 Official closing Remark:**

**Speaker:** Hon Betty Amongi

**Institution:** AMANI Forum-Uganda chapter Chairperson.

Hon Betty Amongi asserted that she was honored to give a closing remark to a subject that is so close to her heart. She went further to remind the delegates that all was not well in Great Lakes region.

The following are some of the current threats to security in Great Lakes region:

- Somalia is currently in crisis.

- There is an emerging rebel group in DRC.
- Sudan fight over Abyei oil rich region still persists.
- Djibouti threat to fight Eritrea over border.
- Ethiopia and Eritrea constant conflict.

**Causes of SALWs proliferation:**

- Failure by the government to control the use of SALWs.
- Lack of legal mechanism to control purchase supply and use.
- Lack of implementation and harmonization of regional policies.

**Conclusion:**

Hon Betty Amongi noted that the dialogue identified various factors hindering effective implementation of existing protocols. She also echoed the efforts of Great Lakes parliamentarians in promoting ethnic reconciliation and involving in various peace initiatives.

Parliamentarians should continue establishing effective partnerships not only with each other, but also with the civil society. Civil society partners are a necessary complement to initiatives by the government.

With the few remarks, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.