

Declaration concerning Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community

Preamble

We, the Heads of State or Government of:

The Republic of Angola	The Republic of Namibia
The Republic of Botswana	The Republic of Seychelles
The Democratic Republic of the Congo	The Republic of South Africa
The Kingdom of Lesotho	The Kingdom of Swaziland
The Republic of Malawi	The United Republic of Tanzania
The Republic of Mauritius	The Republic of Zambia
The Republic of Mozambique	The Republic of Zimbabwe

Gravely concerned with the illicit manufacturing, stockpiling of, trafficking in, possession and use of firearms and, especially, those used in the commission of violent crimes and their contribution to the high level of instability, prolonged conflict and social dislocation that is evident in southern Africa and the African continent as a whole,

Reaffirming that priority should be given to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit manufacturing of, stockpiling of, trafficking in, possession and use of firearms, and ammunition and other related materials, because of their links with, inter alia, drug trafficking, terrorism, transnational organized crime, mercenary activities and other violent criminal acts,

Aware of the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of, stockpiling of, trafficking in, possession and use of firearms and ammunition, and other related materials, and owing to the harmful effects of those activities on the security of each State and the region, the danger they pose to the well-being of people in the region, their social and economic development and the right to live in peace,

Convinced that the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit manufacturing of, stockpiling of, trafficking in, possession and use of firearms and ammunition and other related materials requires international cooperation, the exchange of information and other appropriate measures at the national, regional and global levels,

Stressing the need, especially during peace processes and post-conflict situations, to maintain effective control over firearms and, ammunition and other related materials,

Recognizing:

- o The work of the United Nations, through its Group of Experts on Small Arms, and the progress made in the draft Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

o The work undertaken by the Preparatory Committee for the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; and

o The Joint Southern African Development Community (SADC)/European Union (EU) Declaration on Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons of November 2000,

Reaffirming the Organization for African Unity (OAU) initiatives, in particular the adoption on 1 December 2000 by the OAU Ministerial Council of the Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as the preparatory work on the draft declaration, done by the First Continental Meeting of African Experts held in Addis Ababa during May 2000,

Commending the work done by the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization on preventing, combating and eradicating the proliferation of small arms, including work undertaken in the preparation of the SADC Draft Protocol on Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials, and its implementation programme,

Further commending the work undertaken by the SADC Small Arms Working Group and its successor, the SADC Committee on Small Arms,

We do hereby declare our firm determination, within the SADC region, to take all necessary steps to prevent, combat and eradicate the trafficking in, and the illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition and other related materials in the region.

Our Governments will, inter alia, undertake to review national legislation in order to:

o Prohibit the unrestricted civilian possession of small arms and the total prohibition of the possession and use of light weapons by civilians;

o Regulate and centralize the registration of all firearms owned by civilians;

o Regulate and control the manufacture, import, export, transfer, possession and use of firearms and ammunition, and other related materials;

o Standardize the marking and identification of firearms at the time of manufacture, import and export;

o Regulate firearms brokering;

o Adopt national legislation and take other measures that sanction the violation of arms embargoes mandated by the Security Council of the United Nations;

o Improve the operational capacity of the police, customs officials, border guards, the military and the judiciary in order to combat the illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition and other related materials;

- o Promote national and regional public education and awareness programmes concerning the curbing of the proliferation of firearms;
- o Improve the control over firearms owned by the State;
- o Develop and adopt effective programmes for the collection, safe storage, destruction and responsible disposal of firearms rendered surplus, redundant or obsolete through, inter alia, peace agreements, demobilization or integration of ex-combatants or re-equipping or restructuring of national armed forces or armed State bodies;
- o Adopt coordinated national policies that ensure that confiscated or unlicensed firearms that come into the possession of State authorities are destroyed;
- o Develop joint and combined operations to locate, seize and destroy caches of firearms and ammunition and other related materials left over after armed conflicts and civil wars;
- o Introduce programmes that encourage the reduction of legal firearms and the voluntary surrender of illegal firearms;
- o Cooperate in providing mutual legal assistance in a concerted effort to suppress the illicit manufacturing of, trafficking in, possession and use of firearms and ammunition and other related materials;
- o Promote information exchange relating to the accumulation of firearms owned by civilians, and develop policies that reflect transparency in the control of such firearms;
- o Institute appropriate and effective measures for cooperation between law enforcement agencies in order to curb corruption associated with the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in, possession and use of firearms, and ammunition and other related materials.

We undertake to develop and adopt a legal instrument in the form of a regional protocol on the control of firearms and ammunition and other related materials.

We firmly believe that this will contribute towards preventing, combating and eradicating the stockpiling and illicit trafficking in firearms in southern Africa.

In witness whereof, we, the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community have signed this Declaration.

Done at Windhoek on this 9th day of March 2001, in three (3) original texts, in the English, French and Portuguese languages, all texts being equally authentic.

(Signed) José Eduardo Dos Santos
Republic of Angola

(Signed) F. G. Mogae
Republic of Botswana

(Signed) Joseph Kabila
Democratic Republic of the Congo

(Signed) P. M. P. Mosisili
Kingdom of Lesotho

(Signed) Bakili Muzuli
Republic of Malawi

(Signed) Anerood Jugnauth
Republic of Mauritius
(Signed) J. Chissano
Republic of Mozambique

(Signed) Sam Nujoma
Republic of Namibia

(Signed) Jeremy Bonnelame
Republic of Seychelles

(Signed) Thabo Mbeki
Republic of South Africa

(Signed) A. R. V. Khoza
Kingdom of Swaziland

(Signed) Benjamin W. Mkaia
United Republic of Tanzania

(Signed) F. Chiluba
Republic of Zambia

(Signed) Robert Mugabe
Republic of Zimbabwe