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Nairobi Protocol

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The Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa (2004) is an important international agreement aimed at combatting the illicit manufacturing, trafficking, possession and use of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the sub-region. Its primary objective is to prevent excessive accumulation of SALW, promote information sharing, cooperation, accountability, law enforcement, control, and management of SALW held by governments and civilians.

Article 2 of the Protocol contains comprehensive provisions for SALW control and management, while Article 3 requires States to establish as criminal offenses under their national law acts of illicit trafficking, illicit manufacturing, and illicit possession and misuse of SALW, falsifying or illicitly obliterating, removing or altering the markings on SALW and violation of UNSC mandated arms embargoes on SALW.

To strengthen the operational capacity of national law enforcement and security agencies to combat SALW proliferation in the Member States and region, Article 4 of the NP provides for their strengthening. Additionally, Article 5 provides for control of civilian possession of SALW while Article 6 provides for control and accountability of State-owned SALW.

Article 7 enjoins State Parties to Marking and Tracing of SALW at the time of manufacture, import, and all SALW in the possession of the State. Meanwhile, Articles 8 and 9 make provisions for Disposal of State-owned, Confiscated, or Unlicensed SALW by State Parties.

Article 13 emphasizes the importance of public awareness in tackling the proliferation and illicit trafficking of SALW. It requires States Parties to develop local, national, and

regional public and community education and awareness programs to enhance the involvement of the public and communities.

The Protocol also provides for regional cooperation on SALW issues. Article 14 provides for mutual legal assistance and requires State Parties to create a mutual legal assistance system to enhance their cooperation in mutual legal assistance in a concerted effort to eradicate the illicit manufacturing and trafficking, and control the possession and use of SALW. Article 15 enjoins State Parties to establish appropriate mechanisms for cooperation among law enforcement agencies to promote effective law enforcement. Articles 16 and 17 provide for mechanisms for cooperation through transparency, information exchange, and harmonization. The Nairobi Protocol remains a vital tool in the fight against the proliferation of SALW in the sub-region.

The Nairobi Protocol

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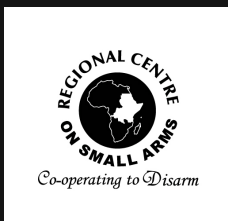
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