



SESSION FOUR

Workshops: Getting the approach right – Implementing an action programme

WORKSHOP ONE: ESTABLISHING LEGAL CONTROLS OVER WEAPONS POSSESSION AND TRANSFER

The harmonisation of laws across countries in the subregion is vital. This should happen through the standardisation of relevant provisions. A timetable is needed to ensure that this happens as soon as possible.

- *Step one:* All states must submit a copy of their firearm legislation and statutes within three months to the Nairobi secretariat. The secretariat would help to assess the differences and similarities between the legislation and propose what can be standardised. This would be without prejudice to the UNAFRI initiative for the whole of Africa.
- *Step two:* The ISS, Saferworld, the SRIC and UNAFRI should examine different national legislation and assist in drafting proposals for common legal controls.
- *Step three:* A special subregional meeting of government officials should be convened to examine the proposals for common controls and agree on the minimum standards to be incorporated into a legal regime.

WORKSHOP TWO: ENHANCING OPERATIONAL CAPACITY TO COMBAT ILLICIT ARMS TRAFFICKING

The working group approved the measures contained in the draft subregional action programme produced at the Kampala meeting. A number of practical proposals were made to move towards their implementation:

- *Establishing a regional illicit trafficking database:* It was recommended that the Interpol Subregional Bureau in Nairobi and the SRIC should take the lead in this initiative and liaise with IGAD which is also establishing a

database. These two organisations should identify the needs for a database and establish how information should be passed from national to subregional level.

- *Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies:* There are problems with a lack of funding, training and logistics. Interpol national central bureaux should identify requirements and pass them to the Subregional Bureau. Improved equipment, such as scanners, are vital. These could be shared between countries at border posts to help reduce costs. The motivation of the police must be improved through training and incentives. Community policing programmes should be introduced and developed.
- *Improving co-ordination:* Regular contact between Interpol national central bureaux is vital. Meetings and seminars should be encouraged and regularly scheduled.
- *Exchanging intelligence:* Increased trust is needed on all levels. National central bureaux need to pass more information to the Subregional Bureau and vice versa. The police forces in the subregion have started to engage in joint sports and social activities – these should be encouraged to boost trust.
- *Improving and enhancing the effectiveness of police forces:* The group proposed this as a new heading in the action programme to replace ‘enabling effective investigation’. The law must be applied uniformly and this requires improved training for investigators and prosecutors. Each national central bureau should identify where this is necessary. The group noted that political will is vital for the police to apply the rule of law.
- *Strengthening border controls:* The problem of corruption must be tackled. Training and equipment are needed at border posts. The group proposed that customs and immigration officers should be involved in future meetings and seminars as they are key roleplayers.
- *Establishing crossborder operations:* Crossborder meetings between law enforcement agencies of neighbouring countries should be encouraged. Hot-pursuit agreements should be incorporated into legislation.
- *Using information resources:* The group stressed the importance of all participants keeping in contact and sharing research, ideas and information. Existing information must be used more effectively and shared.

WORKSHOP THREE: REMOVING AND DESTROYING SURPLUS WEAPONS AND DEVELOPING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The working group supported the measures outlined in the draft subregional action programme developed in Kampala. The following proposals were made to facilitate their implementation:

- *Demobilising and reintegrating former combatants:* All demobilisation programmes must include a comprehensive disarmament component. This will require the sustained support of the international community. In the past, the disarmament and reintegration aspects have too often been neglected. More attention should be given to the reintegration of former combatants into society after being demobilised. This will also need much more sustained support from donors. The group also proposed that a legal framework should be developed to help prescribe actions to be taken when combatants are identified in refugee flows.
- *Collecting and destroying surplus weapons:* Each country should undertake an internal, interagency debate on state arsenals and seized stocks. This should seek to define what constitutes 'surplus' or 'obsolete' stocks and what action should be taken to deal with them, including what are the best methods of destroying old stocks. A regional database should be established of seized illicit small arms and weapons which have been reported stolen.
- *Taking inventories of state-held small arms:* Each country should conduct an inventory of the small arms controlled by the state. This should help to identify surplus and obsolete stocks and will also help governments to be accountable for their weapons. During the course of this inventory, all small arms should be marked and recorded in a national register. The exchange of information within the subregion should be encouraged and facilitated where appropriate.
- *Introducing public education programmes:* Governments should launch national public education campaigns to raise awareness of the *Nairobi Declaration* and the measures it contains.
- *Introducing community policing:* A manual of best practice in community policing should be developed and sent to local police stations to illustrate why working with communities is important and can be beneficial to the police. This manual should also contain proposals on how this can best be achieved. Education programmes should be targeted at the public to show that they have a role to play in security and that there are benefits in working with the police.
- *Protecting witnesses and sources:* Legislation should be introduced to guarantee protection for witnesses and informants.
- *Integrating marginalised groups:* Education and development programmes should be targeted at marginalised communities to provide alternative means for socio-economic development and to discourage cattle-rustling.
- *Resolving conflicts:* The conflict prevention and management capacity of subregional organisations, particularly IGAD, should be strengthened.