Joint Communique

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other Plenipotentiaries of the States Party to the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol namely: Republic of Burundi, Republic of Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the State of Eritrea, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of the Sudan, Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, Republic of Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania met in Nairobi on 20th and 21st June 2005 for the 3rd Ministerial Review Conference of the Nairobi Declaration on the problem of the proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries reiterated their commitment and determination in preventing, combating and eradicating the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in the entire region.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries expressed continued concern that the flow of Small Arms and Light Weapons to non-state actors such as armed rebel groups, warlords, vigilantes, organized criminals and terrorists contribute and exacerbate violence, insecurity and human suffering in the region and internationally.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries welcomed the membership and accession to the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol by the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and expressed the hope that the accession would add impetus to the joint sub-regional effort eradicate the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries expressed their determination to sustain the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons by continuing to extend the necessary political and financial support to the Centre and in that regard signed the Agreement on the Establishment of a Regional Centre on Small Arms, the Ministerial Declaration for Implementation of Practical Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and The Best Practice Guidelines and Minimum Common Standards on Key Issues in the Implementation of the Nairobi Protocol.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries underscored the need for the Centre to be staffed by professionals who should be recruited through competitive interviews in conformity with agreed United Nations targets of mainstreaming gender and giving priority to women having regard to equitable representation of all member states and to this effect, they mandated the Technical Advisory Committee to work out modalities for the recruitment exercise and me recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries thanked the Government of Kenya for agreeing to expeditiously sign a host headquarters agreement with the Regional Centre in accordance with the agreement on its establishment and also expressed their gratitude to Kenya for the sustained political and financial support it has accorded to the Nairobi Secretariat and encouraged the Government of Kenya to continue this support during the transitional period as the Nairobi Secretariat converts into a Regional Centre.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries further extended their appreciation to the Donor Community especially the Government of the United Kingdom through the Department of International Development (DfID) the Government of the Royal Netherlands and the Government of Germany through the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) for the continued support for the Implementation of the Nairobi Declaration through funding extended to the Nairobi Secretariat and States Parties engaged in National Action Plans.

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries also expressed their gratitude to Civil Society Partners particularly the Security Research and Information Centre (SRIC), SaferAfrica and Saferworld for their technical support for the Nairobi Secretariat as well as member States' National Focal Points, and also appreciate the support that has been extended by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS).

The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries expressed their appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the people of Kenya as well as the Nairobi Secretariat for the warm hospitality extended to them during their stay in the country.

Issued in Nairobi
21st June 2005