CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by Mr. Charles Njoroge, EBS
Deputy Secretary General/Political Federation

At the

Fifth UN Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Progress made in the Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects and the UN International Tracing Instrument.

New York,
17th June 2014.
May I begin by congratulating you and the entire bureau for election to the onerous task of shepherding this important Conference to a successful conclusion. We look forward to working with all partners present here to build upon gains already made over the last thirteen years.

Mr. Chairman,

The EAC associates itself with the statements made by its Partner States of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

The last thirteen years has witnessed the conclusion of a number of landmark instruments that focus on Small Arms and Light Weapons among them, the Nairobi Declaration, the UNPoA the Bamako Declaration, the Nairobi Protocol, an International Tracing Instrument and an Arms Trade Treaty. We are gathered here to reflect on how far the implementation of these instruments has contributed to international Peace and Security.

Mr Chairman

Our region has registered substantial progress in implementing the UNPoA. National Coordination Structures have been institutionalized, Laws have been revised, disarmament initiatives have been undertaken and destruction of obsolete/excess stocks implemented. Marking processes have advanced substantially while record keeping has been improved. Stockpile management measures have been put in place and public awareness and public confidence enhanced. In the Eastern Africa sub region, conflicts still abound, crime soaring and mutating into other derivatives that include poaching, and piracy among others.

It is clearly indicative that while through these instruments, supply factors are being addressed, the demand driving elements still obtain and thus undermine the effectiveness. Future interventions should thus address this concern. We may have focused more on supply factors but ignored demand driving factors which still obtain. This calls for links between small arms & wider thematic issues such as development, armed violence and gender.
Mr Chairman

a noble initiative by the name linking needs to resources was developed and welcomed by all States Parties, as a novel modality for linking states in need to states that are in a position to support the various aspects of implementation of the UNPoA. Not much has come out of this initiative in spite of the numerous proposals that have been presented. Preoccupation with the ATT also appeared to have reduced the appetite to maintain the tempo of UNPoA implementation by partners who were supporting national and regional efforts. This combination of factors runs the risk of undermining the gains that have been achieved and we as a region would wish to urge Partners to maintain support even as we work on the ATT implementation.

Mr Chairman

With respect to the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument, our region has recorded substantial progress through consolidation of efforts among the various players that include the Regional Centre on Small Arms and optimization of support by the European Union and German Government. Due to the diverse nature of stakeholders involved and structural issues at national level, it is a process that will take some time to complete but we are satisfied with the progress so far made in establishing reliable electronic databases.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on small arms of 22 August 2013 (S/2013/503) which addressed in detail Peace and Security in Africa e.g. Libya, Mali, Somalia, DRC, Horn of Africa and specifically mentions the threat of terrorism which remains a major concern to our region. In this respect the 5th BMS should encourage states to undertake measures to:

- Enhance the exchange of tracing results between appropriate authorities in conformity with ITI (par 14 & 15)
- Enhance stockpile security, accountability and management of SALW
- Fast-track implementation of national weapons marking programmes
Apply International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and International Small Arms Control Standards, which provide practical guidance on stockpile management, marking, record-keeping and tracing,

Explore technologies that make it possible to personalize and track weapons and to curb the diversion and misuse of small arms in conflict, post-conflict and crisis settings.

Mr. Chairman

Achieving these will not be possible without international cooperation and support and in this respect the EAC would wish to reaffirm the need for enhanced and predictable support to states in need towards enhancing the quality of implementation of the ITI.

This BMS can also make a difference by seeking to further interrogate what Belgium in its submission to the UN has referred to as: under-explored but relevant dimension of the UN PoA & ITI to address a number of critical questions.

I thank you.