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UNIDIR/2000/2

**West Africa Small Arms Moratorium:  
High-Level Consultations on the  
Modalities for the Implementation of PCASED**

A report of the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting  
23-24 March 1999, Bamako, Mali

Jacqueline SECK



UNIDIR  
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research  
Geneva, Switzerland

UNRCPDA  
United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa  
Lomé, Togo

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## Workshop Report

## INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, the illegal transfer of small arms and light weapons is recognized as a security-related humanitarian problem that needs to be tackled by States on a national, regional, and international level. A new “integrated and proportional approach to security and development”, which explicitly links security, stability, human rights, disarmament and development, is the “security first” approach. Effective development requires long-term stability and security, which in turn demand arms control and development. The “security first” approach seeks to build on this imperative.

Recognizing the threats to national security posed by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, West African States have sought to address the issue through a subregional grouping, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Inspired by the “security first” approach, on 31 October 1998, in Abuja, all 16 ECOWAS member States signed the ***Declaration of a moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons in West Africa***.

The Moratorium—commonly known as the West African Small Arms Moratorium—entered into force on 1 November 1998, for a renewable period of three years. This Moratorium is an innovative approach to peace-building and conflict-prevention. It is not a legally-binding regime but rather an expression of shared political will. In order for the Moratorium regime to be effective, concrete measures need to be adopted to ensure that West African Governments remember this political commitment and to mobilize national, regional and international support for its implementation. Located in Bamako, the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) is the designated implementation mechanism for the Moratorium. PCASED is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bamako, but PCASED’s Director is also Director of the Lomé-based United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (Lomé Centre); and the Moratorium was signed at the twenty-first ordinary session of ECOWAS. Therefore, the three organisations responsible for the implementation of the Moratorium in the West African subregion are the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, UNDP (through PCASED), and the Lomé Centre (which acts as the representative of the United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs).

On 23 and 24 March 1999, ECOWAS, UNDP, and the Lomé Centre hosted high-level consultations with West Africa and small arms experts to elaborate the modalities for the implementation of PCASED. This Experts' Meeting was held at the Palais des Congrès, in Bamako, Republic of Mali. Representatives from the following eleven ECOWAS member States attended:

- C Republic of Benin;
- C Burkina Faso;
- C Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
- C Republic of Gambia;
- C Republic of Ghana;
- C Republic of Guinea;
- C Republic of Liberia;
- C Republic of Mali;
- C Islamic Republic of Mauritania;
- C Republic of Senegal;
- C Togolese Republic.

Also taking part in the Experts' Meeting were members of the PCASED Advisory Group, representatives of friendly countries, representatives of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), representatives of inter-governmental organisations, and representatives of West African Civil Society organisations (CSOs) involved in efforts to reduce the circulation of small arms and light weapons in the subregion.

Simultaneously, the Norwegian Church Aid and the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) hosted a meeting with West African Civil Society organisations in support of PCASED. Representatives of 25 CSOs from eight West African States,<sup>1</sup> as well as representatives from international NGOs and intergovernmental organisations, attended the meeting also held at the Palais des Congrès in Bamako.

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<sup>1</sup> Republic of Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Liberia, Republic of Mali, Republic of Niger, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Sierra Leone and Togolese Republic.

Both meetings were designed to feed into the ECOWAS Meeting of Foreign Ministers held on 24 and 25 March 1999; they underlined the importance of Civil Society in the successful implementation of the West African Small Arms Moratorium through PCASED.<sup>2</sup> At the Experts' Meeting, participants adopted a plan of action for ECOWAS member States, and drafted a Code of Conduct for adoption by the Foreign Affairs Ministers at the 24 March 1999 meeting.<sup>3</sup> The Civil Society Meeting produced a plan of action for West African CSOs and two declarations—one on behalf of everyone attending the meeting and the other on behalf of women—read at the Foreign Affairs Ministers meeting.<sup>4</sup>

PCASED is a programme designed to implement the Moratorium regime. Over an initial period of five years, PCASED, in collaboration with the Lomé Centre and other UN organisations, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and ECOWAS member States, will undertake a series of activities in the following nine priority areas:

- C Establishing a culture of peace;
- C Training for military, security, and police forces;
- C Enhancing weapons controls at border posts;
- C Establishing a small arms and light weapons register;
- C Collecting and destroying surplus and unauthorized weapons;
- C Facilitating dialogue with producers/suppliers;
- C Reviewing and harmonizing national legislative and administrative procedures;
- C Mobilizing resources for PCASED objectives and activities; and

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<sup>2</sup> The ECOWAS Meeting of Foreign Ministers held on 24 and 25 March 1999 resulted in the adoption of the plan of action proposed at the Experts' Meeting. The Ministers also agreed to take the Code of Conduct back to their capitals and to discuss its adoption at the next ECOWAS Summit. Finally, the Ministers made a commitment to stop the use of child soldiers. The official ECOWAS documents that came out of the meeting are reproduced in Annex 1 and 2.

<sup>3</sup> The Plan of Action and the Code of Conduct prepared at the Experts' Meeting are reproduced in Annex 3 and 4. The Code of Conduct was amended by States and adopted during the ECOWAS Summit in December 1999. The adopted Code is reproduced in Annex 5.

<sup>4</sup> See Annex 6, 7 and 8 for the documents that came out of the Civil Society Meeting.



### C Enlarging membership of the Moratorium.

This report outlines the various discussions that took place within both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting about these priority areas. More views were expressed than can possibly be printed here, but it is hoped that minority views have been given adequate coverage.

## ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF PEACE

Participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting agreed that the West African Small Arms Moratorium is a confidence-building measure. By signing the Moratorium, West African Governments tried to start the process to establish a culture of peace. Creating a culture of peace, as one of the participants from the Civil Society Meeting put it, means:

creating a normal standard of behaviour that favours the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and one that stigmatizes the use of violence—by any part of society. The illegal possession or transfer of small arms would be rendered unacceptable in a culture of peace.

The role of Civil Society in promoting this culture of peace will be crucial. It was generally felt that, although five months had already gone by since the Moratorium was signed in Abuja, few people other than specialists were aware of its existence. Participants from both meetings thought that West African Civil Society organisations—women's organisations, religious

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bodies, community groups, business associations, professional organisations, academics, traditional groupings ("griots"), elders—as well as international non-governmental organisations, need to launch an awareness campaign. They should

inform the general public about the effects of armed violence and about the ongoing subregional efforts to try and reduce them. They also highlighted the responsibilities of Governments who have signed the Moratorium to promote awareness in their populations, and more especially among officials and Government institutions (police, customs, armed and security forces, elected

and appointed local Government officials, community and religious leaders, etc.). Many concrete measures were suggested at the local, national, and international levels.

### **1. Local Level**

- C Submit essays, or opinion pieces to local newspapers about the West African Small Arms Moratorium and PCASED, and about these high-level consultations;
- C Go to local radio talk shows and discuss regional efforts to curb illicit small arms trafficking;
- C Persuade local television stations to air a documentary on the issue of small arms proliferation and control (NISAT, the Centre for Defense Information in Washington, D.C., and Amnesty International have recently produced appropriate videos in French and English); and
- C Organize community meetings to inform grassroots Civil Society on the dangers posed by the uncontrolled proliferation of light weapons.

### **2. National Level**

Governments should:

- C Mobilize the resources of the Ministries of Interior, Information, Education, and Youth to promote education in favour of a culture of peace;
- C Educate primary and secondary school children: rewrite history books and school curricula to de-glamorize violence and to emphasize Africa's tradition of decentralized governance, negotiation and conflict resolution;
- C De-glamorize child soldiers, promote alternative role models and promote national figures whose fame rests on non-military values and make clear the difficult life ahead for a child who grows up only learning the ways of war.

CSOs should:

- C Lobby Governments to ensure the sustainability of their political will to stem the proliferation of light weapons;

- C Translate into native languages existing documents concerning the West African Small Arms Moratorium and the proliferation of light weapons; and
- C Conduct research on the impact of small arms and light weapons proliferation on sustainable peace and sustainable development, and use the findings to promote national and public debate concerning issues of arms and peace and reconciliation.

### **3. International Level**

- C Establish a network of West African NGOs working to promote peace in the subregion and working in close collaboration with PCASED personnel;
- C Promote membership in the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) launched at The Hague Appeal for Peace in May 1999;
- C Increase subregional and international collaboration; and
- C Celebrate in each ECOWAS member State a common week against the proliferation of small arms.

To launch this awareness campaign effectively and therefore contribute to creating a culture of peace, participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting felt that CSOs have to reach out to all groups that are affected by armed violence, including women, children and elders. CSOs should update all collaborative partners about the steps they are taking (or could be taking) to help combat violence. CSOs should involve the most powerful segments of Civil Society in the fight against the proliferation of small arms: participants from the Civil Society Meeting thought that traditional groupings and women's associations, especially, are often forgotten, and they should not be.

The culture that currently prevails in the West African subregion is one of violence. With the ongoing wars, the potentially explosive ethnic tensions, and the poverty that have created a climate of uncertainty and insecurity, it is sometimes hard to imagine that a culture of peace could ever return to West Africa. Participants in the Civil Society Meeting felt that Governments can contribute to the establishment of such a culture by no longer permitting crimes to go unpunished and by practising democratic governance. Experience has shown that in countries governed by dictators, or subject to centralized governance systems which leave citizens feeling powerless,

violence is easily sparked and can very quickly escalate to uncontrollable proportions. Citizens who cannot trust their Governments to protect them will try to protect themselves; knowing that their neighbours are most probably armed, they will procure, through any means available, small arms and light weapons in order to defend themselves. This contributes to the spread of a culture of violence.

Participants at the Experts' Meeting felt that if sustainable peace is to be achieved in the subregion, PCASED, the Lomé Centre, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and ECOWAS member States must act to counter this growing culture of violence:

- C Organize community education programmes to help local constituencies acquire knowledge about, and therefore develop norms against, the possession and accumulation of small arms and light weapons;
- C Develop peace education materials on the direct and indirect consequences of the accumulation, proliferation, and use of small arms adapted to different segments of society, such as students, law and order forces, or ordinary citizens;
- C Devise appropriate peace education curricula in secondary and higher education institutions;
- C Organize capacity-building seminars and workshops on the issues of light weapons, sustainable peace, and sustainable development;
- C Conduct seminars on civil-military relations; and
- C Develop youth initiatives on the problems of small arms and the potential hazards of the child soldier.

Participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting felt that establishing a culture of peace is a lengthy process. To successfully carry out these activities, PCASED, the Lomé Centre, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, ECOWAS member States, West African Civil Society organisations (including women's organisations, elders and traditional groupings) and the international community must work together.

### **TRAINING FOR MILITARY, SECURITY AND POLICE FORCES**

One of the pre-requisites to establishing a culture of peace is to have all military, security, police, and customs forces—in other words, all the

uniformed forces in general—properly trained to enforce the rule of law and maintain stability in a given country. In 1994 and 1995, the United Nations Secretary-General sent an Advisory Mission to West Africa to analyse the security situation in seven countries in the subregion, namely: Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. Their analysis showed that uniformed forces lack the necessary skills and, more importantly, the modern techniques to deal with the challenges of:

- C Easy access of civilians to small arms and light weapons;
- C Ease with which to conceal small arms and light weapons;
- C Long and porous borders which are impossible to guard;
- C Secure storage of important quantities of weapons;
- C Uncontrolled spread of cheap and unregistered firearms, including military weapons;
- C Rapidly growing cities; and
- C Increasing urban criminality rate.

Participants at both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting felt that this analysis is still valid in 1999: there is an important need to train all military, security, police and customs forces to combat illicit use and transfers of small arms and light weapons in West Africa. More specifically, participants from the Experts' Meeting thought that PCASED, the Lomé Centre, and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat should develop training materials on the following issues:

- C Modern techniques for maintaining law and order;
- C Proper small arms collection methods;
- C Dealing with drug trafficking and cross-border crimes;
- C Effective maintenance of national weapons arsenal;
- C Demobilization of soldiers and post-conflict reconstruction;
- C Disarmament and re-integration of ex-combatants into Civil Society; and
- C Cross-border collaboration between security forces and the leaders of local communities.

These educational materials could be used to train national trainers on the issue of stemming the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the West African subregion. Participants from the Experts' Meeting felt that ECOWAS member States should then use those national trainers to train all military, security and police officials in the modern methods of arms and

ammunition control and law enforcement; and to develop joint training programmes for all uniformed forces, including military, security, police and customs officials.

It was generally felt that Civil Society organisations could be involved in this training process, that their input would in fact be crucial to identify the areas in which military, security, police and customs forces need to be trained. CSOs could conduct research studies to identify the areas where training is necessary and ensure that the reforms undertaken are as participative and responsive to community needs as possible.

Participants in the Civil Society Meeting thought that regular channels of communication between local community representatives—including representatives of women, elders, religious and traditional groupings—and uniformed forces need to be established in order to build cooperation and open dialogue. Such a dialogue would increase confidence in the newly trained military, security, police and customs officials, and hence in the Government's ability to protect and defend civilians.

***There is an important need to train all military, security, police and customs forces to combat illicit use and transfers of small arms and light weapons in West Africa.***

Participants at the Civil Society Meeting also felt that West African NGOs can play a vital role in promoting professionalization and anti-corruption practices among local police, military, security and customs officials, in promoting awareness of good standards of law enforcement, and in helping community police at the local level. It was generally felt that getting rid of corrupt officials at border posts would enhance national and regional security on both sides of the frontier. Indeed, corruption leads officials to encourage or allow illicit transfers of small arms and light weapons for personal gain. It also leads those officials to engage in theft or distribution of stored weapons.

Finally, Civil Society Meeting participants sensed that CSOs could help ensure that all military, security, police and customs officials are aware of:

- C The West African Small Arms Moratorium commitment undertaken by their Governments;
- C Other national and international law relating to arms transfers;

- C Internationally recognized human rights standards; and
- C International humanitarian law.

Establishing a culture of peace, like training all military, security, police and customs officials is a lengthy and ongoing process. Participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting felt that coherent concerted human rights training for all uniformed forces should start as soon as possible.

### **ENHANCING WEAPONS CONTROLS AT BORDER POSTS**

Experts' Meeting participants and Civil Society Meeting participants all felt that in addition to taking the appropriate measures to establish a culture of peace and to train all military, security, police and customs officials, ECOWAS member States—in collaboration with PCASED, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and West African Civil Society, including women's associations, elders and traditional groupings—should find ways of enhancing weapons controls at border posts. It was generally sensed that small arms and light weapons are, by definition, weapons that are very easy to conceal.

***The porous nature of the borders increases the likelihood of small arms, light weapons, and drugs to be smuggled from one country to another.***

Participants also noted that West African borders are very long and hard to access in some places. It is impossible to cover all entry posts; the porous nature of the borders

increases the likelihood of small arms, light weapons, and drugs to be smuggled from one country to another. Therefore, participants strongly emphasized the need to enhance existing weapons control systems. More specifically, participants from the Experts' Meeting suggested that West African Governments should adopt the following measures:

- C Increase control and verifications at frontiers in order to stem the illicit flows of small arms and light weapons;
- C Develop a system for detecting and apprehending illicit cross-border flows of small arms and light weapons;
- C Put in place an effective legal regime at identifiable points of entry or exit;

- C Conduct research studies to understand the nature and gravity of the small arms transfers problem;
- C Conduct research studies to understand the weapons flow routes;
- C Apply strict controls of imports and exports of small arms components and ammunition;
- C Provide the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, on an annual basis, with information regarding any components and ammunition on order, or any cross-border transactions with regard to weapons that are subject to the Moratorium;
- C Issue visitors, upon arrival, with an entry permit for arms brought into their territory, as well as an exit certificate upon departure from the country;
- C Cooperate with PCASED and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat during their assessment missions to member States to ascertain that existing national production is reduced and brought to a halt in conformity with the spirit of the Moratorium;
- C Declare all small arms and ammunition dedicated to an international peace operation within ECOWAS territory;
- C Forward all requests for exemption from the Moratorium regime to the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat.

Enhancement of weapons control systems cannot be left to governmental officials alone. Participants from the Civil Society Meeting emphasized the need to develop and improve civil-military and civil-police relations, so that CSOs can help monitor the flows of weapons at border posts.

### **ESTABLISHING A SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS REGISTER**

All participants agreed that smuggled small arms and light weapons are very hard to trace because ECOWAS member States have no proper registration or licensing systems, as well as no national filing system. Participants thought that establishing or strengthening national registries of weapons might help prevent excessive, unplanned accumulations; facilitate information exchange; and promote confidence through greater transparency. Participants from the Experts' Meeting suggested that West African States implement, in collaboration with PCASED, the Lomé Centre, and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, the following measures:



- C Set up or enhance national filing systems, taking particular notice of captured illegal weapons;
- C Better organize national holding and storage facilities;
- C Compile information on small arms transfers issues and potential policy options to stem the illicit proliferation of light weapons;
- C Organize workshops on operational modalities for a database and arms register.

It was generally felt that information from small arms and light weapons registers should be readily available for military, security, police and customs forces, other Government officials, Civil Society and neighbouring countries. A register should be established as soon as possible and maintained even after PCASED's initial five-year lifespan.

### **COLLECTING AND DESTROYING SURPLUS AND UNAUTHORIZED WEAPONS**

West Africa is home to many civil wars or potentially violent conflicts that are accentuated by the rapid proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the subregion. One problem identified by both Experts' Meeting participants and Civil Society Meeting participants, is that a lot of the illegal weapons in circulation legally originally entered the country legally: they

***Collecting and destroying weapons that are not needed for national security reasons is conducive to establishing a proper climate for post-conflict reconstruction.***

were bought for national security purposes. These small arms may have been part of national armouries, collected from peacekeeping missions, or collected as a result of

peace accords. Participants suggested that all weapons that are no longer needed for national security should be collected and immediately destroyed. Experience has shown that collecting surplus weapons and storing them is not a good option: such weapons invariably re-surface during conflicts, having been stolen from their original storing location. Collecting and destroying weapons that are not needed for national security reasons is conducive to establishing a proper climate for post-conflict reconstruction. Participants from the Experts' Meeting therefore suggested that ECOWAS member States should organize comprehensive voluntary weapons collection programmes (VWCP) that would include amnesties or other in-kind

incentives. More specifically, participants from the Experts' Meeting proposed that Governments, in collaboration with PCASED and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, should:

- C Develop an awareness campaign about VWCP;
- C Develop and promote inexpensive weapon destruction methods;
- C Avoid "buy-back" programmes which encourage flows of weapons for sale; and
- C Develop strategies to effectively control the flows of weapons during peacekeeping operations, or during post-conflict peace processes.

Participants felt that collection and destruction of surplus, obsolete and unauthorized weapons and ammunition should begin immediately.

#### **FACILITATING DIALOGUE WITH PRODUCERS/SUPPLIERS**

Participants in the Experts' Meeting felt that in order for the Moratorium regime to be successful, close collaboration with arms producers and arms suppliers had to be established. ECOWAS arms producers and suppliers cannot comply with a Moratorium of which they are not aware, or of which they have insufficient knowledge. To ensure that the West African Small Arms Moratorium is respected by ECOWAS producers and suppliers, participants from the Experts' Meeting suggested that PCASED and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, in collaboration with ECOWAS member States, adopt the following measures:

- C Encourage dialogue among small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers and between small arms producers/suppliers and potential buyers;
- C Encourage small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers to devise common export controls;
- C Encourage small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers to mark light weapons in order to ease tracing;
- C Encourage small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers to establish a database of weapons transfers;
- C Encourage small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers jointly to develop codes of conduct in order to ensure transparency in the arms

trade. The codes of conduct will address international arms brokering, end-use, monitoring, and licensed production; and

- C Devise and promote reorganisation programmes for artisan producers of guns in ECOWAS countries to encourage them to produce other goods in place of firearms.

Participants from the Experts' Meeting also felt that discussing the technical provisions of the West African Small Arms Moratorium with international small arms and ammunition producers/suppliers would enhance the chances of its successful implementation in the subregion. Therefore, they suggested that PCASED and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, adopt the following measures:

- C Continue dialogue with the Wassenaar Arrangement;
- C Establish dialogue with other groups engaged in discussions promoting small arms supplier restraints;
- C Collaborate with the European Union and other regional organisations to establish common arms export controls.

Participants from the Experts' Meeting felt that these activities should start immediately and continue throughout the duration of PCASED.

## **REVIEWING AND HARMONIZING NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Many West African States are governed by laws that were elaborated during the colonial era; therefore, they operate under a legal regime that no longer reflects adequately the country's security situation and socio-political environment. Also, some countries have a set of laws that do not take into account light weapons possession and use by civilians, or small arms and ammunition import/export. Consequently, the difference between legal and illegal transfers of small arms and light weapons is often hard to establish in the West African subregion.

When all 16 ECOWAS Heads of State signed the *Declaration of a Moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons in West Africa*, they expressed political will rather than legal commitment. Participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil

Society Meeting expressed concern that without an adequate system of national and regional laws, regulations, and administrative procedures to exercise control over arms ownership and arms importation and exportation in the West African subregion, the Moratorium regime would be rendered useless. Therefore, participants felt that ECOWAS member States, in collaboration with PCASED, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and West African Civil Society (including women's associations, elders and traditional groupings) should:

- C Review, update, and harmonize all national legislation and administrative procedures regarding civilian possession, use and transfer of light weapons;
- C Develop standardized exportation and importation permits and end-user certificates to limit fraudulent transfers;
- C Establish or strengthen national commissions on small arms and light weapons made up of representatives of the relevant governmental authorities as well as representatives of Civil Society (including women, elders, and traditional groupings). These commissions would develop strategies and policies relating to small arms and light weapons proliferation; and
- C Harmonize different national legislation across the region with a view to developing a regional convention on light weapons.

The role of Civil Society in the national small arms legislation review process will again be critical. Participants from both the Experts' Meeting and the Civil Society Meeting thought that CSOs could conduct studies on the existing national legislative and administrative instruments with regard to small arms and light weapons, identifying the areas that need improvement. Also, CSOs could launch an awareness campaign on the existing coordinating mechanisms for the control of small arms and light weapons including:

- C Declaration of Principles in the context of firearms control and transnational organized crime (ECOSOC);
- C European Union Programme on Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms (1997);
- C OAS Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials (1997);

- C 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

Finally, participants from both meetings felt that PCASED—in collaboration with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and West African Civil Society representatives (including women’s associations, elders and traditional groupings)—could organize training sessions on legislative drafting and harmonization; and work towards the adoption of a regional convention to regulate arms transfers within ECOWAS.

### **MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR PCASED OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

PCASED is a very ambitious programme with an initial five-year duration. Carrying it out will require sustained funding, and adequate moral and political support. So far, seven countries have agreed to fund PCASED: Belgium, Canada, France, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Other countries have shown an interest but have not yet pledged any money. Participants from both meetings agreed that PCASED should launch an awareness campaign on its achievements in order to attract funding. They also agreed to support NISAT’s convening of an international consultation of donor countries in Geneva in May 1999.

### **ENLARGING MEMBERSHIP OF THE MORATORIUM**

The Moratorium currently only applies to the West African subregion. Small arms and light weapons proliferation, however, is a problem which stretches far beyond the established borders of ECOWAS member States. Participants felt that measures should be taken for the Moratorium to be extended to other African regions and therefore suggested that the Lomé Centre could regularly provide non-ECOWAS African States with regular information on the evolution of the Moratorium.

### **CONCLUSION**

In November 1996, UNIDIR and UNDP jointly organized a conference in Bamako, Mali, on ***Conflict Prevention, Disarmament and Development in West Africa***. At this gathering, representatives from 11 West African States came together to discuss their individual security concerns, and the need for harmonizing policies on arms control and conflict prevention in the region. The Malian initiative of a Moratorium sparked interest among the participants who took up the idea within their respective Governments. Less than two years later, on 31 October 1999, all 16 ECOWAS member States signed the ***Declaration of a Moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons in West Africa***. First initiative of its kind in the world, the Moratorium became effective on 1 November 1999, for a renewable period of three years. It is hoped that at the end of this initial three-year period, it will be extended.

The Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) is the implementation mechanism for the Moratorium. High-level consultations of West Africa and small arms experts, as well as high-level consultations of West African Civil Society, both on the implementation of PCASED, took place on 23 and 24 March 1999. A complex series of proposals were presented for consideration by the Foreign Affairs Minister at their meeting on 25 March 1999. Throughout the meetings, the crucial role of Civil Society, including women's associations, elders and traditional groupings, in the implementation process of the Moratorium was emphasized. The successful implementation of PCASED will condition the extension of the Moratorium.

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

**MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
ON THE MODALITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME  
FOR COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE FOR SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT  
(PCASED)**

**Bamako, 24-25 March 1999**

**FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ**

**Bamako, March 1999**

1. A meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs jointly organised by the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa was held in Bamako on 24 and 25 March 1999.
2. The meeting was declared open by His Excellency Alpha Omar Konaré, President of the Republic and Head of State of Mali whose opening speech was adopted as a working document by the meeting.
3. The following member States were represented at the meeting:
  - C Republic of Benin;
  - C Burkina Faso;
  - C Republic of Cabo Verde;
  - C Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
  - C Republic of the Gambia;
  - C Republic of Ghana;
  - C Republic of Guinea;
  - C Republic of Liberia;
  - C Republic of Mali;
  - C Islamic Republic of Mauritania;
  - C Republic of the Niger;
  - C Federal Republic of Nigeria;
  - C Republic of Senegal;
  - C Togolese Republic.
4. Representatives of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity, as well as representatives of friendly countries also attended the meeting as invited guests.
5. The meeting was a follow-up to the directives embodied in the Declaration of the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of light weapons, dated 31 October 1998, and focussed on the modalities for the implementation of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED).
6. The Ministers recalled that at the twenty-first session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, they had been directed



to formulate an operational framework for the associated measures of the Moratorium under PCASED.

7. In this connection, the Ministers agreed to adopt a plan of action for the implementation of PCASED and to submit a code of conduct for the application of the Moratorium to the Heads of State.
8. They agreed that the Plan of Action be formulated in a manner that would permit the effective implementation, within specific time frames, of judiciously selected activities. To this end, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs approved the following nine priority areas of activity:
  - (i) Developing a culture of peace;
  - (ii) Training for the military, security and police forces;
  - (iii) Enhancing weapons controls at border posts;
  - (iv) Establishment of a database and a regional arms register;
  - (v) Collection and destruction of surplus and unauthorized weapons;
  - (vi) Facilitating dialogue with producers and suppliers;
  - (vii) Review and harmonization of national legislation and administrative procedures;
  - (viii) Mobilizing resources for PCASED objective and activities; and
  - (ix) Enlarging membership of the Moratorium.
9. The Ministers encouraged immediate financial support for PCASED in the following areas:
  - (i) Measures to enhance confidence in the Moratorium such as improving controls at harbours, airports and border crossings. To this end, donor country assistance should be sought for the installation and effective operation of such control mechanisms;
  - (ii) Security sector reform, including initiating and strengthening regional training programmes for the uniformed services;
  - (iii) Incentive schemes to collect and destroy weapons in uncontrolled circulation or unauthorized possession;
  - (iv) Cooperation with Civil Society organisations.
10. The Foreign Ministers decided to instruct the ECOWAS Executive Secretary to formally notify the United Nations Security Council and the

Wassenaar Arrangement of the entry into force of the Moratorium and of the list of categories of light weapons covered by it.

11. The Foreign Ministers decided to initiate a dialogue with other arms producers that are not members of the Wassenaar Arrangement with a view to promoting respect of the Moratorium.
12. The Foreign Ministers supported the convening of the high-level consultation that has been initiated by the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) to promote international support for PCASED.
13. The Ministers passed a declaration on the phenomenon of the child soldier, which they decided to incorporate into the Plan of Action and the Code of Conduct.
14. The Ministers expressed appreciation to all partners for their contribution to light weapons proliferation control in West Africa and urged them to intensify their efforts to ensure the success of the Moratorium and effective implementation of PCASED. They thanked one and all for having undertaken the journey to Bamako to lend support to the initiatives of our subregion.
15. The Ministers expressed their acknowledgement to the United Nations system, the friendly countries and all institutions and organisations which, in diverse ways, made their meeting possible.
16. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs expressed their deep appreciation to His Excellency President Alpha Oumar Konaré, and to the Government and people of the Republic of Mali for the warm hospitality and for the excellent facilities provided to ensure the success of their meeting.

Done at Bamako, 25<sup>th</sup> day of March 1999

By the Ministers of Foreign Affairs

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

**DECLARATION BY ECOWAS MINISTERS  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON CHILD SOLDIERS**

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of ECOWAS,

AWARE that the proliferation of light weapons creates a fertile environment for the emergence of child soldiers in the subregion,

GREATLY preoccupied by the increasingly frequent use of children as soldiers by various armed groups in the subregion,

DEPLORING the violence to which such children are generally subjected when forcibly conscripted into these groups,

AWARE of the trauma suffered by these child soldiers and of its inherently grave consequences for themselves, for their families and for the nation,

CONSIDERING that the conscription of these children into illegal armed groups denies them access to education, training and culture and prevents them from being useful to their countries,

AWARE also that children, as nation-builders, are the guarantors of the future,

CONCERNED therefore for their physical, moral and intellectual well-being and desiring to provide them with the protection which they deserve,

CONSIDERING that all ECOWAS member States have acceded to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child,

CONSIDERING the relevant OAU resolutions on the protection of the African child and the provisions of the African Charter on the welfare and rights of the child,

CONDEMN STRONGLY the conscription of children into armed groups anywhere on the territory of the Community in particular, on the African continent, and all over the world,

CALL on member States to take necessary measure to disband all groups using children as fighters,

APPEAL to all armed groups which use child soldiers to demobilize such children immediately and return them to the appropriate public institutions for reintegration into society,

URGE the Governments of member States, international and non-governmental organisations, Civil Society and women's associations to coordinate their efforts with a view to adopting appropriate coercive measures to arrest this phenomenon.

Done at Bamako, 24<sup>th</sup> day of March 1999

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

**PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PROGRAMME FOR COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE  
FOR SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT  
(PCASED)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The uncontrolled accumulation and proliferation of small arms is a major threat to subregional security. Apart from causing destruction of lives and serious human rights violations, the phenomenon undermines development efforts. The diffusion of light weapons also fuels conflicts in Africa, engendering increased criminality and banditry, and the emergence of the child soldier.

To curb small arms proliferation, the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) declared on 1 November 1998 a Moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons in their region. The Moratorium covers an initial period of three years which may be extended. The Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) has been put in place as a support to the Moratorium.

## **OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY AREAS OF PCASED**

PCASED has been conceived as a programme which aims to build peace in support of activities that will promote a secure and stable climate for socio-economic development.

In the execution of its activities, PCASED will seek the active collaboration of inter-governmental and Civil Society organisations, in particular women's organisations.

In the exercise of its functions, PCASED will benefit from the guidance and technical support of an advisory group consisting of recognized regional and other international experts serving in their personal capacity.

Over an initial five-year period, PCASED will support a series of activities in priority areas such as:

### **Priority Areas**

- Establishing a culture of peace;
- Training programmes for military, security and police forces;
- Enhancing weapons controls at border posts;

- Establishment of a database and regional arms register;
- Collection and destruction of surplus and unauthorized weapons;
- Facilitating dialogue with producer suppliers;
- Review and harmonization of national legislation and administrative procedures;
- Mobilizing resources for PCASED objectives and activities;
- Enlarging membership of the Moratorium.

#### **I. ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF PEACE**

If sustainable peace is to be achieved in the subregion, appropriate programmes must be put in place to counter the growing culture of violence—which is buttressed by the proliferation of light weapons. In this connection, member States, ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, PCASED and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, with assistance from their multilateral and bilateral partners, will endeavour to:

- forge a peace culture in the region through community education programmes and advocacy campaigns whereby local constituencies would acquire knowledge about, and develop the requisite norms against, the possession and accumulation of this class of weapons;
- assist in developing appropriate peace education material for pertinent segments of society such as students, law and order forces, and ordinary citizenry so that a critical mass of public awareness can be developed on the direct and indirect consequences of the accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms;
- assist in capacity-building for peace through seminars and workshops focusing on the issues of light weapons and sustainable development so as to enhance policy-making and public awareness of the challenges involved;
- develop youth initiatives on the problems of small arms and the potential hazards of the child soldier;
- conduct seminars on civil-military relations that would focus on the military's role in an emerging democratic political culture.

It will be necessary to develop formal and informal education programmes in respect of these activities.



The formal approach will include devising and teaching appropriate peace education curricula in secondary and higher education institutions; and organizing workshops, roundtables discussions and training programmes for students, policy-makers and the citizenry.

The non-formal approaches include sensitization campaigns using the media and electronic means, sponsoring intra-Community relations.

To successfully carry out these activities, member States, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, PCASED, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa will seek the active collaboration of intergovernmental and Civil Society organisations, and women's organisations.

The programme should be commenced as soon as possible, given the length of time it will take a true culture of peace to gain a foothold.

## **II. TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR MILITARY, SECURITY AND POLICE FORCES**

Effective light weapons control requires strengthening the present structure and improving the capacity of the military, security and police forces through training and improved access to modern arms control methods.

PCASED, in partnership with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and with assistance from the relevant partners will assist in:

- training military, security and police forces in modern techniques of effective control of arms and ammunition as well as enforcement of pertinent laws;
- developing joint training programmes for military, security and police forces as well as border guards;
- training national trainers on the small proliferation question.

To this end, the Executive Secretariat, PCASED and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa will:

- develop a curriculum that will include:
  - (ii) general information on the diffusion problem including legal and human rights issues; and

(ii) modern techniques of maintenance of law and order; methods of collecting small arms, dealing with drug trafficking and cross-border crimes, effective ways of maintaining national weapons arsenals; demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of combatants into Civil Society, etc.;

- seek financial and technical assistance from partners.

Training of military, security and police forces should be a continuous activity and should commence within the shortest possible time.

### **III. ENHANCING WEAPONS CONTROLS AT BORDER POSTS**

Light weapons are easy to conceal and this fact, coupled with the prevalence of porous borders and inadequate government control, works to frustrate arms control efforts.

PCASED shall, in collaboration with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and with the support of bilateral and multilateral partners, assist member States in:

- controlling frontiers so that the diffusion problem, particularly illicit flows (smuggling), might be stemmed;
- enhancing and/or developing an effective capacity to “police” arms transfers and flows;
- developing a system for detecting and apprehending illicit transborder flows;
- putting in place an effective legal and regulatory regime at identifiable points of entry or exit for light weapons;
- conducting relevant studies on borders and related political and security issues (in particular, light weapons) in the region to understand the nature and gravity of the diffusion problem, and weapons flow routes so that relevant policy prescriptions may be formulated;
- organizing training sessions for border/customs officials on such issues as: monitoring end-user certificates, complying with arms embargo and sharing information; and the use of various border control technology;
- seeking donor country assistance in providing up-to-date technology to assist border control efforts.

PCASED will seek assistance from intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations with proven expertise in this domain, and which have traditionally cooperated in the identification of groups and individuals engaged in illicit trafficking of weapons and ammunition.

Activities which target improved arms controls at borders will commence as soon as possible and will continue for the entire length of the project.

#### **IV. ESTABLISHING A REGIONAL LIGHT WEAPONS DATABASE AND REGISTER**

The diffusion problem is also accentuated by the ineffective registration and licensing systems and by the absence of national filing systems.

To remedy these inadequacies, PCASED and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in collaboration with ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, will assist member States in:

- strengthening and/or establishing national filing systems/registries on weapons flows so as to contribute to a timely identification and prevention of excessive and destabilizing accumulations, as well as facilitate research and policy development;
- creating a Light Weapons Information Management (LWIM) system; that is, a database reflecting compilation of national filing systems that would not only facilitate research on the issue but also promote transparency and safeguard weapons from loss especially through theft or corruption, in particular at weapons storage facilities; and
- improving record-keeping and intelligence-gathering as well as creating a transparency regime in light weapons procurement that would facilitate information exchange and promote confidence-building while respecting the rights and obligations of member States of a regional cooperative security system.

PCASED will, at the national level:

- assist national governments in setting up and or enhancing their national filing systems especially for captured illegal weapons that would have been taken out of circulation, and ultimately destroyed;
- assist governments to better organize national holdings and storage facilities;

- facilitate access by Civil Society and national commissions to information on the movement of light weapons;
- compile information on small arms proliferation issues and on potential policies and solutions for combatting this scourge;
- organize in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa a workshop to define the operational modalities for a database and arms register.

The cooperation of relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations will be sought.

Activities relating to the establishment of a database and a regional light weapons register will begin immediately and will continue even after the lifespan of PCASED.

#### **V. COLLECTION AND DESTRUCTION OF SURPLUS AND UNAUTHORIZED WEAPONS**

For there to be enduring peace and security in the subregion, all surplus weapons must be retrieved and destroyed. Such surpluses are generally made up of the excess from national armouries, and arms collected from peacekeeping missions or as a result of peace accords. They are thus not needed for national security or law and order.

Consequently, PCASED and ECOWAS efforts in this area will consist in support action to member States:

- in establishing a more secure environment which would facilitate post-conflict reconstruction by mopping up excess weapons in member States through comprehensive voluntary weapons collections programmes (VWCP);
- to ensure reduction of flows by encouraging destruction of surplus weapons.

PCASED will assist member States in:

- designing and implementing VWCP such as amnesties and in-kind incentives;

- developing and implementing sensitization and persuasion programmes in the local media (radio, TV, press);
- developing and encouraging inexpensive methods of weapons destruction;
- working with peacekeeping operations to design effective strategies for the control of arms during the peace process following an intra- or inter-state conflict;
- engaging Civil Society in arms collection efforts.

Activities to collect and destroy surplus and unauthorized light weapons shall commence immediately and should yield significant results during the initial three years of the Moratorium.

#### **VI. FACILITATING DIALOGUE WITH PROCEDURES AND SUPPLIERS (WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT AND OTHERS)**

Close collaboration from arms producers and suppliers is a major determinant of success in the effort to control light weapons diffusion.

To ensure that ECOWAS producers respect the provisions of the Moratorium, PCASED and the Executive Secretariat will seek to:

- sensitize producers and suppliers of light weapons and ammunition, and evolve with them common export control strategies; in particular by encouraging them to check the activities of brokering agents so that the latter would provide relevant and critical information pertaining to financial and transportation arrangements in weapons transactions;
- jointly develop codes of conduct that ensure transparency in the arms trade and the flows of weapons;
- encourage producers and suppliers to establish a database on weapons transfers, and to mark light weapons at the time of manufacture for ease of tracing.

These are attainable goals if PCASED, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and Civil Society organisations:

- encourage dialogue between producers/suppliers and between them and buyers;

- liaise with the Wassenaar Arrangement and others who are engaged in discussions about promoting supplier restraints.

In addition, PCASED, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, and Civil Society will endeavour to ensure the adoption by producer suppliers of codes of conduct on the arms trade that will address international arms brokering, end-use, monitoring and licensed production.

Thus, PCASED, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and Civil Society organisations will:

- continue the dialogue with the Wassenaar Arrangement; and other arms suppliers;
- join efforts with the European Union and other regional organisations to establish politically-binding, common arms export controls.

These activities should be embarked upon immediately and should continue throughout the duration of PCASED.

#### **VII. REVISING NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

The effective application of the Moratorium is contingent on the existence of an adequate system of national laws, regulations and administrative procedures that will permit effective control of the import, export and manufacture of light weapons.

Members States will, with assistance from PCASED, the Executive Secretariat and multilateral and bilateral partners:

- review, update and harmonize national legislation and regulations on light weapons bearing on civilian possession, use and transfer;
- apply legal instruments, such as export and import permits and end-user certificates;
- harmonize different national legislation with a view to developing a regional convention on light weapons that would relate to the control and reduction as well as humanitarian law issues;
- set up or strengthen National Commissions that would develop strategies and policies relating to small arms diffusion, and coordinate the relevant technical services. Member States shall transmit to the

ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and PCASED the names and addresses of members of their national commissions thus established.

In order to meet the above objectives, PCASED shall:

- initiate a comprehensive study of the legislative and regulatory instruments relative to light weapons in the subregion;
- organize, in conjunction with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat and bilateral and multilateral partners, workshops and training sessions on legislative drafting and harmonizations;
- work with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat on the adoption of a regional convention to regulate arms flows within ECOWAS.

Member States can draw inspiration from similar initiatives such as:

- the Declaration of Principles in the context of firearms control and trans-national organized crime (ECOSOC);
- the “European Union Programme on Preventing and Combatting Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms (1997);
- the OAS “Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials (1997);
- the 1997 Ottawa “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction”.

Activities relative to the review and harmonization of national laws and administrative procedures should commence without delay and should be a continuous process throughout the lifespan of project.

#### **VIII. MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR PCASED OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

For PCASED to succeed, it must be assured of adequate and constant financial, moral and political support.

Member States and their bilateral and multilateral partners, along with the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, PCASED and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa shall endeavour to mobilize the necessary resources to:

- sustain the PCASED activities as presently defined; and
- provide a foundation for sustaining this light weapons diffusion control initiative beyond the initial lifespan of PCASED.

Continued resource mobilization will be carried out through an active awareness and public relations campaign designed to publicize PCASED's achievements and needs.

Bilateral and multilateral assistance will be sought to enable work to begin on this important aspect without delay.

#### **IX. ENLARGING MEMBERSHIP OF THE MORATORIUM**

The Moratorium regime will enjoy even greater success with an enlarged membership of African States.

Other African countries are therefore encouraged to adhere to the Moratorium or to embark on similar initiatives.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Development in Africa will support OAU and ECOWAS efforts by providing non-ECOWAS African member States with regular information on the evolution of the Moratorium and involving them in its activities.

The Centre will initiate immediate action in this direction by establishing cooperation ties with other African subregional organizations.



**Table of Activities**

| Activities  | Responsibilities   | Expected Sponsors                                |
|---|--|--|
| Establishing a culture of peace<br>(Long-term process to be started as soon as possible)  | Member States<br>OAU<br>United Nations<br>Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat<br>Civil Society and women's organisations | Cooperation with other subregional organisations |
| Training programmes for military, security and police forces<br>(Permanent activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED)        | Member States<br>PCASED<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat  | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation           |
| Enhancing weapons controls at border posts<br>(Activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED. To be started as soon as possible) | Member States<br>PCASED  | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation           |

| Activities  | Responsibilities   | Expected Sponsors                      |
|---|--|--|
| Establishment of a database and regional arms register<br>(Permanent activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED. To be started immediately)                       | Member States<br>PCASED<br>United Nations<br>Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa   | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation |
| Collection and destruction of surplus and unauthorized weapons<br>(Activities to be started immediately. Results expected during the duration of the three-year Moratorium)           | Member States<br>PCASED<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat<br>Civil Society and women's organisations | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation |
| Facilitating dialogue with producers and suppliers (Wassenaar Arrangements and others)<br>(Activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED. To be started immediately) | Member States<br>PCASED<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat  | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation |

| Activities   | Responsibilities   | Expected Sponsors  |
|--|--|--|
| Review and harmonization of national legislation and administrative procedures<br>(Activities to be carried out throughout the duration of the project. To be started immediately) | Member States<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat<br>PCASED  | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation                     |
| Mobilizing resources for PCASED objectives and activities<br>(Activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED)  | Member States<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat<br>United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa        | Bilateral and multilateral cooperation                     |
| Enlarging membership of the Moratorium<br>(Activities to be carried out throughout the duration of PCASED)   | Member States<br>ECOWAS Executive Secretariat<br>OAU<br>United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa | Cooperation with other subregional organisations in Africa |

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

**(DRAFT)**

**CODE OF CONDUCT  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MORATORIUM  
ON THE IMPORTATION, EXPORTATION AND  
MANUFACTURE OF LIGHT WEAPONS**

Bamako, 25 March 1999

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),

REAFFIRMING our declaration of 31 October 1998 of a Moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons for a period of three years renewable, effective from 1 November 1998,

AWARE of the compelling need to encourage and promote actions to support the effective application of the Moratorium,

CONVINCED that observance of the Moratorium can best be achieved through transparency and concerted effort, and that the establishment of a code of conduct is required for this purpose,

**Have hereby agreed as follows:**

**Article 1**

The ECOWAS member States shall respect this Code of Conduct so as to put into place the Moratorium agreed to in Abuja, Nigeria, on 31 October 1998.

**Article 2**

The Moratorium shall apply to the import, export and manufacture of light weapons as defined in the Annex to this document.

**Article 3**

Imports and exports of components and ammunitions shall be subject to strict control in accordance with the spirit of the Moratorium.

**Article 4**

Member States shall harmonize and adopt the regulatory and administrative measures necessary for exercising control of cross-border transactions with regard to light weapons or components and ammunition relating to them. They shall train the law and order and customs, water resources and forestry officials required to put such regulatory and administrative measures into effect. For this purpose, PCASED, in partnership with ECOWAS Executive

Secretariat, will facilitate the provision of the assistance that member States may require in this regard.

#### **Article 5**

In order to promote and ensure coordination of concrete measures for the effective implementation of the Moratorium at national level, member States shall establish national commissions made up of representatives of the relevant authorities and Civil Society.

#### **Article 6**

The ECOWAS Executive Secretary, with the assistance of PCASED, shall organize assessment missions to member States to ascertain that existing national arms production is reduced and brought to a halt in conformity with the spirit of the Moratorium. The Executive Secretary shall submit a feedback report to the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

#### **Article 7**

All member States wishing to adhere to the Moratorium shall show transparency by providing the ECOWAS Executive Secretary with pertinent information. They shall therefore, on an annual basis, provide the Executive Secretary with information regarding any components and ammunition on order, and any cross-border transactions with regard to weapons that are subject to the Moratorium. The Executive Secretary shall include all such information available to him in his annual report to the Authority of Heads of State and Government.

#### **Article 8**

At the beginning of international peace operations within the ECOWAS zone, all dedicated light weapons and ammunition shall be declared to the ECOWAS Secretariat so as to enable their effective control as well as removal upon completion of the operation.

**Article 9**

In the context of peace accords or the completion of international peace operations, member States shall, with the assistance of PCASED, ECOWAS, the United Nations, other international organisations and non-governmental organisations, carry out a systematic collection of destruction of all light weapons that are not required for the purpose of national security and are therefore to be considered as surplus weapons.

**Article 10**

If member States have valid reasons to request an exemption from the Moratorium in order to meet legitimate national security needs, such a request shall be forwarded to the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat. The ECOWAS Executive Secretariat shall then circulate the request to member States, on a no objection basis. Should a member State object, the request would then be referred to the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council.

The ECOWAS Secretariat shall issue confirmation that ECOWAS member States have been consulted. The document shall accompany the export licence application together with other required documentation on end-use as requested by the national procedures of arms-exporting states.

**Article 11**

Arms brought into any ECOWAS territory by visitors are to be declared upon entry. The competent authorities in the country concerned shall issue visitors, upon arrival, with an entry permit for such arms. An exit certificate shall be issued on their departure from the country.

**Article 12**

ECOWAS member States shall engage external arms producers and suppliers as well as relevant international organisations to cooperate with PCASED and the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat to ensure adherence to the Moratorium provisions.

**Article 13**

Participation in the Moratorium regime may be extended to other interested African States. The ECOWAS Executive Secretary shall take all necessary measures to encourage OAU member States to adopt the Moratorium and shall work with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa to facilitate the extension of the Moratorium to all African States and shall lend active support to all small arms control initiatives.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS CODE OF CONDUCT IN TWO ORIGINALS IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH, BOTH TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.



**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

**CODE OF CONDUCT  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MORATORIUM  
ON THE IMPORTATION, EXPORTATION AND MANUFACTURE OF LIGHT WEAPONS**

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),

REAFFIRMING our declaration of 31 October 1998 of a Moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons for a period of three years renewable, effective from 1 November 1998,

RECALLING AHG/DEC.137(XXXV) on the proliferation, illegal circulation and traffic of light weapons adopted by the 35<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the OAU Conference of Heads of State and Government held in Algiers, Algeria in July 1999,

AWARE of the compelling need to encourage and promote actions to support the effective application of the Moratorium,

CONVINCED that observance of the Moratorium can best be achieved through transparency and concerted effort, and that the establishment of a Code of Conduct is required for this purpose,

**Have hereby agreed as follows:**

**Article 1      Binding Nature of the Code of Conduct**

The ECOWAS member States shall abide by this Code of Conduct in order to implement the Moratorium signed in Abuja, Nigeria on October 31, 1998.

**Article 2      Scope of Moratorium**

The Moratorium shall apply to the import, export and manufacture of light weapons as defined in Annex I to this Code of Conduct.

**Article 3      Ammunition and Components**

Import, export and manufacture of components and ammunition for the light weapons defined in Annex I shall also be subject to strict control in accordance with the spirit of the Moratorium. References to weapons or arms in this Code of Conduct shall be deemed to include ammunition and components.

**INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS****Article 4 Member States**

In order to promote and ensure coordination of concrete measures for effective implementation of the Moratorium at national level, member States shall establish National Commissions, made up of representatives of the relevant authorities and Civil Society. The ECOWAS Executive Secretariat shall prepare guidelines to assist the member States in the establishment of their National Commissions.

**Article 5 ECOWAS Executive Secretariat**

1. Structures, staff and procedures shall be established within the ECOWAS Secretariat in order to:
  - (a) Assist member States' implementation of the Moratorium;
  - (b) Monitor compliance;
  - (c) Report progress to the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government at regular intervals.
  
2. Such structures and procedures may include:
  - (a) The initial establishment of four Zonal Observation Bureaux;
  - (b) Missions to member States to ascertain that existing national arms production is brought to a halt in conformity with the spirit of the Moratorium;
  - (c) Obtaining external funding and technical assistance to support Moratorium-related activities.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MECHANISMS****Article 6 Information Exchange**

In order to increase transparency, member States shall provide the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat an annual report on the ordering or procurement of weapons, components and ammunition covered by the Moratorium, both from national and international sources. The ECOWAS Secretariat with the assistance of PCASED shall develop an arms register as a confidence-building

measure, with the intention of developing an electronic database of all legitimate stocks of weapons, ammunition and components covered by the Moratorium. Member States shall provide all necessary information to the arms register and database. The Executive Secretary shall include all this information in his annual report to the Heads of States and Government.

**Article 7            Harmonisation of Legislation and  
Administrative Measures**

Member States shall harmonise and adopt the regulatory and administrative measures necessary for exercising control of cross border transactions with regard to light weapons, components and ammunition relating to them. They shall train the law and order, immigration, licensing, customs, water resources and forestry officials required to put such regulatory and administrative measures into effect. The ECOWAS Secretariat will provide the necessary assistance that members States may require for this purpose. The ECOWAS Secretariat shall in this regard, request appropriate assistance of PCASED.

**Article 8            Peace Operations Weapons Register**

At the beginning of international peace operations within and outside the ECOWAS zone, all dedicated light weapons and ammunition shall be declared to the ECOWAS Secretariat so as to enable their effective control as well as removal upon completion of the operation.

**Article 9            Exemptions**

1. Member States may seek an exemption from the Moratorium in order to meet legitimate national security needs or international peace operations requirements. Such requests for exemptions shall be forwarded to the Executive Secretariat, which shall assess them against criteria developed with the technical assistance of PCASED.
2. The Executive Secretariat shall circulate the request to member States. Provided there are no objections, the Executive Secretariat shall issue a certificate confirming member States' assent. The document shall accompany the export licence application, together with other documentation on end-use as required by arms-exporting states. Should

a member State object, the request for exemption shall be referred to the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council.

3. Exemptions may be granted to permit individual ownership of a single weapon in categories 1, 2 and 3A of Annex 1 for hunting or sporting purposes. Applications for such exemptions shall be processed by National Commissions and *recommended* to the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat for approval. The Executive Secretariat, with the technical support of PCASED shall develop and issue guidelines to National Commissions on the exemptions procedure.

#### **Article 10      Visitor Certificates**

Member States shall introduce arrangements requiring visitors to apply in advance if they wish to bring arms covered by the Moratorium into any ECOWAS territory, and to declare such arms on entry. If entry is approved, the competent authorities shall issue visitors with an entry certificate on arrival, and an exit certificate on departure. A register shall be kept of all such certificates.

#### **OPERATIONAL ASPECTS**

#### **Article 11      Intra- and Inter-State Cooperation**

The ECOWAS Executive Secretariat with the assistance of PCASED and in partnership with National Commissions, shall develop procedures for inter-state cooperation between customs, law and order, and all other relevant officials involved in monitoring and implementing the Moratorium; and shall submit them for approval by member States. The Executive Secretariat shall also, with the assistance of PCASED and in collaboration with member States, develop guidelines for intra-State cooperation between these officials. The Executive Secretariat shall facilitate and obtain assistance for the training of officials in intra- and inter-state cooperation.

#### **Article 12      Enhancing Border Controls**

The Executive Secretariat, in conjunction with member States and with the assistance of PCASED, will develop more effective border control

mechanisms, including improved equipment, and training and cooperation of customs and other border officials.

#### **Article 13      Collection and Destruction of Surplus Weapons**

Member States shall in collaboration with the Executive Secretariat, PCASED and other relevant international organisations, carry out a systematic collection, registration and destruction of all weapons, ammunition and components covered by the Moratorium that are surplus to national security requirements, were under illegal possession or collected in the context of peace accords or upon completion of international peace operations.

#### **PROMOTION AND EXPANSION**

#### **Article 14      Public Relations and Outreach**

The Executive Secretariat shall, in collaboration with member States, and PCASED, develop and implement an Information Strategy in support of the Moratorium, incorporating and building on the activities already underway. The strategy will enhance understanding of and support for the Moratorium within the ECOWAS region, throughout Africa, and among international organisations and potential external funding partners.

#### **Article 15      Resource Mobilisation**

The Executive Secretariat, in partnership with PCASED, will develop and implement a Resource Mobilisation Strategy, in order to secure long term financial support for the Moratorium, and to enhance transparency and good financial management of resources.

#### **Article 16      Dialogue with suppliers and producers**

The Executive Secretariat and individual member States shall engage in dialogue with national and international arms producers and suppliers as well as relevant international organisations, in order to secure their support for and adherence to the spirit and the letter of the Moratorium. PCASED shall assist in this effort.

**Article 17      Expansion of Moratorium**

Participation in the Moratorium regime may be extended to other interested African States. The ECOWAS Executive Secretary shall take all necessary measures to encourage other OAU member States to adopt the Moratorium and shall work with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa to facilitate this.

IN FAITH WHEREOF WE THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES HAVE SIGNED THIS CODE OF CONDUCT IN THREE ORIGINALS IN ENGLISH, FRENCH AND PORTUGUESE, ALL TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.

Done at Lomé, this 10<sup>th</sup> December 1999.

.....  
H.E. Mathieu KEREKOU  
President of the Republic of  
Benin

.....  
H.E. Blaise COMPAORE  
President of FASO  
Chairman, Council of Ministers of  
Burkina Faso

.....  
Hon. Alexandre Dias MONTEIRO  
Minister of Commerce, Industry  
and Energy  
For and on behalf of the  
President of Cabo Verde

.....  
H.E. Henri Konan BEDIE  
President of the Republic of  
Côte d'Ivoire

.....  
H.E. Mrs Isatou NJIE-SAIDY  
Vice-President,  
Secretary of State for Health,  
Labour, Social Welfare and  
Women's Affairs  
For and on behalf of the  
President of the Republic of  
Gambia

.....  
H.E. Flt.-Lt. Jerry John  
RAWLINGS  
President of the Republic of  
Ghana

.....  
Hon. Zaïnoul Abidine SANOUSSI  
Minister of Foreign Affairs in the  
President's Office  
For and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Guinea

.....  
Hon. José Pereira BATISTA  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and  
International Cooperation  
For and on behalf of the President  
of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

.....  
Hon. Enoch DOGOLEAH  
Vice-President  
For and on behalf of the  
President of the Republic of  
Liberia

.....  
H.E. Alpha Oumar KONARÉ  
President of the Republic of Mali

.....  
Hon. Sidi Mohamed Ould  
BOUBACAR  
Minister, Secretary-General at the  
Presidency  
For and on behalf of the President  
of the Islamic Republic of  
Mauritania

.....  
H.E. Squadron Leader Daouda  
Malam WANKE  
President of the Council for  
National Reconciliation, Head of  
State of the Republic of Niger



.....  
H.E. Olusegun OBASANJO  
President, Commander-in-Chief  
of the Armed Forces of the  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

.....  
H.E. Abdou DIOUF  
President of the Republic of  
Senegal

.....  
H.E. Ahmad Tejan KABBAH  
President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

.....  
H.E. Gnassingbé EYADEMA  
President of the Togolese  
Republic

**West African Civil Society Workshop on the Moratorium  
Bamako, Mali, 22-23 March 1999**

**PLAN OF ACTION  
FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND NGO NETWORKS**

Representatives of 25 Civil Society groups from eight West African countries gathered in a consultation in Bamako, Mali, on 22 and 23 March 1999 in support of the West African Moratorium on Light Weapons and its implementation. The consultation reviewed actions taken by Civil Society in support of disarmament and the creation of a culture of peace, and proposed future actions to speed up the process which received a monumental boost by the signing of the West African Moratorium in Abuja on 31 October 1998.

The consultation delivered a message to the Foreign Ministers' meeting on the occasion of the launch of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) as part of the West African Moratorium on Light Weapons. The message underlined the importance of good relationship between governments and Civil Society groups in pursuance of the implementation of PCASED. It further urged the Governments to take a number of concrete actions.

The representatives undertook to build networks on national, regional and international levels. Flow of information and the need for research was emphasized. Principles and mechanisms of these networks were discussed, and the following action points were agreed upon.

#### **NATIONAL LEVEL**

*In respect of Civil Society*

Participants undertake to:

1. Sensitize Civil Society organisations to make the implementation of the Moratorium and the campaign against small arms as part of their individual activities.
2. Create a national network on small arms to be made up of national and community-based organisations.
3. Encourage Civil Society groups, including women's groups, religious and traditional leaders to ensure that their work includes both traditional and modern experiences.

4. Make the spirit and content of the West African Moratorium known and understood among the people, through the use of the media (radio, TV, newspapers), posters, stickers, cultural events, and songs on disarmament and the culture of peace.

*In respect of Governments*

Participants uncall on Governments to:

1. Ensure cooperation, collaboration and working together in the implementation and monitoring of the Moratorium.
2. Build an alliance for peace, including members of Parliaments, women's organisations, youth groups, business communities and opposition parties.
3. Government signatories to the Moratorium, to begin without delay, the implementation of the Moratorium and other programmes necessary to combat the proliferation of small arms.
4. Ensure that their parliaments adopt the necessary legislation and administrative structures for the effective implementation of the Moratorium.
5. Work with the government to take immediate actions to collect and destroy excess weapons. In this work different modes and mechanisms should be applied, including the active participation of local communities and traditional leaders.

**REGIONAL LEVEL**

*In respect of NGOs*

Participants undertake to:

1. Convene a conference of Civil Society organisations to create the West Africa Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this regard, a coordinating committee to organize the conference and undertake

preliminary activities is hereby established. Its membership includes all participating countries in this consultation.

2. Continue working with the ECOWAS secretariat on the promotion of the Moratorium.
3. Develop a training programme for small arms/light weapons issues. In this regard training of trainers and development of a manual/curriculum should be given priority.
4. Celebrate a week with focus on small arms and the Moratorium during the next ECOWAS summit.

*In respect of Governments*

1. Participants call on ECOWAS and OAU to intensify their involvement of Civil Society organisations in all aspects of their work in the implementation and expansion of the Moratorium.

**INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

1. Participants call for the participation of all Civil Society organisations and national networks in the efforts for the creation of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) which is to be launched in May 1999.
2. Participants call on active generous contribution of resources necessary for implementation of the Moratorium and other disarmament programmes under PCASED and Civil Society groups.
3. Participants call for development support to governments which actively and seriously implement the Moratorium.

**MESSAGE FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION  
Bamako, 22-23 March 1999**

**TO THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING, 24 MARCH 1999, ON THE LAUNCHING OF THE  
PROGRAMME FOR COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE FOR SECURITY AND  
DEVELOPMENT (PCASED)**

Representatives of 25 Civil Society groups from eight West African countries have been gathered in a consultation in Bamako, Mali, on 22 and 23 March 1999 in support of the West African Moratorium on Light Weapons and its implementation. The consultation reviewed actions taken by Civil Society in support of disarmament and the creation of a culture of peace, and proposed future actions to speed up the process which received a monumental boost by the signing of the West African Moratorium in Abuja on 31 October 1998.

The consultation took account of a number of Civil Society meetings held in the region, including in Accra, Ghana, in September 1998, where representatives of churches and christian councils from the region met and an NGO consultation which took place in Abuja in October 1998 alongside the ECOWAS summit that adopted the Moratorium.

The consultations pledged the unflinching support of Civil Society for the effective implementation and monitoring of the Moratorium, in collaboration with State authorities in their efforts in this direction. West African Civil Society have since welcomed with satisfaction the historic adoption of the Moratorium.

In Bamako we reviewed the important future plans in many countries to raise awareness in support of the Moratorium and its implementation mechanisms, and ongoing efforts to create a West African network of Civil Society groups.

As representatives of Civil Society, we see the urgency of the human suffering caused by the uncontrolled ongoing proliferation of small arms within our region. We note that the Moratorium is already six months old. We have no time to lose in making the agreement a reality. We hear worrying reports that many ECOWAS member States have not made their security sectors nor other relevant government institutions aware of the existence of the Moratorium as signed by their Heads of State. We therefore, on behalf of our communities, urge our Governments to:

1. Move, without delay, into the vigorous implementation of the Moratorium as adopted in Abuja, and to actively support and promote the priorities and programmes of PCASED.

2. Include Civil Society groups in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the PCASED programmes. Modalities should be found to accommodate local realities, but without changing the importance of a constructive relationship between governments and Civil Society on local, national and regional levels. PCASED should continuously make its plans and actions known, and propose how national commissions and committees, and national and regional networks may work with it.
3. Work tirelessly with local and national media and Civil Society groups to make the content and mechanisms of the Moratorium and PCASED known to the wider communities in our countries. A systematic awareness-building is necessary to create the ownership which is needed to make implementation realistic.
4. Welcome and encourage Civil Society plans of action on local, national and regional levels. The Civil Society, including religious groups, media, business and labour organisations has outreach to wide varieties of people who are key to the local work for disarmament, and the creation of the environment for development and a culture of peace. We call on the Governments to see the Civil Society plans as complementary to their own efforts in our joint efforts to create a culture of peace.
5. Review and establish proper laws and administrative structures to exercise effective control over arms ownership and over the import and export of arms. Without such laws and policies, it is impossible to separate legal from illegal gun transfer and ownership.
6. Take immediate actions to collect and destroy excess weapons. This should be achieved through a mix of development and peace-building. It is essential that collected weapons and ammunition are not recycled, but destroyed.
7. Initiate comprehensive security reform, including training of security personnel, such as military, police and customs officers. Civil Society groups should be fully involved in this process to ensure that the reforms undertaken are as democratic and responsive to community needs as possible.



8. Introduce proper control measures, including border crossing controls of weapons, airport and port control mechanisms and equipment.

The participants want to extend the appreciation to the people and Government of Mali for their hospitality and cooperation in connection with this consultation. Participants finally appreciate the consistent diplomatic, moral and financial support from the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT).

**BAMAKO DECLARATION FOR PEACE  
BY THE WOMEN OF WEST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY**

Considering the terrible effects produced by the phenomenon of proliferation of small arms and light weapons on the most vulnerable strata of society, particularly women and children, who are the first victims of the spread of this culture of violence which runs counter to our cultural values,

Bearing in mind the immense hope raised by the moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms and light weapons declared by the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS in Abuja on 31 October 1998,

Considering the resolve affirmed by Civil Society in Abuja to contribute to the drive for peace reflected in the mechanism of the moratorium and the PCASED,

Considering the leading role of women in strengthening peace in society, a role which highlights our skills in the fields of consultation, dialogue, the lowering of tension and solidarity,

We, women of West African Civil Society, gathered together on the fringes of the meeting of experts and Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS,

Firmly reaffirm our resolve to contribute to efforts to combat the illicit and uncontrolled possession of small arms and light weapons,

Urge the political authorities of our various countries:

1. To strive to enforce and respect the Moratorium which they so solemnly adopted in Abuja;
2. To acknowledge the major and vital contribution made by women in instituting a culture of peace in our subregion and the consequent need for their firm commitment to dependable support and open cooperation with the women's organisations working in this area.

May this partnership enable women to demonstrate their commitment and talents in the service of peace.

Bamako, 23 March 1999