

KENYA'S RESPONSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL'S REQUEST FOR VIEWS ON INTERRELATION BETWEEN ARMED VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Kenya is privileged to be a member of the Core- Group spearheading the principles and goals of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The country is indeed pleased to have been selected as one of the pilot countries for a study and implementation on the integration of Armed Violence with Development.

Kenya recognizes the nexus between Security and Development that member States highlighted at the 2005 UN World Summit on development, security human rights and reform. This linkage needs to be emphasized in order to encourage the inclusion of measures to reduce Armed Violence in National Development Strategies. The Government in collaboration with other States and non-governmental organizations has remained committed to implementing this Declaration. Programmes and activities in line with this Declaration have been implemented at the local, national, regional and international level through various strategies.

Among the key plans and strategies put in place are: the Economic Recovery Strategy for Employment and Wealth Creation (ERS), and Vision 2030. Kenya's Vision 2030 is an economic development plan that aims at producing annual economic growth rates of 10%. It envisages a "society free from danger and fear." One of the key

foundations of the Vision is security of the individual and property. Indeed, freedom from danger (example the protection from physical or direct violence), and freedom from fear (i.e. a sense of safety and overall well-being) provide an enabling environment for individuals, investments and business to thrive. The Vision thus recognises that safety and security are vital enablers of the country's political, social and economic development

The plan acknowledges that the democratic provision of safety and security and the prevention of violent conflict are crucial to good governance and to long-term development and poverty reduction. Widespread insecurity, high levels of crime, inter-communal conflicts, and Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) proliferation are acknowledged as impacting negatively on Kenya's peace and development.

In implementation of the Vision, the First Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2008-2012 has been developed for phase one. It incorporates the activities of the Report of the National Accord Implementation Committee on National Reconciliation and Emergency Social and Economic Recovery. In addition to these strategy is the National Accord and Reconciliation Agreement (NARA) that the government is keen to implement. At a global level, Kenya is committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's).

Context Analysis

In Kenya, resort to violence is fuelled by political and socio-economic factors. For instance the increase in armed violence in most of the pastoralists' communities is catalyzed by proliferation of SALW, cattle rustling practices, banditry, competition for pasture and water as well as limited presence of administrative structures. This has had a direct bearing on poverty and under development.

Organized criminal gangs both in urban and rural areas remain a big challenge to peace, security and development in Kenya. There are various factors that have contributed to this phenomenon. Among these is the involvement of youths in armed violence. Socio-economic factors such as unemployment, sectarian and traditional factors that have seen a number of organized gangs maiming their kith and kin. The problem is complicated by easy availability and access to illicit SALW. More so, it poses challenges to the security apparatus whose capacity in addressing the problem has been overstretched.

The impact of armed violence on sustainable development in Kenya has been more evident recently. For instance, following the post-election violence arising from the 2007 disputed presidential election results, Kenya's economic development was adversely affected with an aggregate decline of growth rate from 7% in the year 2006 to below 3% growth rate in 2008 and 1.7% in 2009 although there are other contributing factors for this decline. Armed violence has also perpetuated unemployment, limited opportunities for job creation, and

other forms of investment in key sectors such as tourism, infrastructure and agriculture thus having an overall negative impact on the country's growth.

Measures to address armed violence

Security Sector Reforms (SSR) The Government has partnered with local, national and international non- governmental and civil society organizations to undertake various initiatives at the local, national and regional levels with a view to address the issue of armed violence. The Government is committed to Security Sector Reforms (SSR) aimed at ensuring citizens' security concerns are addressed while protecting their fundamental rights and freedoms. In particular, efforts have been made to deepen police reforms including double in-takes into the police recruitment establishment of more police divisions, stations and posts. The government has established a national Police reform Task force to implement various reforms aimed at improving service provision by Kenya's law enforcement agencies.

Youth and Development

The government of Kenya has prioritized youth empowerment through vocational training and has created opportunities for youth access to education. Local youth polytechnics have been revived across the country to accommodate more youth in enterprise and business skills training. The Free Primary Education (FPE) programme has been intensified to absorb more youth. More recently, the *Kazi Kwa Vijana* (Employment for Youth) programme was launched with a view to turn

the negative energies of the youth into positive and constructive energies.

Institutional Development

Various institutions have been established to coordinate peace initiatives and SALW control at the local, national and regional levels. These include the National Steering Committee on Peace building and Conflict Management (NSC) and the Kenya National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons (KNFP). At the community level, District Peace Committees (DPC's) and Task Forces as well as community policing committees have been established in most Districts to address these issues. Regionally, Kenya is signatory to the Conflict Early Warning and Response (CEWARN) Mechanism and has ratified the CEWARN Protocol. This is an early warning and response mechanism within the IGAD arrangement that aims at addressing armed violence in the Karamoja and Somalia clusters in northern parts of the country.

SALW control and management

The Government of Kenya has enhanced public awareness on the negative effects of conflicts and use of illicit SALW. Through these interventions, an estimated 23,000 assorted illicit firearms and 50,000 ammunitions have been destroyed by burning over the last 5 years. The government has also stepped up the marking of all state owned firearms line with Best Practice and Guidelines of the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPOA).

Regional cooperation

Kenya is a signatory to a number of regional protocols and agreements regarding small arms and conflict management. Examples of these are the Nairobi Declaration on SALW, Nairobi Protocol, a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism Protocol, (CEWARN) for Intergovernmental Authority on Development IGAD, UN Programme of Action on Small Arms (UNPoA), and the Ottawa Convention to ban Land mines among others. The Government has ratified and domesticated most of these instruments, as a sign of political commitment and goodwill. In addition Kenya hosts the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) that brings together 13 countries within the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa. This depicts Kenya's commitment to addressing the problem of proliferation of illicit SALW not only in the region but also in the international system.

Kenya's signature to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in Oslo, Norway in December 2008 is a clear indication of its commitment to support efforts aimed at limiting the indiscriminate effects to civilians of Cluster Munitions as areas affected are not suitable for economic development and growth. The Convention provides a vital link to these other existing Conventions and strengthens their role in limiting the proliferation of weapons and enable development in areas affected after clearance.

Kenya is strongly involved in the Arms trade treaty (ATT). It provided views on the Draft Parameters, Scope, and Feasibility and is an active member of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). The government continues to work very closely with the Civil Society and UN agencies under the stewardship of UNDP and Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) to address armed violence and development. Among the CSO's working in Kenya on small arms issues are Oxfam, PeaceNet, Saferworld, Kenya Action Network on Small Arms (KANSA), Africa Peace Forum and Security Research information Centre (SRIC). These have been working together to consolidate national, regional and international action on SALW, notably their support to the Arms Trade Treaty process and engagement with Group of Government Experts.

Kenya government has implemented international conventions and agreements, which address issues related to armed violence and development. At the regional level, the East Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) has been instrumental in steering the process for the development of a draft protocol on Cattle Rustling. Again, consultative meetings between the Defence Chiefs and Ministers in charge of defence have also been enhanced in the eastern Africa region. Further, in an effort to strengthen cross-border collaboration and information exchange, Kenya and Uganda have positioned liaison officers on both sides of the border. Kenya encourages the facilitation of cross-border peace dialogue with her neighbours.

Major Challenges

Kenya is faced with a series of challenges that impede the interventions in armed violence reduction. First and foremost is the high unemployment rate especially among the youth who constitute over 60% of the entire population. This is compounded by the rising poverty levels among the general population. Further, is the problem of drug and substance abuse among the youth that often result in changing trends in crime. The resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs') also remains a major challenge in most parts of the country. Political instability among the neighbouring countries also poses serious challenges to Kenya's initiatives towards armed violence reduction. Nonetheless, efforts have been put in place to address these challenges.

Recommendations

To effectively address armed violence in Kenya a number of recommendations are made for consideration:

- (i) Harmonized funding framework for armed violence reduction and development initiatives
- (ii) Strengthening the capacities of various stakeholders.
- (iii) Enhanced international support to ensure national reforms efforts are implemented in relation to promote good governance, rule of law and accountability.
- (iv) The need for the harmonization of policy and legislation that will promote a co-ordinated approach to armed violence reduction and development.

- (v) Strengthened awareness raising and education on issues of armed violence reduction, peace building, conflict management and small arms reduction.
- (vi) Strengthening regional and sub-regional interventions and frameworks on armed violence reduction such as the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA).
- (vii) Establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation reporting mechanisms in relation to the implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Armed violence and development.

Conclusion

Noting that governments are responsible for guaranteeing the security of their citizens, and that the Declaration includes a commitment to promote sustainable security and a culture of peace by taking action to reduce armed violence and its negative impact on socio-economic and human development, it is imperative that States take measures to address the problem. In submitting our views on the interrelation between Armed Violence and Development, Kenya believes that it's a positive step towards a noble cause. Kenya is committed in the implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Armed violence and development.