



2006 Conference to Review Progress Made in Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons  
New York, June 30, 2006

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**"The Role of Hunting in International Development Activities"**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to address the Parties today. My name is Rick Parsons and I speak to you today on behalf of sportsmen and women around the globe. I am here to highlight the important role hunting plays in international development and to help prevent each of you from taking an action that could inadvertently interfere with your pledge to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Hunting plays an important role in International Development

All 191 UN Member States have pledged to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015. Member States have agreed to work towards 1) the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, 2) the creation of a global partnership for development and 3) ensuring environmental sustainability.

I believe that every person in this room will acknowledge that some of the world's poorest countries are also the most biodiversity rich. The sustainable use of biodiversity is vital to the economic development of capital-poor countries. The trade and use of biodiversity generates revenues that fund basic needs like farming equipment, education, medical clinics, roads, food storage facilities and electricity.

Communally managed hunting programs, developed with the input and expertise of indigenous persons, are lauded as some of the most successful natural resource programs of their kind by experts in international development. Words cannot begin to describe the way these hunting programs have changed the lives of those widely recognized as the most disadvantaged and marginalized people in the world.

The Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resource Areas, also known as CAMPFIRE, operates in some of the poorest communities in Zimbabwe. The annual per capita income in these communities is less than US \$35. The CAMPFIRE program is built on a philosophy of sustainable rural development and enables indigenous communities to manage and benefit directly from wildlife and other resources. CAMPFIRE generates profits by providing hunting opportunities to foreign hunters. The fees generated by big game hunts stay in local villages and the communities use

these resources to build infrastructures like schools, clinics and clean water facilities. The communities also distribute a small portion of the hunting-generated revenues to households to be

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used for what they believe are luxury goods. The amount received by an individual in a year is often less than US \$5 — an amount that is miniscule in our daily lives but to a Zimbabwean villager that \$5 can be life changing.

Programs like CAMPFIRE exist in many states in Africa such as Zambia's ADMADE program and Botswana and Namibia's Communal Resources Management Programs. These programs change lives and play an important role in the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals -- they reduce poverty, they ensure environmental sustainability and they are an important tool of international development. Mr. Chair, *these programs all rely on hunting and on the participation of foreign hunters. These programs cannot continue unless the foreign hunters who bring the revenues to these programs are able to retain the flexibility to travel with their lawfully owned firearms.* If you inadvertently establish barriers to the role of these foreign hunters, you will undermine your own goals of eradicating poverty and hunger, creating a global partnership and ensuring environmental sustainability.

The Organization of American States Firearms Protocol acknowledges the need to facilitate the international activities of hunters and sport shooters as follows:

"Recognizing that states have developed different cultural and historical uses for firearms, and that the purpose of enhancing international cooperation to eradicate illicit transnational trafficking in firearms is not intended to discourage or diminish lawful leisure or recreational activities such as travel or tourism for sport shooting, hunting, and other forms of lawful ownership and use recognized by the States Parties."

In your continuing efforts you must make certain to explicitly recognize the Parties' wishes to neither discourage nor diminish lawful hunting and shooting sports activities. If you do not, you will place in dire risk the very programs that enrich the lives of indigenous persons worldwide — the very programs that accomplish those goals you have set out to achieve.

Mr. Chair, I respectfully request that legitimate firearm owners, hunters and competition shooters receive a similar acknowledgement from this meeting, that they are indeed equal and recognized stakeholders in efforts against illicit trafficking in small arms.

Thank you.