



Safari Club International

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to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action**
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Statement by Sezaneh Seymour,
Safari Club International

“Hunters and Shooters – Numbers and Economic Impact”

Mr. Chairman, I would like to first thank you for the opportunity to address the Parties today. My name is Sezaneh Seymour and I would like to take a few moments to discuss both the large numbers of hunters and shooters throughout the world and highlight positive contributions of hunters around the globe.

Number of hunters and shooters

According to the Swiss Small Arms Survey, over 377 million small arms are legally owned by civilians. These civilians are hunters and sport shooters who very clearly play an important conservation and economic role around the world. Mr. Chairman, these are not the people UN efforts should focus upon. I believe this issue was properly resolved in another international forum and I shall return to that at the conclusion of my remarks.

Hunting has a major impact on economies as it generates substantial revenues

Each year hunters contribute billions of dollars to economies around the world, support hundreds of thousands of jobs, pay billions of dollars in taxes and contribute billions of dollars to wildlife conservation worldwide.¹

This brief speech can do no more than refer to a very few examples. At the 2004 African Wildlife Consultative Forum in Sun City, Tanzanian wildlife officials reported 8.8 million US dollars in revenues from hunting in 2003. Namibian wildlife officials reported 32 million US dollars in revenues generated from hunting in

¹ These figures represent a variety of spending: purchasing hunting supplies, renting hotels on hunting trips, purchasing licenses and permits, paying excise taxes on certain hunting equipment and donating to wildlife organizations (courtesy Southwick Associates, resource economics firm).

2003 and South Africa reported 41.4 million US dollars for the same period.² In the United States, annual spending by America's 14 million hunters amounts to 22.1 billion US dollars.³

Hunting is recognized by conservationists as one of the most effective mechanisms for conservation.

In Kyrgyzstan, the hunting of mountain sheep has provided an economic incentive to restore and protect the mountainous ecosystem from overgrazing by domestic sheep. As a result, the habitat for numerous species, not just mountain sheep, is being protected. This has been so successful that the populations of wild mountain sheep are now expanding, whereas 15 years ago there was grave concern for these same wild sheep populations.

In Zimbabwe, a village-based wildlife management program called CAMPFIRE generates profits by providing hunting opportunities to foreign hunters. The CAMPFIRE program is built on a philosophy of sustainable rural development and enables rural communities to manage, and benefit directly from, indigenous wildlife and other resources.⁴ Hunting fees generated through big game hunting stay in local villages – the locals eat the meat, and use the money to build schools, clinics, irrigation infrastructures, and to purchase electricity, clean water and maize grinding mills. It has been estimated by the World Wildlife Fund that the CAMPFIRE program increases villagers' household incomes by 15-25%.⁵ CAMPFIRE and other similar community-based resource management programs exist in several African countries. Without the foreign hunting revenues, small villages with little economic activity would be at a loss for some very basic needs.

The need for the international community to acknowledge hunters, shooters and legal firearms owners

Sustainable use and regulated hunting of wildlife are endorsed by The International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the world's oldest and largest conservation organization. In 2004, the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a set of guidelines for the sustainable use and hunting of wildlife.

But perhaps most relevant to the Parties today is the Organization of American States Firearms Protocol. The OAS Firearms Protocol recognizes hunters and sport shooters as follows:

² Amounts reported by respective countries at African Wildlife Consultative Forum annual meeting, August, 2004 in Sun City.

³ 2003 report, *Economic data on hunting in the US and California*. Courtesy IAFWA and USFWS

⁴ *The Rough Guide to Zimbabwe*, May, 2000

⁵ *The CAMPFIRE Program: Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe*, Feb 1999

“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”.

Mr. Chair, we respectfully request that the world's large number of 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.