



Yaounde, 02 June 2019

## PRESS RELEASE

### GLOBAL WEEK OF ACTION AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE, 02 – 09 JUNE 2019

On the occasion of the Global Week of Action against Gun Violence (WoA) holding from 2 – 9 June, 2019, the Cameroon Action Network on Small Arms (CANSA) in solidarity with the entire Cameroonian public is pleased to join the global civil society coalition in holding governments responsible for some of the commitments they have taken in the fight against the illicit proliferation and misuse of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The theme for this year's Week of Action is **"Rise up for humanity: Control the guns"**.

In a bid to curb the illicit proliferation of SALW in 2001 States of the United Nations agreed to an important framework for cooperation on small arms called the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA). Under the PoA, governments agreed to improve national small arms laws, import/export controls, and stockpile management, and to engage in cooperation and assistance.

In 2005, members adopted the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), which requires States to mark weapons properly and to keep records. Improving weapons tracing is now part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in Sustainable Development Goal 16.4.

In order to evaluate this programme, every six years a Review Conference is held at the UN Headquarters to review progress made in the implementation of the PoA and the ITI. The third Review Conference held from June 18 – 29, 2018 in New York with focus on weapons diversion strongly recommended the need for more efforts on the implementation of ITI.

In spite of the efforts being made by the UN and its member countries to eradicate the proliferation of SALW, the phenomenon remains and threatens world peace. Today, approximately 1 billion of such arms are in circulation and approximately 8 million more are produced annually by thousands of manufacturers around the world. In Central Africa, about 10,000 of these weapons are in circulation. In Cameroon, the proliferation of these weapons is on the rise as a result of the armed conflicts in the North and South West of Cameroon, the Boko Haram incursions in the Far North and the civil war in Central Africa.



Cameroon has ratified some of the international instruments regulating arms: The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) ratified in June 2018 and the Kinshasa Convention ratified in 2015. As part of the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention, Cameroon hosted the first Conference of States Parties (CSP) to the Convention from 11 to 13 June 2018. Among the outcomes of this conference was the call to accelerate the implementation of the Convention through the establishment of a permanent secretariat of the Convention and the establishment of a trust fund to finance the activities of the Convention.

**On this Global Week against Gun Violence, CANSA:**

- Denounces the armed violence that prevails in the North West, the South West, the Far North, Adamawa and the eastern regions of Cameroon;
- Denounces violence against women, girls and children in these areas;
- Supports the initiatives of the Government for the resolution of these crises and the return to peace;
- Calls on the government to accelerate the process of dialogue on the socio-political crisis rocking the North West and South West English speaking regions of Cameroon.
- Commend government efforts on the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention, the ATT and other relevant instruments ratified by Cameroon. These includes progress on the creation of a National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NatCom), the elaboration of a National Action Plan on SALW, and the steps taken to submit the national report on the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms, and the preparation of the ATT Initial Report.
- Salute government's collaborative spirit with the civil society on the implementation of an UNSCAR project on building the technical and operational capacities of 7 States Parties to the Kinshasa Convention on: the creation and management of National Commissions on SALW (NatCom), the elaboration of National Action Plans on SALW and the submission of PoA national reports.
- Reaffirms its willingness to support the Government in the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention and the ATT;
- Demonstrates solidarity with women and girls who are victims of armed violence in crisis areas.

*Done in Yaounde on 02 June 2019*

Signed:

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