

SOUTH SUDAN ACTION NETWORK ON SMALL ARMS

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on Small Arms

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arms Trade Treaty adopted by UN General Assembly will head to H.E President Salva Kiir for signature.

Press release

(JUBA) April 3, 2013 – Yesterday, the UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of an Arms Trade Treaty to regulate the annually 70 billion dollar arms trade.

The Arms Trade Treaty establishes the first ever, legally binding, common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms. With the treaty in force, exporting states will be required to conduct risk assessments before authorizing transfers of arms to recipient states. In case arms to be transferred run high risks to be used in the commission of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, arms transfers shall not be authorized.

Geoffrey L. Duke, National Coordinator of the South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms said; *“By adopting the Arms Trade Treaty, states have illustrated their earnestness and commitment to end the suffering caused by unregulated arms trade. For the millions of people struggling to survive under the shadows of the gun, there is finally a reason to smile.”*

“With the establishment of this treaty, now states cannot just sell arms to any willing buyer, who often includes militias and warlords. States must sell to, legitimate but also responsible users. The world finally has an instrument to hold arms sellers accountable to the impacts of their transfers. These are the new rules of the game. No more guns for atrocities”. Mr L. Duke added.

We commend the Government of the Republic of South Sudan for their commitment and support for a robust Arms Trade Treaty. This support was unequivocal in the first ATT conference that South Sudan attended as a UN member state, and that endured through the General Assembly vote yesterday. South Sudan is among the 154 states who voted “YES” for the adoption of the treaty at the UN General Assembly while only 3 states voted against the adoption of the treaty and 23 states abstained.

Marko Madut, Chairman of Warrap State Action Network on Small Arms said: *“Warrap state suffers immensely from cattle raiding and revenges perpetuated by arms in the hands of civilians. Having the Arms Trade Treaty signed will minimize spread and diversion of guns to civilian populations who use them to cause human rights violations increasing death tolls.”*

Local communities can only start perceiving the impacts of the treaty once effective implementation commenced. For this to happen soon, a swift entry into force is essential. The treaty requires 50 accessions for entry into force. As a country suffering daily with the problems associated with the illicit trafficking of arms, South Sudan needs this treaty urgently. It is a potentially suitable mechanism to hold accountable the parties that are responsible for arms flows that cause bloodshed and insecurity in South Sudan. We therefore, call upon the government of the Republic of South Sudan to be among the lead countries to sign the treaty when it opens for signatures on 3rd of June, 2013.

SSANSA is proud to have been part of the movement of civil society organizations from all over the world under the “The Control Arms Coalition” that worked for the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty.

SSANSA is a network of civil society organizations from over the 10 states of South Sudan united against gun violence in South Sudan.