



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development**

26 – 27 November 2014 | Nairobi, Kenya

Armed violence and conflicts are a cancer for development in Africa, said Ambassador Muburi of Kenya, in his closing remarks at the Regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development.

The two-day conference, held in Nairobi, Kenya, brought together more than 140 representatives from the Sub-Saharan Africa region to discuss how to achieve measurable reductions in armed violence, and improve development, both in the region and globally.

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to around fifteen percent of the world's population, yet experiences more than a quarter of all lethal violence. On average, almost 107,000 lives are claimed by lethal violence each year in Africa:

- In many countries in the region, data is scarce, and may not provide the full picture. In more than half of the countries in the region the measurement of lethal violence is based solely on estimates.
- Six out of seven victims of armed violence are killed outside of armed conflict. However, exposure to armed conflicts often translates into other forms of violence, such as intimate partner and domestic violence.

Armed violence not only destroys lives and damages communities, but also disrupts development. The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development is a diplomatic initiative—supported by 112 UN Member States—that encourages armed violence reduction and prevention (AVRP) as an essential component of development programmes.

The Regional Review Conference provided an opportunity to review progress to the implementation of the principles of the Geneva Declaration, emphasizing the need for a united approach involving governments, civil society, international organizations, and development cooperation agencies. Effective armed violence reduction and prevention involves tackling arms control, reforming security and justice institutions, and investing in youth, education, and alternative livelihoods.

The conference discussed how development needs to be considered alongside security when tackling armed violence. Putting people at the core of the debates, participants considered peace and security as cornerstones for any development process. At the international level, the ongoing process of negotiation on the framework that will succeed the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) offers an opportunity to put peace at the centre of multilateral development process. While the concerns of some countries still need to be considered, the discussion showed that clear progress has been done in the ability to measure peace and governance.

Referring to the Common African Position of the African Union Commission, many speakers and participants called for the inclusion of peace and security as a goal in the next development framework.

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