



**CTITF PROJECT
NATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP IN NIGERIA**

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(UNREC)**

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Venue: Abuja, Nigeria

Dear Ambassador ABDULKADIR

Dear Mr. BANKALE

Distinguished guests

Dear Participants,

I am very pleased to be with you all here today!

The illicit proliferation, circulation and misuse of Small Arms and Light Weapons (*SALW*) are widespread phenomenon in Africa. A number of countries are affected by its disastrous consequences. The resulting humanitarian crises constitute obstacles to socio- economic development and lead to increasing criminal and terrorist acts.

Islamist extremism has been affecting various parts of the African continent, including the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin area, which are growingly plagued by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram who regularly commit attacks against innocent civilians.

The illicit trafficking of firearms feeds the terrorism and organized crimes; creates severe challenges for peace, security and development. Terrorist groups active in Lake Chad Basin countries, such as in Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad, take advantage of the illicit proliferation, diversion and trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition to strengthen their capacities and means of destruction.

Recognizing these worrisome challenges, the United Nations Security Council, through resolution 2178 (2014) request countries, among others measures, to prevent the acquisition and diversion of weapons by terrorist groups. In this resolution, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (*UNODA*) has developed the Project "***Regional Support to the Counter-Terrorism Task Force (CTITF) in the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2178***". Its implementation has been entrusted to UNREC. The project includes two main stages of activities, which are

technical/legislative assistance, national and regional capacity-building. This national workshop is precisely under the capacity building component and demonstrates the United Nations support to weapons marking process in Nigeria.

The present training workshop in Abuja aims to reinforce capacities of the Nigerian authorities from various ministries in implementing international best practices for better implementation of the national weapons marking and management programme to secure national stocks, in addition to compliance with the relevant gun control legislation to which Nigeria is a State Party. We will also cover the content of a related training manual on International Small Arms Control standards developed by UNREC for this project, which PSSM Expert and Colonel Moussa will walk us through in detail. Prior to this training workshop, two other activities took place. In August 2016; UNREC, in collaboration with ECOWAS, organized a meeting of experts concerning "Improving cross-border cooperation for the control of SALW", which was attended by delegates from Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon. In January 2017, a Training of Trainers workshop, which is entitled "***Inter-institutional course on combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in Africa***", took place in Yaoundé, for which some of the participants here today have attended and will share their acquired knowledge and skills through presentations this afternoon.

Within this aforementioned context, UNREC supports Nigeria, along with other member states in Africa, in achieving the objectives related to its commitment to disarmament and arms control, including the registration, marking and tracing of SALW.

Lastly, it is worth noting that Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDG) emphasizes the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, including the net reduction by 2030 of arms trafficking and the fight against all forms of organized crime!

**Ladies and gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,**

I'm not going to conclude my remarks without paying tribute to the Government of Nigeria, which spares no effort in supporting the work of our Regional Centre. I would also like to thank the Government for having attached importance to this CTITF project and contributing actively in its implementation. In addition, please allow me to express gratitude also to the donors who have provided funding for the project.

Thank you for your kind attention!