



**Remarks by
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament
Affairs
Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu**

**On the Inauguration of the New Premises of UNREC
and
The Launch of Activities of the Arms-Marking Project in Togo and
Madagascar**



Lomé, Togo
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Monsieur le ministre de la Sécurité et de la Protection Civile du Togo,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Membres du Gouvernement,
Messieurs les Présidents des institutions de la République togolaise,
Monsieur le Représentant de l'Ambassade du Japon en Côte d'Ivoire et au Togo,
Mesdames et Messieurs les membres du Corps diplomatique et des organisations internationales accréditées au Togo,
Monsieur le Coordonnateur Résident du Système des Nations Unies au Togo,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Représentants des Agences des Nations Unies au Togo,
Autorités politiques, administratives, traditionnelles et militaires,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Partenaires techniques et financiers,
Distingués invités,
Mesdames et Messieurs.

C'est un grand honneur pour moi d'être accueillie dans ce beau pays qu'est le Togo, dans le cadre de l'inauguration du nouveau siège du Centre régional des Nations Unies pour la paix et le désarmement en Afrique (UNREC); un Centre qui est à la disposition des pays africains pour les accompagner et les assister, à leur demande, sur les questions relevant de son mandat.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the President of Togo, His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, for accepting my visit in his beautiful country and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its dedicated efforts in organizing this visit.

I would like to thank the Togolese government for providing modern and spacious office premises to help the Centre expand to better assist fifty-four African Member States. I also thank Togo for its long-standing support, as host-country, to the Centre for the past 32 years.

As many of you know, on 24 May, in Geneva, Secretary-General António Guterres launched *Securing Our Common Future*, his disarmament agenda for the 21st Century.

The agenda is predicated on a critical premise—that disarmament concerns every country and involves all weapons, from hand grenades to nuclear weapons. It makes clear that disarmament is a driving force for maintaining international peace and security as well as a tool for ensuring national security, upholding the principles of humanity, promoting sustainable development and protecting civilians.

Securing Our Common Future identifies three distinct but mutually reinforcing priorities: disarmament to save humanity; disarmament that save lives; and disarmament for future generations.

The first, disarmament to save humanity, aims to reduce and eliminate weapons of mass destruction: nuclear, chemical and biological.

The second priority, disarmament that saves lives, aims to reduce and mitigate the impact of conventional weapons. To facilitate this goal, the Secretary-General will redouble his support to Member States in developing appropriate limitations, common standards and operational policies on the use of explosive weapons in urban areas. He will also act to ensure that the UN can address the challenge of illicit small arms and ammunition, including with dedicated resources within his Peacebuilding Fund.

The third priority, disarmament for future generations, seeks to ensure that developments in science and technology now producing revolutionary economic and social gains are not diverted or misused in ways that undermine security. It stresses the importance of responsible innovation and of multi-stakeholder coalitions, including the private sector, to address these challenges.

The agenda also reiterates the Secretary-General's commitment to using his good offices to prevent acts in cyber space from causing conflict.

**Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Every day, hundreds of lives are lost due to gun violence worldwide. Guns are responsible for about half of all violent deaths – nearly a quarter million each year. But the dire consequences of gun violence are not limited to those slain. For every person killed by a gun, many more are injured, maimed or forced to flee their home and community. Still many more live under constant threats of gun violence.

I am pleased to note the Centre’s support to African States towards achieving the vision of “*Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020*” through a Central Africa-based project, financed by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, to strengthen States’ capacity to effectively implement the Kinshasa Convention.

Responding to the continued challenge that illicit small arms and light weapons pose to peace, security and stability in the region, particularly in Central Africa and the Sahel, the Regional Centre focused on helping Member States control their circulation and improve physical security and stockpile management of weapons and ammunition. It does this through capacity-building for civilian authorities—including officials in governments, parliaments and national commissions on small arms and light weapons—as well as defence and security forces and United Nations peacekeeping mission personnel.

The Centre supported work by States to prevent the diversion of such weapons, in particular to non-State armed groups and terrorists, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). It also assisted in the implementation of instruments relating to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and it facilitated relevant regional dialogue among Member States.

Last month, States gathered at the United Nations in New York for the Third Review Conference on the Programme of Action on small arms – the key global instrument that has guided international efforts in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms over the past two decades. The Conference allowed the African States and international community to renew their commitment to silence the guns that affect so many innocent lives, and to continue their work towards achieving our common goal of peace, security and development for all.

**Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Today I am honored to participate, alongside Togolese authorities and representatives from Japan, in the official launch of the project on “*technical assistance for physical security and stockpile management, marking and destruction of small arms, light weapons and related ammunition in Madagascar and Togo*”. The project was developed at the request of the governments of Togo and Madagascar, with financial support from Japan and several Togolese private-sector institutions. This project will help Togo comply further with the requirements of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and the United Nations Programme of Action, among other international arms control and disarmament instruments. The project aims to improve and modernize the overall physical security and stockpile management system, including practices for marking government arms and weapons held by private persons. It also addresses the destruction of stockpiles of seized and obsolete weapons and ammunition and the construction or rehabilitation of arms depots in full compliance with the international small arms control standards (ISACS) and the international ammunition technical guidelines (IATG).

**Mesdames et Messieurs,
Distingués invités,**

In conclusion, I would like to once again pay tribute to the authorities and people of Togo.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs and its Regional Centre in Africa stand ready to work with you to advance efforts in “Securing Our Common Future”.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.