

Colonel Soren Knudsen

WORLD INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE - 21ST SEPTEMBER 2016

EASF

**“The Sustainable Development Goals: Building Blocks for Peace”**

Chief Guest, Director, MC/Protocol, Head Teacher, representatives from the Diplomatic Community, staff, colleagues, Friends and other participants.

Allow me to briefly touch upon the 16<sup>th</sup> of the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs: *To promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.* On a day that is dedicated to world peace, and specifically the absence of war and violence, I re-iterate the fact that peace and inclusivity are not just features happening by themselves; we witness tragedies occurring daily as we see atrocities unfolding in Syria, in Yemen, in geographical places very close to even here like in Somalia in South Sudan, in domestic terror attacks.

On behalf of the Friends, I would like to thank the EASF Secretariat, notably you Director, for reminding us on this day of peace on our duties, not only to consider one SDG out of seventeen, but all

them, although number 16 obviously appears so much closer to what we do on a daily basis.

That said; I would like to also thank Kenya – which has literally just launched its road map on the implementation of the SDGs, but also other member states for their continued push for the SDG's that guide our future development together.

Coming back to my own safe ground of SDG no. 16, I would like to specifically thank Kenya and the other member states for their will and physical efforts to engage in EASF. Please continue, EASF must remain, and even improve as a primary operational tool for peace, if and when situations get out of hand – and they do!

Many of us here have experienced with our own bodies that peace doesn't come for free, hence I also use this occasion to urge not only Member States, but also the Director and the EASF staff, the advisors, the "Friends" to continue their support, to make EASF remain and continue to improve as the tool for peace we all want.

Peace be with you all, not only on this day but all days!