



**OPERATION
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REPORT ON
THE PEACE CARAVAN AND BENCHMARKING TOUR FOR
BORDER COMMUNITIES: Experiential Learning Visit at
Namanga (Kenya–Tanzania Border, Kenya Side)

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Abbreviations / Acronyms

AFLI — Africa Leadership Institute

AU — African Union

AUBP — African Union Border Programme

EAC — East African Community

IGAD — Intergovernmental Authority on Development

KAPATU — Karamoja Peace and Technology University Project

OWC — Operation Wealth Creation

RECSA — Regional Centre on Small Arms

SALW — Small Arms and Light Weapons

UN — United Nations

OSBP — One Stop Border Post

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Executive Summary

The Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour for Border Communities was conceived as a preventive diplomacy and conflict transformation intervention aimed at strengthening peaceful coexistence, good neighbourliness, and sustainable cross-border cooperation among communities affected by persistent insecurity and boundary-related tensions in the East African region. The initiative was implemented under the auspices of the East African Community (EAC), in collaboration with the Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan, and in partnership with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), with the Namanga (Kenya–Tanzania border, Kenya side) visit serving as the central experiential learning site.

The report documents the strategic relevance of the Namanga benchmarking engagement as a practical learning platform for border community leaders and stakeholders drawn primarily from the Ateker cluster—Turkana (Kenya), Karamojong (Uganda), and Toposa (South Sudan). The Namanga site was selected due to its comparatively stable cross-border environment, established mobility and trade dynamics, and community-level coexistence practices that demonstrate how borders can be managed as bridges for integration rather than triggers for conflict.

The Peace Caravan generated key outcomes and learning areas relevant to border governance and conflict prevention in pastoral borderlands. These included: reinforcing the framing of borders as platforms for regional integration and economic opportunity; demonstrating that community-led peace mechanisms can sustain stability; strengthening awareness of EAC and AU border governance frameworks, including the EAC Treaty and the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention); and underscoring the importance of joint border governance institutions, coordinated disarmament and SALW control, and development investments in borderlands.

A major value addition of the Peace Caravan was the formalisation of community and stakeholder commitments through a structured set of resolutions addressing priority areas such as boundary reaffirmation and demarcation, cross-border infrastructure, joint border security and governance mechanisms, sustained community sensitisation, climate resilience, and enhanced cooperation with IGAD. The initiative further demonstrated strong follow-up orientation through subsequent community sensitisation barazas and high-level political engagement, culminating in the development of the Joint Action Plan for Implementation of the Ateker Peace Caravan Resolutions (2025–2027).

Overall, the report concludes that the Peace Caravan model offers a credible and scalable mechanism for translating regional peace and security frameworks into practical community-level action, while strengthening institutional cooperation among Partner States. The report recommends institutionalising peace caravans as a recurring EAC tool, accelerating boundary demarcation processes, strengthening joint border governance and SALW control mechanisms, prioritising cross-border infrastructure and service delivery, supporting climate-resilient livelihoods and transboundary resource governance, and deepening structured cooperation between the EAC and IGAD for border peace and security programming.

1.0 Introduction

Borderlands across the East African region remain among the most fragile and strategically consequential spaces for peace, security, and regional integration. While international boundaries are legally defined as instruments of state sovereignty, in practice they function as everyday socio-economic and cultural spaces where communities interact, trade, migrate, graze livestock, access shared natural resources, and negotiate coexistence. In pastoral and agro-pastoral settings—particularly within the Ateker cluster spanning Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan—borderlands have historically been characterised by fluid mobility and shared ethnic identity, but increasingly disrupted by contested boundary interpretations, resource scarcity, climate stress, proliferation of small arms, and weak institutional mechanisms for cross-border governance.

It is within this context that the East African Community (EAC), in collaboration with the Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan, and in partnership with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), convened and launched the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour for border communities. The initiative was deliberately designed as a pragmatic conflict transformation and preventive diplomacy intervention aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence, strengthening good neighbourliness, and supporting the peaceful resolution of border-related disputes through experiential learning from border communities where tensions have been successfully managed and where functional cross-border cooperation has been institutionalised.

The benchmarking component at Namanga—on the Kenya–Tanzania border, Kenya side—was selected as a strategic learning site due to its relatively stable cross-border environment, functional mobility and trade dynamics, and the presence of social and administrative practices that demonstrate how borders can be managed as bridges for integration rather than as triggers for conflict. The Namanga learning visit therefore provided an opportunity for border community leaders, local administrators, youth, and other stakeholders from the Ateker communities (Turkana of Kenya, Karamojong of Uganda, and Toposa of South Sudan) to engage in structured peer-to-peer learning, dialogue, and observation of best practices in peaceful border management.

This report documents the Namanga experiential learning visit as part of the wider Peace Caravan programme, analyses its strategic relevance to cross-border peace and security in the EAC region, and synthesises key lessons, outcomes, and actionable recommendations to

inform future community-led and state-supported interventions in border governance, conflict prevention, and regional integration.

2.0 Background and Rationale

Border and boundary governance remains one of the most consequential yet under-resourced pillars of peace, security, and regional integration in the East African Community (EAC). While the EAC Partner States have made substantial progress in advancing the Customs Union, Common Market, and the broader integration agenda, the sustainability of these gains is structurally dependent on a stable regional environment in which borders are managed as cooperative spaces rather than contested frontiers. The persistence of unresolved boundary claims, overlapping administrative jurisdictions, weak cross-border institutional coordination, and the continued vulnerability of borderlands to violent conflict continues to pose a direct threat to peace dividends, citizen security, and the long-term viability of people-centred integration.

The EAC Secretariat has noted that a regional study on the state of borders and boundaries conducted in 2021 identified **22 boundary and territorial disputes**—both manifest and latent—across the region. This finding underscores that border-related tensions are not isolated or peripheral issues, but rather a systemic challenge with potential to escalate into violence, undermine inter-state relations, disrupt trade corridors, and weaken confidence in regional cooperation frameworks.

Borderlands in East Africa, particularly those occupied by pastoralist and agro-pastoralist populations, are frequently characterised by structural vulnerabilities that intensify conflict risk. These include chronic poverty, limited state presence, weak service delivery, displacement, climate-induced shocks, and intense competition over shared natural resources such as water, pasture, and livestock migration routes. In such contexts, borders often become sites where everyday livelihood pressures intersect with governance deficits and security threats, including the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, retaliatory violence, and cyclical cattle raiding.

Within the Ateker cluster—comprising the Turkana of Kenya, the Karamojong of Uganda, and the Toposa of South Sudan—these dynamics have historically manifested as recurrent insecurity and cross-border tension, driven not only by resource scarcity but also by unresolved boundary perceptions, contested grazing zones, and inadequate mechanisms for joint management of transboundary ecosystems. The border communities often experience the paradox of being culturally connected across state boundaries while simultaneously bearing the heaviest burden of insecurity and underdevelopment. These challenges are further compounded

by limited cohesion-building mechanisms, insufficient coordination among local authorities across borders, and gender-insensitive peace processes that often marginalise women and youth, despite their central role in community resilience.

In response to these realities, the EAC Secretariat—working in collaboration with the Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan, and in partnership with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP)—initiated the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour as a preventive diplomacy and conflict transformation intervention. The programme was designed to strengthen community ownership of peacebuilding, promote good neighbourliness, and provide structured experiential learning for border communities by exposing them to functional examples of peaceful cross-border coexistence.

The benchmarking site of **Namanga (Kenya–Tanzania border, Kenya side)** was selected because it represents a practical and relatively stable border environment where community interaction, mobility, trade, and administrative cooperation have demonstrated that borders can function as shared socio-economic bridges rather than conflict triggers. The Namanga learning visit therefore provided an opportunity for Ateker leaders and community representatives to observe and interrogate real-world mechanisms through which cross-border relations can be normalised, disputes managed, and peace dividends sustained.

This report is grounded in the recognition that sustainable border peace cannot be achieved through security measures alone. Rather, it requires a combined approach that integrates community-led peacebuilding, legal and institutional border governance, development investments in borderlands, and regional frameworks for cooperation. By documenting the Namanga benchmarking experience and linking it to broader EAC and AU policy instruments, this report seeks to generate actionable insights and recommendations for strengthening cross-border peace architecture, enhancing border governance, and consolidating stability among vulnerable border communities in the EAC region.

3.0 Overall Objective of the Peace Caravan

The overall objective of the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour was to serve as a structured preventive diplomacy and conflict transformation intervention aimed at strengthening peaceful coexistence, good neighbourliness, and sustainable cross-border cooperation among conflict-affected border communities in the East African region. Anchored within the EAC's peace and security mandate and implemented in partnership with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), the initiative sought to address persistent border-related tensions by promoting community ownership of peace processes, improving awareness of regional and continental border governance frameworks, and facilitating experiential learning from border communities where disputes have been peacefully and successfully resolved.

Through the Namanga benchmarking engagement, the Peace Caravan aimed to demonstrate in practical terms that international borders can be managed not as zones of contestation, insecurity, and exclusion, but as shared socio-economic spaces that enable mobility, trade, cultural continuity, and regional integration. In this regard, the Peace Caravan was designed to generate durable peace dividends by strengthening the capacity of border communities, local authorities, and partner state institutions to prevent and resolve disputes through dialogue, cooperation, and inclusive cross-border governance mechanisms.

4.0 Specific Objectives

In order to operationalise its overall goal of strengthening peaceful coexistence and sustainable cross-border cooperation, the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. **To promote community-led conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence** among border populations by strengthening good neighbourliness, mutual trust, and culturally grounded dialogue mechanisms across international boundaries, particularly among historically interconnected pastoralist communities.
2. **To facilitate structured experiential learning and peer-to-peer exchange** between conflict-affected border communities and communities where border/boundary tensions have been peacefully managed and successfully resolved, using Namanga (Kenya–Tanzania border) as a practical benchmarking model.
3. **To sensitise border communities and their leadership** on the ongoing national, regional, and continental initiatives for border governance, including processes for boundary reaffirmation and demarcation, cross-border cooperation agreements, and institutional mechanisms for managing emerging border issues.
4. **To strengthen awareness and uptake of relevant EAC and AU policy and legal frameworks** that guide peace and security cooperation, border governance, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, including the EAC Treaty and Protocol on Peace and Security, and the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention).
5. **To reinforce the narrative of borders as bridges for regional integration and economic opportunity** by demonstrating how functional cross-border environments support trade, mobility, investment, and shared livelihood systems—thereby transforming borderlands from conflict-prone peripheries into productive corridors of development.
6. **To support the development of actionable community and partner-state commitments** through the identification of lessons, best practices, and priority interventions that can inform follow-up implementation frameworks, including strategies addressing disarmament, small arms control, infrastructure development, joint border governance structures, and sustainable management of shared natural resources.

5.0 Composition of Participants

The Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour was deliberately designed as a multi-stakeholder, cross-border engagement platform bringing together community leadership, local administrative authorities, and regional policy actors drawn from the Ateker cluster and the broader EAC peace and security architecture. The composition of participants reflected the understanding that sustainable peace in borderlands requires both community ownership and structured institutional support across Partner States.

At the community level, the caravan involved representatives of the **Ateker communities**, specifically the **Turkana of Kenya**, the **Toposa of South Sudan**, and the **Karamojong of Uganda**. These communities were selected due to their shared socio-cultural heritage, transboundary mobility patterns, and the persistent security and boundary-related challenges affecting the tri-junction areas.

To ensure legitimacy, policy relevance, and alignment with national and regional priorities, the initiative was supported and attended by senior officials and leaders from the participating Partner States, including ministers responsible for East African Community affairs, sub-national government leaders, county and district authorities, and security and administrative officials. The Namanga launch, in particular, provided a high-level political platform for reinforcing the importance of peaceful coexistence and border cooperation as prerequisites for development and regional integration.

At the regional and continental levels, the programme was facilitated by the **EAC Secretariat** and implemented in partnership with the **African Union Border Programme (AUBP)**. This institutional involvement ensured that the caravan was not treated as an isolated community dialogue exercise, but as an intervention grounded in formal regional peace and security mandates, continental border governance frameworks, and structured follow-up mechanisms.

Overall, the composition of participants ensured that the Peace Caravan functioned simultaneously as:

- a community-driven peacebuilding initiative,
- a platform for cross-border trust-building and dialogue,
- and a policy-linked mechanism for translating community experiences into actionable commitments for border governance and conflict prevention.

6.0 Route and Programme Flow

The Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour was implemented as a structured, time-bound regional learning process designed to combine mobility-based engagement, practical observation, and facilitated dialogue across multiple geographic and institutional contexts. The programme was organised as a **seven-day cross-border learning journey**, reflecting both the transboundary nature of the targeted communities and the need to expose participants to real-world examples of functional border cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

The caravan commenced in **Lodwar, Turkana County (Kenya)**—a strategic entry point within the Ateker borderland context—and proceeded by road through **Eldoret**, before culminating at **Namanga on the Kenya–Tanzania border (Kenya side)**. The route was deliberately designed to facilitate gradual engagement, team cohesion, and structured reflection among participants as they transitioned from conflict-affected border realities to a benchmarking environment characterised by comparatively stable cross-border relations.

Namanga was selected as the primary experiential learning site due to its established cross-border mobility, trade activity, and the presence of community-level coexistence practices that demonstrate how borders can function as socio-economic bridges rather than conflict frontiers. At Namanga, the caravan participants engaged directly with the **Maasai community** and relevant local stakeholders, enabling peer-to-peer learning on practical approaches to border dispute management, coexistence, and cooperative utilisation of shared spaces.

The programme flow combined:

- structured dialogue and sensitisation on border governance and regional peace initiatives,
- facilitated community-to-community engagement,
- observation of best practices and operational border dynamics, and
- reflective learning intended to support the transfer of lessons to the Ateker borderlands.

Through this sequencing, the Peace Caravan operationalised experiential learning as a practical peacebuilding tool, enabling participants to connect regional policy frameworks to lived realities and to translate observed best practices into actionable commitments for conflict prevention and sustainable cross-border cooperation within the EAC region.

7.0 Namanga Benchmarking Visit: Experiential Learning Focus

The Namanga benchmarking visit constituted the central experiential learning component of the Peace Caravan and was intentionally designed as a practical demonstration of how international borders can be managed as functional spaces of cooperation rather than as drivers of conflict. Situated along the Kenya–Tanzania boundary, Namanga provides a relatively stable cross-border environment where community interaction, mobility, and trade are normalised, and where local coexistence practices have contributed to the reduction of border-related tensions. The site was therefore selected as a strategic learning platform for the Ateker communities to observe and interrogate real-world approaches to peaceful border management.

The benchmarking engagement at Namanga was structured around facilitated peer-to-peer learning between the caravan participants and local community actors—particularly the Maasai community—whose cross-border socio-cultural continuity and cooperative livelihood systems provide a practical case of sustained coexistence across a national boundary. Through structured interaction, dialogue, and observation, participants were exposed to community-level and administrative practices that support stability, including the management of cross-border movement, informal trade, and everyday dispute resolution mechanisms.

The Namanga learning focus reinforced a core policy and security insight underpinning the Peace Caravan: that sustainable peace in borderlands cannot be achieved through security responses alone, but requires an integrated approach combining community-led trust-building, predictable cross-border governance, economic incentives, and institutional cooperation. The benchmarking visit therefore enabled participants to appreciate how peace is practically sustained through the presence of functional relationships and cooperative frameworks—rather than through the mere absence of violence.

In addition, the Namanga experience strengthened the caravan’s strategic narrative that borders should be treated as **bridges for regional integration**—facilitating movement of people, goods and services, supporting pastoral and market value chains, and enabling shared socio-economic opportunities. This learning was particularly relevant for the Ateker borderlands, where the historical logic of mobility and shared identity has increasingly been undermined by insecurity, resource competition, and weak institutional coordination. By providing a tangible example of a more stable border environment, the Namanga benchmarking visit offered participants a credible reference point for adapting lessons, best practices, and feasible interventions aimed

at consolidating peaceful coexistence and strengthening cross-border cooperation within the Kenya–Uganda–South Sudan tri-junction context.

8.0 Key Messages Delivered During the Launch at Namanga

The official launch of the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour at Namanga served as a high-level political and policy signalling platform through which the EAC, Partner States, and continental institutions reaffirmed their collective commitment to peaceful coexistence, good neighbourliness, and the peaceful resolution of border-related disputes. The launch brought together senior government officials, EAC Secretariat leadership, and African Union representatives, whose statements collectively framed the Peace Caravan as a strategic preventive diplomacy intervention anchored in regional legal instruments and continental border governance frameworks.

Across the official communications, three interlinked policy messages were consistently reinforced. First, that borderlands—particularly those inhabited by pastoral and agro-pastoral communities—remain disproportionately affected by insecurity, marginalisation, and weak service delivery, and therefore require targeted peacebuilding and development interventions. Second, that international borders should not be treated as barriers, but as bridges for mobility, trade, investment, and socio-economic integration. Third, that sustainable peace in borderlands requires deliberate cooperation between states, institutions, and communities through joint mechanisms for border governance, dispute prevention, and cross-border development.

8.1 Message from the Government of Kenya: Borders as Bridges for Integration and Development

In his keynote remarks at the Namanga launch, Kenya's Prime Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Musalia Mudavadi, emphasised that the Peace Caravan provides a practical platform for the EAC to sensitise affected border communities on ongoing national, regional, and continental initiatives aimed at achieving peaceful and sustainable dispute resolution. He reaffirmed that the region stands to benefit significantly from peaceful coexistence and good neighbourliness along international borders.

A central theme of the Prime Cabinet Secretary's address was the strategic reframing of borders as economic and integration enablers. He underscored that borders should be viewed not as barriers, but as bridges facilitating the movement of people, goods, and services across East Africa without impediment. He further highlighted the potential of borderlands to contribute to national and regional economic growth through investment, pastoralism value chains, and informal cross-border trade.

The Prime Cabinet Secretary also acknowledged the importance of institutional measures already undertaken by Partner States, including the establishment of joint surveying and demarcation mechanisms, commissions, and memoranda of understanding for border management. He further noted that borderlands continue to bear the heaviest burden of poverty, insecurity, displacement, climate change impacts, and weak access to basic services, reinforcing the urgency of coordinated interventions.

8.2 Message from the EAC Secretariat: Legal Mandate, Regional Peace Architecture, and the Scale of the Challenge

The EAC Deputy Secretary General responsible for Productive, Social, Infrastructure and Political Sectors, Hon. Andrea Aguer Ariik Malueth, emphasised that the Peace Caravan is firmly anchored in the EAC's foundational legal and policy frameworks. He noted that the initiative derives legitimacy from Articles 5, 6, 123 and 124 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC, as well as Article 4 of the EAC Protocol on Peace and Security, which collectively commit Partner States to the promotion of peace, security, peaceful coexistence, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

He further underscored that peace and security are indispensable prerequisites for social and economic development within the Community, and vital to the realisation of the EAC's overarching vision of a peaceful, prosperous, competitive, and politically united East Africa. In this context, the Peace Caravan was presented as a practical tool for protecting the gains of regional integration and ensuring that the benefits of integration reach border communities.

The Deputy Secretary General also provided a critical evidence base for the intervention by referencing the EAC Secretariat's 2021 study, which identified 22 boundary and territorial disputes in the region. He cautioned that even disputes currently dormant retain significant escalation potential and must be proactively addressed through preventive mechanisms such as the Peace Caravan.

8.3 Message from the African Union: Continental Border Governance and the Niamey Convention

The African Union representative reaffirmed the AU Commission's commitment to supporting Member States in enhancing peaceful coexistence among border communities and preventing border-related conflict. He emphasised that unresolved boundary issues carry significant risk

of escalation into violence and can undermine peace, security, regional integration, and the movement of people, goods, and services across borders.

Importantly, the AU communication linked the Peace Caravan initiative to the implementation of the **African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention, 2014)**, describing it as a continental instrument designed to transform borders into bridges for cooperation and integration. The AU representative noted that the Convention had not yet entered into force due to limited ratification and urged EAC Partner States—particularly South Sudan and Uganda—to follow Kenya’s example in ratifying the Convention.

8.4 Consolidated Policy Message from the Launch

Taken together, the messages delivered at Namanga provided a coherent strategic framing for the Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour as a multi-level peace and security intervention. The launch reaffirmed that:

- border peace is a necessary foundation for regional integration;
- border disputes require preventive diplomacy and community ownership;
- economic opportunity, mobility, and shared development are central peace incentives;
- joint governance frameworks—demarcation, institutional coordination, SALW control, and cross-border cooperation—are essential to sustaining peace dividends.

9.0 Key Outcomes and Learning Areas

The Namanga benchmarking engagement generated practical outcomes and reinforced strategic learning areas relevant to the prevention of border-related conflict and the strengthening of cross-border governance in the EAC region. Beyond serving as a symbolic launch site, Namanga functioned as a demonstrative case of how borders can be operationalised as spaces of cooperation, economic interaction, and peaceful coexistence. The learning outcomes were particularly relevant to the Ateker cluster borderlands, where insecurity and contested border dynamics continue to undermine community stability, mobility, and livelihoods.

The following outcomes and learning areas emerged as central:

9.1 Reframing Borders as Platforms for Regional Integration and Economic Opportunity

A key outcome of the Namanga benchmarking visit was the reinforcement of a policy-consistent narrative that international borders should not be treated as rigid barriers, but as functional bridges enabling movement, trade, investment, and social interaction. This framing was emphasised during the launch by senior leadership and was validated through the Namanga experience, where cross-border mobility and commerce were observed as normalised and socially accepted.

For the Ateker borderlands, this learning is particularly consequential. It underscores that peacebuilding interventions should not be limited to security containment but should intentionally incorporate economic incentives—such as trade facilitation, livestock market development, and cross-border value chains—as stabilising factors in border relations.

9.2 Evidence that Community-Led Peace Mechanisms Can Sustain Stability

The Namanga engagement demonstrated that sustainable border peace is most resilient where communities have internalised coexistence as a shared norm and where social systems reinforce cooperation across borders. The benchmarking interaction with the Maasai community illustrated how cultural continuity, shared identity, and functional community-level dispute management practices can contribute to stability in cross-border settings.

This outcome reinforced the strategic importance of strengthening:

- traditional leadership systems,
- inclusive dialogue structures, and
- locally legitimate mediation mechanisms,

as core components of cross-border peace architecture. The Peace Caravan model itself was validated as an effective approach for facilitating peer-to-peer learning and strengthening community ownership of peace processes.

9.3 Increased Awareness of Regional and Continental Border Governance Frameworks

The Peace Caravan's launch at Namanga also served a sensitisation function, strengthening awareness among border community leaders and stakeholders on the policy and legal frameworks governing peace and border management. Key frameworks highlighted included:

- the EAC Treaty provisions committing Partner States to peace, security, and dispute resolution,
- the EAC Protocol on Peace and Security,
- and the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention).

This learning is significant because border communities are often the most affected by boundary disputes but the least informed about the institutional processes for boundary reaffirmation, demarcation, and cooperative governance. Improved awareness is therefore a necessary foundation for constructive community engagement with state-led and regional initiatives.

9.4 Recognition of the Central Role of Joint Border Governance and Institutional Coordination

The Namanga benchmarking visit reinforced the practical necessity of institutional cooperation as a precondition for sustainable border peace. The launch messages and subsequent resolutions highlighted the importance of:

- joint surveying and demarcation teams,
- cross-border cooperation agreements and MoUs,
- joint border security and administrative committees,

- and strengthened institutional structures to manage emerging border issues.

This learning area is directly relevant to the Ateker tri-junction context, where weak coordination between sub-national administrations and border security systems often allows local disputes to escalate rapidly.

9.5 Consolidation of Policy Priorities for Conflict Prevention in Pastoral Borderlands

The Peace Caravan outcomes further contributed to consolidating priority areas for preventive action in pastoral borderlands. These priorities, reinforced through the Namanga experience and reflected in subsequent resolutions, include:

- accelerating boundary reaffirmation and demarcation,
- strengthening cross-border infrastructure and basic services,
- addressing small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation,
- advancing disarmament through coordinated approaches,
- and promoting cross-border development investments to reduce structural marginalisation.

This outcome is important because it positions border peace as a multidimensional agenda requiring security, governance, and development interventions to be implemented in a coordinated manner.

9.6 Strengthened Momentum for Follow-Up Action and Structured Implementation

A critical outcome of the Namanga Peace Caravan was that it did not conclude as a stand-alone learning event. Rather, it generated momentum for structured follow-up engagements, including later sensitisation barazas and the development of an implementation framework and action plan.

This reflects an important shift from ad hoc peace dialogues toward a more programmatic approach in which peace caravan resolutions are linked to implementation timelines, institutional responsibilities, and medium-term action planning.

9.7 Key Strategic Lesson: Border Peace Requires Integrated Security–Development Approaches

Overall, the Namanga benchmarking visit reinforced a core strategic lesson for the EAC and Partner States: sustainable peace in borderlands is unlikely to be achieved through security measures alone. Instead, it requires integrated approaches combining:

- community trust-building,
- legal and institutional border governance,
- conflict-sensitive development investments, and
- regional frameworks for cooperation and accountability.

This learning aligns with both EAC and AU policy frameworks, including the Niamey Convention’s emphasis on transforming borders into cooperative bridges rather than conflict frontiers.

10.0 Peace Caravan Resolutions Relevant to Border Communities

The inaugural Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour launched at Namanga culminated in a set of structured resolutions adopted by community leaders from Uganda, Kenya, and South Sudan. These resolutions reflect a collective commitment by the Ateker communities to advance peaceful coexistence, strengthen cross-border cooperation, and support sustainable mechanisms for preventing and resolving border-related disputes. The resolutions further acknowledge that durable peace dividends cannot be achieved through community commitments alone, but require deliberate and coordinated support from Partner State governments, the East African Community (EAC), the African Union (AU), and relevant development partners.

The resolutions are summarised below as priority commitments and calls to action, consistent with EAC and AU peace and security frameworks:

10.1 Boundary Reaffirmation, Delimitation and Demarcation

The Peace Caravan resolutions strongly urged the Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan to provide adequate resources and technical capacity to expedite the reaffirmation and demarcation of their international boundaries. This resolution recognises that unresolved or ambiguously defined boundaries remain a structural driver of recurring conflict, contested mobility, and mistrust among border communities.

10.2 Cross-Border Infrastructure and Development Investments

The resolutions called upon Partner State governments to develop joint cooperation frameworks aimed at improving infrastructure and essential services in border areas. Priority investments identified include:

- road networks and transport corridors,
- one-stop border posts,
- hospitals and health facilities,
- schools and education services,
- markets and trade infrastructure,
- livestock trade support systems.

This resolution reflects a core policy position that peace dividends are most sustainable when reinforced through inclusive development and visible improvements in livelihoods and service delivery.

10.3 Coordinated Disarmament and Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)

Recognising the destabilising impact of small arms proliferation in pastoral borderlands, the resolutions acknowledged ongoing disarmament initiatives in Uganda and Kenya and urged the Government of South Sudan to plan for and implement a simultaneous disarmament programme. The resolutions further urged all three governments to reinforce measures aimed at curbing illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons across their respective jurisdictions.

This resolution highlights the strategic necessity of coordinated approaches to disarmament, given that unilateral disarmament can create perceived insecurity and trigger retaliatory risk.

10.4 Strengthening Cross-Border Institutional Structures for Border Governance

The Peace Caravan resolutions called upon Partner States to reinvigorate and strengthen institutional structures responsible for managing emerging border issues. This includes the establishment or strengthening of:

- Joint Border Security Committees,
- Joint Border Administrators and Commissioners,
- cross-border coordination mechanisms linking local administrations.

This resolution reflects the understanding that border peace requires predictable governance systems capable of early response, mediation, and coordinated decision-making.

10.5 Sustained Sensitisation, Peace Caravans and Community Engagement

The resolutions requested the EAC, AU Commission, and relevant United Nations agencies to support continuous sensitisation programmes and mobilise resources for peace caravans and benchmarking tours. The resolutions emphasised that sustained community engagement at local and sub-national levels is necessary to consolidate peaceful coexistence, reduce misinformation, and strengthen good neighbourliness among border populations.

10.6 High-Level Regional Engagement on Ateker Peace Initiatives

The resolutions further requested the EAC—supported by the AU Commission—to convene a high-level meeting involving Ateker community leadership to discuss sustainable peaceful coexistence initiatives. This resolution recognises that community-level commitments must be reinforced through structured regional platforms capable of mobilising political will, policy alignment, and coordinated implementation support.

10.7 Inclusivity and Expansion of the Peace Caravan Programme

In the interest of regional inclusivity, the resolutions called upon the EAC to consider expanding the peace caravan programme to include neighbouring communities, particularly the Pokot communities of Kenya and Uganda. This reflects the understanding that peace in borderlands is interconnected and that excluding adjacent communities may leave unresolved conflict dynamics intact.

10.8 Strengthening Regional Coordination with IGAD

The resolutions proposed that the EAC engage IGAD to establish collaborative mechanisms that include other communities around the tri-junction, including those near the Kenya–South Sudan–Ethiopia border. This resolution reinforces the strategic recognition that cross-border conflict systems often extend beyond EAC boundaries and require inter-regional cooperation for sustainable management.

10.9 Climate Change Mitigation and Livelihood Diversification as Peacebuilding Priorities

The resolutions encouraged the EAC to undertake joint efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, which is increasingly recognised as a conflict driver in pastoral regions. The resolutions further emphasised the importance of supporting border communities to diversify socio-economic activities, reduce over-reliance on pastoralism, and improve livestock quality—thereby reducing resource-based conflict pressures.

10.10 Strategic Significance of the Resolutions

Collectively, the Peace Caravan resolutions constitute a comprehensive border peace and security agenda combining:

- boundary clarification and legal certainty,
- institutional governance mechanisms,
- SALW control and coordinated disarmament,
- development and infrastructure investments,
- inclusive community engagement,
- regional and inter-regional cooperation,
- and climate-sensitive livelihood resilience.

The resolutions therefore provide an actionable foundation for translating the Namanga benchmarking experience into structured peacebuilding, border governance, and development interventions across the Ateker tri-junction borderlands.

11.0 Implementation and Follow-Up Actions

The Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour launched at Namanga was designed not as a stand-alone peacebuilding event, but as an entry point into a structured, multi-year process for strengthening cross-border cooperation, institutionalising peaceful coexistence, and translating community commitments into implementable actions. Consistent with this approach, the inaugural caravan generated a set of resolutions which subsequently informed follow-up sensitisation engagements, high-level political consultations, and the development of a formal implementation framework to guide medium-term action across the Ateker borderlands.

A major implementation principle reinforced through follow-up processes is that sustaining peace dividends requires a dual-track approach: (i) continuous community engagement and social cohesion building at local level, and (ii) coordinated state and regional action on structural drivers of conflict such as boundary ambiguity, weak border governance institutions, small arms proliferation, and underdevelopment of borderlands.

11.1 Institutionalisation of Follow-Up Dialogue and Sensitisation Mechanisms

Following the Namanga launch, the Peace Caravan initiative was consolidated through structured sensitisation programmes and stakeholder engagements aimed at ensuring that the resolutions and lessons learned were communicated, understood, and owned at grassroots level. Subsequent activities included community sensitisation barazas held across key Ateker border locations, including **Moroto (Uganda), Lokichogio (Kenya), and Narus (South Sudan)**. These engagements served as platforms for community feedback, reinforcement of commitments, and validation of peace messages and resolutions.

These follow-up sensitisation actions also strengthened the credibility of the caravan process by ensuring that community representatives who participated in the benchmarking tour shared experiences and learning directly with wider community constituencies, including elders, women, youth, and reformed warriors (Karachunas).

11.2 High-Level Political Engagement and Adoption of Implementation Commitments

A key follow-up milestone was the convening of a high-level meeting of Ateker leaders and border community representatives, which was held on **30th–31st October 2024** in Moroto, Uganda. This meeting was officially opened by Uganda’s First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for East African Community Affairs, RT Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, and attended by

senior leadership from Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan, alongside EAC Secretariat officials and AU representatives.

The high-level engagement provided a formal platform for reviewing the Namanga Peace Caravan resolutions, briefing leadership on ongoing national, regional and continental border governance initiatives, and reaffirming political commitment to implementation.

11.3 Development of a Structured Implementation Framework

In order to transition from resolutions to delivery, leaders reviewed and adopted a structured implementation framework for the Peace Caravan recommendations. This framework outlined key priority areas, institutional responsibilities, and implementation pathways aimed at sustaining momentum and enabling measurable progress in border governance and peaceful coexistence.

The adoption of this framework represented an important shift from informal peace declarations toward a programmatic model of peacebuilding, anchored in planning, coordination, and accountability.

11.4 Joint Action Plan for Implementation of the Ateker Peace Caravan Resolutions (2025–2027)

A major follow-up output of the post-Namanga process was the development of the **Joint Action Plan for Implementation of the Ateker Community Peace Caravan Resolutions 2025–2027**. The action plan provides a structured roadmap for coordinated interventions across priority thematic areas, including:

- **boundary delimitation, reaffirmation and demarcation,**
- **conflict prevention and cross-border cooperation,**
- **border governance and security strengthening,**
- **capacity building in border governance,**
- **SALW control and disarmament coordination,**
- **development of borderlands through infrastructure and basic services,**
- **transboundary natural resource management, and**
- **regional cooperation frameworks, including engagement with IGAD.**

The action plan further identifies implementation responsibilities involving the EAC Secretariat, AUBP, Partner States, RECSA, development partners, civil society actors, and relevant national border governance agencies. It establishes a medium-term time horizon (2025–2027) to support systematic mobilisation of resources, capacity building, and coordinated delivery.

11.5 After-Action Review and Learning Consolidation

To consolidate lessons and strengthen adaptive learning, the programme further incorporated an after-action review process conducted from **5th–6th November 2024** in Lodwar, Kenya. This review brought together community leaders, EAC Partner State experts, EAC Secretariat officials, and facilitators to reflect on implementation progress, identify challenges, and refine recommendations and next steps.

This learning review mechanism strengthened the quality of the peace caravan approach by ensuring that programme design remained responsive to community realities and operational challenges in border contexts.

11.6 Strategic Significance of the Implementation Approach

The follow-up actions demonstrate that the Peace Caravan has evolved into a structured mechanism for operationalising cross-border peacebuilding within the EAC region. The progression from benchmarking to sensitisation, high-level political endorsement, implementation planning, and multi-year action programming reflects a deliberate shift toward sustainability, accountability, and measurable outcomes.

The Joint Action Plan (2025–2027), in particular, provides a policy-ready foundation for mobilising Partner State and development partner support to address both immediate conflict risks and long-term structural drivers of instability in the Ateker borderlands.

12.0 Conclusion

The Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour launched at Namanga represents a strategic and practical preventive diplomacy intervention aimed at strengthening peaceful coexistence, good neighbourliness, and cross-border cooperation among border communities in the EAC region. By convening leaders and representatives of the Ateker cluster and exposing them to a functional example of stable cross-border interaction at the Kenya–Tanzania border, the initiative demonstrated the feasibility of transforming borders from conflict-prone frontiers into cooperative spaces of integration, mobility, and shared socio-economic opportunity.

The Namanga benchmarking experience reinforced that sustainable peace in borderlands requires an integrated approach that combines community-led dialogue, strengthened border governance institutions, boundary reaffirmation and demarcation, coordinated SALW control, and targeted development investments in borderlands. Importantly, the caravan generated formal resolutions and catalysed structured follow-up actions, including community sensitisation programmes and the development of a Joint Action Plan (2025–2027), which provides a medium-term framework for implementation across Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan.

Overall, the Peace Caravan approach has proven to be a credible mechanism for consolidating political commitment, strengthening community ownership of peace processes, and translating regional peace and security frameworks into actionable interventions at the grassroots level.

13.0 Recommendations

In order to sustain momentum and maximise peace dividends generated by the Namanga Peace Caravan and Benchmarking Tour, the following recommendations are proposed for consideration by the EAC Secretariat, the AU Border Programme, Partner States, and relevant development partners:

13.1 Institutionalise Peace Caravans as a Recurring Regional Mechanism

The EAC, in collaboration with AUBP and Partner States, should institutionalise peace caravans and benchmarking tours as a regular conflict prevention and experiential learning tool for border communities, with clear scheduling, thematic focus, and predictable resource support.

13.2 Operationalise the Joint Action Plan (2025–2027) Through Coordinated Resourcing

Partner States, with support from EAC, AU and development partners, should prioritise mobilisation of financial, technical, and logistical resources to operationalise the Joint Action Plan for Implementation of the Ateker Peace Caravan Resolutions (2025–2027), ensuring alignment with national development frameworks and regional peace and security strategies.

13.3 Accelerate Boundary Reaffirmation and Demarcation Processes

The Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan should expedite boundary reaffirmation, delimitation and demarcation processes through strengthened national border agencies, technical teams, and joint cooperation frameworks, recognising boundary ambiguity as a structural driver of conflict escalation.

13.4 Strengthen Joint Border Governance and Security Coordination

Partner States should strengthen joint border governance mechanisms, including Joint Border Security Committees and cross-border administrative coordination platforms, to improve early response, joint decision-making, and prevention of emerging disputes.

13.5 Advance Coordinated SALW Control and Disarmament Strategies

EAC, RECSA, Partner States and relevant partners should strengthen coordinated strategies to curb illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and promote synchronised disarmament measures, supported by community sensitisation and confidence-building mechanisms.

13.6 Prioritise Cross-Border Infrastructure and Basic Service Investments

Partner States, supported by EAC and development partners, should prioritise targeted investments in borderlands, including roads, markets, OSBPs, water points, health facilities, and education infrastructure, to consolidate peace dividends and reduce structural marginalisation.

13.7 Promote Climate-Resilient Livelihoods and Transboundary Resource Governance

EAC, AU and Partner States should strengthen climate-sensitive interventions, including livelihood diversification and joint management of transboundary natural resources, to reduce resource-based conflict pressures in pastoral borderlands.

13.8 Strengthen Inter-Regional Cooperation With IGAD

The EAC should advance structured engagement with IGAD to ensure coherent cross-border peace and border governance responses in tri-junction areas extending beyond EAC boundaries, including communities around the Kenya–South Sudan–Ethiopia border.

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