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## **GENEVA STATEMENT ON COMBATING RHINOCEROS-RELATED CRIMES**

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Ministers and high-level representatives from the Czech Republic, Mozambique, South Africa and Viet Nam, together with observers from the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, China and the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), convened in Geneva, Switzerland, on 14 February 2015 at the CITES Ministerial Dialogue for key States concerned with the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn;

*RECOGNIZING* that the number of rhinoceroses killed illegally and the associated illegal trade in rhinoceros horn continues to escalate despite the considerable efforts to combat this serious crime, giving cause for great concern;

*ACKNOWLEDGING* the consequences of poaching and illegal trade in rhinoceros horn for rhinoceros conservation together with the broader societal and economic impacts arising from transnational organized wildlife crime; and

*AWARE* that strong support from the highest political level and further enhanced international cooperation is essential to effectively combat rhinoceros poaching and the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn;

We, the Ministers and high-level representatives from States implicated in the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn through Decisions of the 16th meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties and Recommendations of the 65th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, namely the Czech Republic, Mozambique, South Africa and Viet Nam:

1. *REAFFIRM* our commitment to:
  - a) Take action to prevent, combat and eradicate rhinoceros poaching and the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn;
  - b) Implement our commitments under CITES, in particular the Decisions and Recommendations on rhinoceroses adopted by the CITES Conference of the Parties and Standing Committee, and the strategies and proposed actions developed by the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force as adopted by the CITES Standing Committee;
  - c) Further strengthen our international cooperation and enhance our collective efforts as range, transit and destination States to deliver coordinated activities and law enforcement responses to combat this illegal trade; and
  - d) Share information and intelligence across the enforcement sector to ensure intelligence-led enforcement activities, facilitate cross-border follow-up investigations and ultimately bring the “kingpins” behind these crimes to justice;
2. *ACKNOWLEDGE* that our commitments will be best advanced through the implementation of tangible short and medium-term actions;
3. *WELCOME* the recommendations to further enhance international cooperation and coordinate law enforcement responses, including through mechanisms provided by CITES and other International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) partners, as identified by the Senior Officials Meeting held in Geneva on 11-12 February 2015;
4. *COMMIT* to take individual and collective action to implement the recommendations identified by the Senior Officials Meeting;
5. *CALL UPON* ICWC to continue to support the efforts of key States concerned with the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn and to provide international coordination, capacity building and operational support; and
6. *FURTHER CALL UPON* the international community to support the initiatives of key States to further enhance cooperation and law enforcement responses.