

2 DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT: HUMAN SECURITY IN ACTION

When the UN was founded in 1945 the two principal tasks assigned to it were international security and the promotion of development. Small wonder that much thought was given during the following decades – and much said and written by diplomats and analysts – to the key linkage between them: a subject that came to be known as **Disarmament and Development**. The main focus of the debate throughout the Cold War was primarily on the colossal costs of the arms race, mainly spent by the superpowers, compared to the equally colossal needs of poor countries. The Charter declared in the now neglected Article 26:

“In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in article 47, plans to be submitted to the members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.”

(Charter of the United Nations, p. 16)

It is well known that the Military Staff Committee has not met for many years and the ‘system for regulating armaments is at best fragmentary and in key aspects purely voluntary. However, many ideas were put forward to reduce arms spending and to transfer the resources to the developing world. But little was actually transferred until the end of the Cold War, when military budgets started dropping, and redundant weaponry was sold off. However proposals such as a UN Poverty Fund using ‘military money’ were never put into practice. Instead, the reduction in military spending led to lower interest rates and a long economic boom, led by the US. This proved to be the engine of the new wave of globalisation which over the last 15 years has granted enormous benefits to a limited global elite, while millions still languish in desperate poverty. Meanwhile military spending has risen dramatically once again.

It is therefore most encouraging that the United Nations has chosen to revive the Disarmament-Development issue, with the appointment in 2002 of a Group of Experts, whose report (approved by the UN General Assembly in 2004) helps to bring the issue up to date.

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A calendar of events covering a range of UN and related activities:

1945: Drafting of Art. 26 of the UN Charter (“...least possible diversion for armaments...”)

1950: Nehru – Indian proposal to create a Global Peace Fund

1950 - present day: a long string of SG reports and UNGA resolutions calling for the transfer of resources from military to social spending;

1955: Edgar Faure: French proposal to establish an International Fund for Development and Mutual Assistance

1956-58: USSR variants. Special UN Fund for Economic Development to be financed through reductions in military budgets.

1964: Brazil proposed fund for industrial conversion and economic development (20% from reduced military budgets)

1968: Declaration of 13 eminent personalities dealing with Disarmament, Development and Security as a Triad of Peace.

1970-79: Second UN Development Decade and First Disarmament Decade

1970-1: UN expert report, commissioned by U Thant: Economic and Social Consequences of the Armaments Race and its Extremely Harmful Effects on World Peace and Security

All Mothers Educated Now (AMEN), Pakistan

This Lahore-based NGO’s mission is to address the imbalance in education opportunities for women in Pakistan. It was set up in 1996, with funding from the Canadian International Development Assistance Programme (CIDA) to run 65 classes for illiterate women. Since then it has educated more than 7,000 women, through education projects funded by western and Asian donor agencies in Lahore, Faisalabad, Jaranwala, Gujranwala and Narowal.

“The literacy rate for women in Pakistan is one of the lowest in the world. Most programmes that address the issues of ‘female literacy’ are aimed almost exclusively at young girls below the age of 10 as the primary target group and teenage girls as the secondary audience. Female literacy programmes that concentrate exclusively on mothers are virtually non-existent,” points out AMEN director Josna Azim. In addition to equipping women with functional literacy skills, AMEN also focuses on health, education, human rights and practical life skills.



Canadian Voice of women for Peace

Since its foundation in 1960, the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace/ La Voix Canadiennes des Femmes pour la Paix has worked locally, nationally and internationally on issues related to peace, social justice, human rights and development, always seeking to promote a woman's and a feminist perspective.

VOW's objectives are:

- To unite women in concern for the future of the world;
- To help promote the mutual respect and cooperation among nations necessary for peaceful negotiations between world partners;
- To protest war or the threat of war as the decisive method of exercising power;
- To appeal to all national leaders to cooperate in the alleviation of the causes of war by common action for the economic and social betterment of all; and
- To provide a means for women to exercise responsibility for the family of humankind.

VOW is one of the non-governmental organizations (NGO) cited by UNESCO's standing committee in the working group report entitled "the contribution of women to the culture of peace". An accredited NGO to the United Nations, affiliated to the Department of Public Information (DPI) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), VOW was the Canadian lead group for peace at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Members have been active in follow-up activities, including writing the chapter, "Women and Peace" in *Take Action for Equality, Development and Peace*.



1973: GA resolution calling for 10% reduction in P5 military budgets

1974: Bradford Proposals – launched by Nobel Peace laureate Sean MacBride, IPB President. Paved the way for the 1978 Special Session.

1976: At Habitat I, member states affirmed the following:

"The waste and misuse of resources in war and armaments should be prevented. All countries should make a firm commitment to promote general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, in particular in the field of nuclear disarmament. Part of the resources thus released should be utilized so as to achieve a better quality of life for humanity and particularly the peoples of developing countries" (II, 12 Habitat 1).

1978 : First UN Special Session on Disarmament

- various proposals on Disarmament and Development: France (Giscard), Senegal, Romania...

1981: Report of Expert Group (Chair: Inga Thorsson, Sweden)

In 1981, in the General Assembly resolution entitled Resolution on the Reduction of the Military Budget, the member states

- (i) reaffirmed "the urgent need to reduce the military budget, and agreed to freeze and reduce the military budget";
- (ii) recognised that "the military budget constitutes a heavy burden for the economies of all nations, and has extremely harmful consequences on international peace and security";
- (iii) reiterated the appeal "to all States, in particular the most heavily armed States, pending the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military expenditures, to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures with a view to reallocating the funds thus saved to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of developing countries".

1982: Second UN Special Session on Disarmament

1983: A General Assembly Resolution on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development affirmed that curbing the arms build-up would make it possible to release additional resources for use in

economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries. Member states considered that "the magnitude of military expenditures is now such that their various implications can no longer be ignored in the efforts pursued in the international community to secure the recovery of the world economy and the establishment of a new international economic order."

1987 UN Conference on Disarmament and Development.

The high point in the UN's work on this issue. The conference was attended by 150 governments, but not by the USA.

"The world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed towards a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order; it cannot do both" (from the *Final Document*)

1988: Third Special Session on Disarmament

1989-91: End of the Cold War

1992: UN Conference on Environment and Development: all member states recognized that "Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development" (Rio Declaration, Principle 24, and in Chapter 33 of Agenda 21, member states made a commitment to "the reallocation of resources presently committed to military purposes" (33.18e).

1994: UNDP's Human Development Report – puts forward the human security perspective.

1994: At the International Conference on Population and Development, the UN member states concurred that the attainment of "quantitative and qualitative goals of the present Programme of Action clearly require additional resources, some of which could become available from a reordering of priorities at the individual, national and international levels. However, none of the actions required - nor all of them combined - is expensive in the context of either current global development or military expenditures." (Article 1.19)

1995: the Social Development Summit endorsed the calling for "the reallocation of military spending to ensure a greater pocket of resources to expand public services".

1995, UN conference on Women, Equality, Development and Peace. In the Platform of Action, States made a commitment to maintain “peace and security at the global, regional and local levels, together with the prevention of policies of aggression ... and the resolution of armed conflict” (Art. 14) and to reduce “...military expenditures” (Art. 15). States also made a commitment to the “prevention and resolution of conflicts” (Art.15) and to “increase and hasten, ... the conversion of military resources and related industries to development and peaceful purposes” (145a).

1998: International Conference on Sustainable Disarmament and Sustainable Development, Brussels, sponsored by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

See statement by Jayantha Dhanapala, UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs:

“It is not so much the shortage of good ideas -- but their coordination -- that constitutes the greatest challenge to those seeking to advance our collective international security and disarmament goals. At virtually all levels of political life today -- state, regional, and global -- initiatives for curbing the arms trade or its consequences are proliferating almost at a daily pace.”

‘Small Arms: Achieving Sustainable Disarmament’:

<http://disarmament2.un.org/speech/statements.htm>

1999: UN-ECAAR symposium on Disarmament and Development.

Topics included DDR, small arms and policy suggestions.

1999: UN High Level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development established

2000: Millennium Report, Millennium Declaration, Millennium Development Goals

2000: Establishment of the Human Security Network (13 governments)

2002: appointment by the UNSG of the **Group of Governmental Experts** on Disarmament and Development

2002: World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10):

Jayantha Dhanapala, UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, called on all participants at the Johannesburg Sum-

mit “to recognise that that the twin global problems of ‘overarmament and underdevelopment’ identified at the 1987 conference, remain very much with us today. These problems can and must be addressed together – in the interests of sustainable development, sustainable disarmament and sustainable peace and security for all”.

2003: Report of Human Security Commission

2004: UN symposium on Disarmament and Development

2004: Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Disarmament and Development

(A/59/119)- accepted by the UNGA in December 2004.

THE GROUP OF EXPERTS REPORT

The intention of the Group of Governmental Experts’ report is to update the UN, member states and the general public on the issue, by stressing on the one hand the continuing relevance of key themes highlighted in 1987, notably military spending, and on the other the emergence of ‘new’ issues such as landmines and other explosive remnants of war, small arms, and wider issues of security, notably the threat of terrorism. In this new report the emphasis is placed on a more holistic analysis of the relationship between disarmament and development and the importance of security, notably the enlarged definition of ‘human security’, seen as the ‘third pillar’. Interestingly, the concept of ‘non-military’ threats to security is already strongly emphasised in the Final Document from the 1987 conference – well before the generally accepted first appearance of ‘human security’ in UN literature in the 1994 Human Development report. However there was some reluctance to use the term in the Expert Group’s report, due to disagreements over meaning.

Two particular themes that have become increasingly common in the ‘new’ disarmament-development discourse, and which are referred to several times in the Group of Experts’ Report are Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Demobilization, Disarmament and Re-integration (DDR).

Rwanda Women’s Network (RWN)

Rwanda Women’s Network (RWN) is a national humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promotion and improvement of the socio-economic welfare of women in Rwanda through enhancing their efforts to meet their basic needs. The Network came into being in 1997 taking over from its parent organisation, the US-based Church World Service (CWS), which had initiated a two-year program (1994 – 1996) in the country following the genocide in 1994. To date, RWN caters to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence across the country in the recognition that women and children bore the brunt of the genocide, and remain the most vulnerable and marginalized groups within Rwanda civil society.

Rwanda Women’s Network implements three core programs. These include provision of health-care and support through the Polyclinic of Hope and the Village of Hope, education and awareness programs on human rights and legal procedures, socio-economic empowerment and institutional capacity building for the Network. It offers training for the women in the respective program areas, with peace and reconciliation being the ultimate goal in all its programs.

Other initiatives to support its peace building programs are shelter construction and rehabilitation of the survivors of the genocide, returnees to Rwanda, widows, child-headed households and orphans. Included in the community-based activities are projects in reproductive health, nutrition, primary health care, micro-credit finance and an HIV - Aids Project.

RWN works with various local and international partners, including the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development, with whom it is currently involved in training and development of materials on SGBV for communities countrywide.

Though there remains some challenges, the organisation’s accomplishments over the years have gained wide recognition, leading to it being cited as a replicable best-practice worldwide.



Security Sector Reform can be defined as:

“the current and/or planned changes of security practices within a given state. The goal of these reforms is to create a democratically-run, accountable and efficient Security Sector within a state. [This] includes the armed forces, paramilitary units, the police, the intelligence services and civil authorities mandated to control and oversee these agencies. Reforming the Security Sector helps reduce the risk of violent conflict and is therefore important in conflict prevention and crisis management.”

(Robin Bloomfield, Quaker Council for European Affairs newsletter, spring 2005).

One could add that well-conceived SSR can help to reduce the demand for weapons by agencies of the state, and to limit the impact of poorly controlled armaments on civilian populations. It should be stressed that such reforms need to proceed from improved, human-security-oriented policies in general. A repressive, elitist state machine is unlikely to show great concern for the ways its police and military operate vis-a-vis deprived

populations, especially if they are from a different ethnic or religious group from that which dominates the government. Since this is a sensitive area for states, it is not easy to impose – or even encourage – such reforms from the outside, though certain Western, and international, agencies do often include SSR under the ‘good governance’ rubrics of their aid conditions.

Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration has constituted an important new area of expertise – and a new set of challenges – in the post-Cold War era, notably in the wake of the many conflict settlements and peace accords. These have brought into focus the urgent need, not only to remove weapons from the community to avoid re-stimulating activities such as banditry, trafficking and extortion, but also to help rebel groups to re-join society by trading the ‘bullet for the ballot’. In general the rebels are young males who have

missed out on sections of their education and have grown used to getting their own way by the threat or actual use of weapons. In order to embrace a new civilian role, they need training, equipment, finance, health care, counselling, and the acceptance of a community that may prefer to reject them and their past behaviour. Women and girls have special needs, depending on whether they have been rebel fighters, assistants, sex slaves or performing other services. Both men and women ex-combatants may have both given and received severe abuse, and in a conflict-scarred and poor community their future prospects are far from rosy. However the experience of DDR programmes across the globe suggests that some remarkable transformations can and do take place.



Recycled weapons,
Mozambique

Photo: World Vision
Germany

Weapons for Development projects

have largely replaced Buy-Back schemes, since the latter tended to boost the arms trade rather than end it. The Tools for Arms approach in Mozambique is a fine example/of WFD:

“The **Christian Council of Mozambique** is collecting at least some of these weapons and destroying them on the spot. Some weapon parts are then modelled into works of art, demonstrating to the people that such killing devices are no longer needed. Project components of this programme are.

- retrieving information, collecting weapons and ammunition, and destruction of weapons on the spot (a lorry with a work bench is used for that purpose);
- providing tools and other items, such as bicycles, sewing machines and tool kits, in return for handed-over weapons;
- civil education (workshops within the communities of beneficiaries); and
- transforming collected arms into art – the sale of which provides funds for the project...

“Between October 1995 and October 2003, the project was able to collect a total of 7,850 weapons, 5,964 pieces of unexploded ordnance (such as mines and grenades of various types) and 256,537 rounds of ammunition.”

(Ekkehard Forberg, ‘Transforming Arms into Tools – a humanitarian approach to voluntary disarmament’, in: Global Futures (magazine of World Vision) 1st quarter, 2005)



The relationship between these two areas is well expressed in the following analysis:

“There are many inter-related factors to deal with in a post-conflict situation, and the effective DDR of ex-combatants must be a leading priority. However DDR programmes will never be effective if a number of other factors have not been taken into account. To name a few examples: weapons can be removed from ex-combatants but if they are not destroyed there is a risk they will leak back into society, leading

to further violence. Similarly, if issues of security sector reform are not addressed, a sense of security is not instilled in communities and resorting to armed violence to ensure personal safety becomes a likely possibility...The early and responsible involvement of civil society in the planning and implementation of peace operations will ensure that such programmes contribute to a stable post-war environment.”
(David Atwood, ‘DDR and Small Arms Control’, in: QUNO Reporter, Geneva, Feb-April 2005)

IPB PROGRAMME DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT: 2005 - 7

In response to the recent developments at the UN and elsewhere, the International Peace Bureau has decided to launch a major new programme to intensify civil society pressure for action in this field.

Summary of main areas:

■ **Military spending**

- creating a new global civil society network, to work for a substantial and permanent shift of resources towards development

■ **Effects of weapons on development**

- building a series of civil society partnerships, both to give support to communities suffering from weapons effects, and to strengthen the work of campaigners seeking to eliminate or limit the production and trade in weapons of all types

■ **Broader security context**

- helping to strengthen civil society capacity to redefine the problem in terms of human security needs, rather than in terms of military responses by the state.

Further details at: www.ipb.org



REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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WEBSITES

Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform

www.gfn-ssr.org

QCEA

www.quaker.org/qcea

QUONO

www.quono.ch

UN Department for Disarmament Affairs:

<http://disarmament.un.org>

especially:

<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/d&d.html>

UN Development Programme

www.undp.org

UNIDIR – Weapons for Development project

www.unidir.org

World Vision

www.wvi.org

