

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: ONE COIN, TWO SIDES? A BRIEFING FOR FRIENDS

Dear Friends,



Greetings from the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva.

We are pleased to present you with this short report outlining how our engagement with issues of small arms demand has led to recent work on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The Declaration's unique approach will be of interest to Quaker service organizations and our other partners working in fields as seemingly diverse as arms control, public health, development and poverty eradication. It is our aim to consolidate an understanding of the links between armed violence and development across these various communities, and we are eager to hear from colleagues with relevant experiences to share.

In Brief:

Small arms work is relatively new on the international agenda. Newer still is the attempt to tackle the issue by asking *why* people choose to acquire and use such weapons (rather than focusing, as is more traditionally the case, on controlling the production, stockpiling and transfer of small arms and light weapons on the international and regional level). In other words, this approach concerns itself with issues of small arms demand.

Recent work on demand questions has resulted in a growing understanding that the motivation for individuals to acquire and use small arms is tied to the issue of human security. Although the connection between small arms-related violence and development is an obvious one, this linkage had not been explicitly recognised at the international level, until the signing of the Geneva Declaration in June 2006.

The Geneva Declaration attempts to be much more than a statement of intent at the level of symbolic politics. It lends legitimacy and credibility to efforts that attempt to integrate development and armed violence reduction, and also commits its signatories to demonstrating the impact of armed violence reduction initiatives on development, and vice versa, through concrete programmes on the ground in key focus countries.

QUNO-Geneva has taken on a significant role in the Geneva Declaration Process, coordinating civil society activity in support of its goals, and participating in a unique endeavour that sees NGOs, international organizations and governments working together in the spirit of positive collaboration.

We are working to highlight civil society programmes that demonstrate how armed violence reduction and development are linked. If you have particular examples of relevant and exciting projects, please contact us at quno1@quno.ch

Background: Small Arms Proliferation as a Development Concern

Fifteen years ago, small arms did not make the list of topics on the international agenda. However, as evidence mounted that violence related to these arms was “killing people in the hundreds and thousands,”¹ that began to change. Initially, the international community approached the small arms issue by focusing on supply-side factors of small arms proliferation (such as production, stockpiling and transfers). Now, there is an increasing tendency to consider, in addition, the demand side of the equation, asking questions about *why* people acquire, use and abuse small arms.

QUNO was among the first to work extensively on questions of small arms demand, with a report dated April 2007 stating the following:

An important dimension of the growing sophistication of small arms analysis has been the understanding that dealing with small arms can not be seen just as an issue of traditional arms control but that factors which drive the proliferation and accumulation of small arms also need to be taken into account and appropriate policies devised. While “supply” and “demand” do not fully capture the nature of these relationships, the employment of this thinking has been helpful to gaining a fuller picture of what is required.

Over the last eight years or so, the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) has been active in seeking to illuminate factors related to the demand for small arms and in promoting a *comprehensive* supply-demand approach to small arms control.² [Italics added]

QUNO sees demand-work as “an effort to lessen the need by civilians to possess small arms by increasing their level of security, both perceived and actual. This is accomplished by fostering systems that offer civilians more assured physical security and extending this necessarily to economic, social and identity aspects (both individual and group).”³ In this line of thinking, “security” consists of several dimensions, and is approached from a rights-based perspective, as a basic entitlement for each individual. This exploration of security/insecurity and other recent work on the demand question allows us to draw several conclusions:

- There are links between widespread armed violence and deteriorating health, economic and social conditions within a given population,
- Armed violence affects poorer countries the most, having a negative impact on their development, including on their achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and
- Focused and sustainable development programming can lessen armed violence, while arms-reduction initiatives can enhance their development counterparts.

The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development is an important new process

underway which embodies these demand concerns. It represents the convergence in analysis that has led the development, small arms and security communities to investigate the links between development and armed violence issues. This interest is being driven, on one hand, by the need to assure sustainable development programmes in the many places where they are threatened by armed conflict and gun violence, and, on the other hand, by the realization that the effective control of armed violence and small arms proliferation depend in part on supportive development programming.

The Geneva Declaration: Armed Violence Reduction Through Development Programming

In 2006, during the lead-up to the UN's Review Conference on small arms, a clear majority of member states stated their belief that development and small arms control were integrally connected. Later that same year, in an initiative led by Switzerland and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), ministers from 42 northern and southern states endorsed the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. At the time of writing, 92 countries had endorsed the Declaration (See Annex I).

The original text of the Geneva Declaration speaks eloquently about a new integrated approach to reducing armed violence through development programming, calling upon states to “achieve demonstrable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and improvements in human security by 2015.”⁴ The Geneva Declaration (henceforth GD) approach involves several kinds of collaboration: between donor and developing states, between civil society and governments; and among security, development and human rights organizations (www.genevadeclaration.org).

The GD process is led by a Core Group⁵ of states for which Switzerland serves as the coordinator. The Core Group is responsible for designing concrete measures to advance the goals of the Geneva Declaration. In order to do this, they have designed a “*Framework for Implementation*,”⁶ which is centered around three pillars: -

- *Advocacy, Dissemination and Coordination* – raising global awareness amongst international organizations, national governments and civil society organizations about the negative impact of armed violence on development
- *Measurability and Research* – demonstrating quantitatively the extent of the linkages between armed violence and development, and the impacts that development programming has on armed violence reduction initiatives (and vice versa)
- *Programming* – developing and carrying out the commitments contained in the Geneva Declaration so as to make a measurable difference in the lives of individuals.

The Core Group has chosen to test this framework in key focus countries, namely **Burundi**, **Guatemala** and **Jamaica**. In addition, The GD is now reinforced and supplemented by

regional declarations signed in Guatemala and Kenya in 2007, Thailand in May 2008, with another for the Middle East region soon to follow (See Annex I). Furthermore, a review summit will be held in Geneva in September 2008 with the aim of submitting a draft resolution on Armed Violence and Development to the UN General Assembly later in the year.

The Geneva Declaration is at once a diplomatic initiative at the highest level, and a framework for concrete action at the grassroots level. Its supporters recognize its value as a tool for expanding the usually minimalist disarmament agenda through its emphasis on an integrated, rights-based approach to issues of small arms control.

So far, efforts to link policy and programming on these issues have taken two routes. The first is to explore effects of armed violence on development programming. The other traces the effect of development programmes on levels of armed violence.

The effects of armed violence on development

Armed violence affects the poorest countries, diverting resources from development initiatives. Armed violence “cost El Salvador \$1.7 billion in 2003, the equivalent of 11.5% of GDP, and more than twice as much as the country spends on health and education combined.”⁷

According to an alliance of U.S.-based NGOs, small arms proliferation undermines development because “fragile economies are damaged by small arms that fuel conflict and crime, development projects are hindered or deterred by small arms-related violence and [even] the threat of small arms violence deters scarce resources to security.”⁸ In addition, firearm injuries burden health facilities and have enormous economic costs. In 2000, the US is estimated to have paid over \$1.4 billion towards medical treatment of firearm injuries.⁹

As a major contribution to understanding policy linkages and assessing the impact of programming, the UK Department for International Development (DfID) commissioned the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative at the University of Bradford.¹⁰ The reports in 2005 and 2006 from this study listed a number of ways that armed violence has a clear impact on poverty:

Direct casualties – men (particularly young men) were the main perpetrators and victims of armed violence in each of the Bradford case studies. This has significant poverty implications through the costs of health care for victims, reducing labour power and skills, as well as increasing the number of female-headed households.

Displacement – After casualties, the biggest direct impact of armed conflict (but not of violent criminality) is the creation of refugees and internally displaced people.

Macro-economic costs – Armed violence slowed economic growth, deterred investment, disrupted socio-economic activity and was an overall drain on the economy in each case study.

Reduced social expenditure and service delivery, and increased social needs – In most of the case studies, the heavy financial cost of armed violence meant that the share of government expenditure going to the security sector rose, and provision of social services fell, particularly medical care and education. This has a knock-on impact on the spread of treatable illnesses and mortality rates, as well as the capacity of the local population to address developmental needs.

Disruption of trade – In all of the case studies dealing with armed conflict, supplies and transportation were severely disrupted. In the majority of the case studies, loss of trade and access to markets negatively impacted on people’s livelihoods.

Loss and depletion of livelihoods – There was a decline in the livelihoods of the majority of households, especially in rural areas, in each of the case studies.

Weakening social capital – In most of the case studies, armed violence eroded trust within and between communities, and undermined traditional governance and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Emergence of exploitative alternative political economies – Armed violence transformed economic activities in all of the case studies, normally leading to increased criminal activity (such as trafficking in guns, drugs, people and natural resources) that impoverished the many while benefiting the few. These were normally dependent on the use, or threat, of arms. Politics was often criminalized.

Disruption of development and humanitarian aid – Armed violence can lead to a ‘culture of withdrawal’ where development agencies are unable to deliver services in insecure areas. Aid workers are increasingly targets of violence and the costs of logistics and security have significantly increased, diverting resources from their intended recipients.¹¹

DfID’s Kate Joseph, like other observers, has pointed out that these factors constitute the biggest obstacles to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) because “on the one hand, poverty and underdevelopment increase the risks of insecurity, while on the other poor people cite insecurity as one of their greatest concerns....DFID has come to recognize that security should be seen as a basic entitlement of the poor, like health or education. Arms play an important role in this dynamic.”¹²

The effect of development programmes on levels of armed violence

A “comprehensive approach,” to weapons control involves a balance of both supply and demand measures. The demand for arms is seen to reside in the need by community members to address their perceived insecurity by the acquisition and use of weapons. This insecurity may have many dimensions: physical, social, ethnic and economic. Weapons – most often small arms – are viewed as a tool to achieve and maintain greater security, as an individual or group. Such factors also drive their employment in criminal activity.

Small arms researchers conceptualize this demand for small arms as an interaction of motivations (what people want) and means (what they can get): if you can’t afford or don’t want/need a gun, you won’t buy one.¹³

Development programming offers a community many opportunities to lessen the demand for

guns by influencing the *motivations* of potential gun owners and users and by adding to the availability of alternative, nonviolent *resources* for security. (Rising economic development indicators may stimulate an increased demand for weapons, if the motivations that drive gun ownership are not addressed.)

There is evidence of demand–related programming in every region of the world. This work has been carried out both in post-war and “peacetime” situations and has exploited a relatively wide range of means to tackle the root causes of armed violence in varied situations. Research has identified relevant activity focused on:

- Post-war transition, especially effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR);
- Participatory community development, addressing disparities and youth employment and training;
- Governance reform: issues of access, participation, policing and judiciary reform;
- Psycho-social change: gender, traditional structures;
- Conflict prevention and resolution, including training and capacity building.

By the time of the UN Review Conference on small arms in 2006 specialists were convinced that arms work “should be concerned not only with the weapons themselves, but with the structural factors such as the root socio-economic causes of armed violence and the need for alternatives to gun-based livelihoods.”¹⁴ This led them to support the proposal by the Geneva Declaration states and others that small arms work should be mainstreamed in development programming.

QUNO’s involvement in the Geneva Declaration Process

The Geneva Declaration process is innovative, attempting to link armed violence and development, disarmament and development communities, civil society and national governments. Its participants do not see it merely as another high-sounding statement of intent, but as a way of creating concrete, practical programmes on the ground, where the difference is made and felt in terms of lives and livelihoods. To achieve this, both state and civil society involvement is crucial.

QUNO’s pivotal role in consolidating discussions on the issues of small arms demand led Switzerland, in its position as coordinator for the Core Group of States, to solicit our participation in the GD process. Specifically, the Core Group requested QUNO to:

- coordinate civil society participation in regional meetings being held in support of the Declaration,
- facilitate the emerging partnership between governments and NGOs in the promotion of the Geneva Declaration goals and their implementation,
- Encourage and sustain efforts to build links and understanding between the development and disarmament communities.

As a result, in October 2007, QUNO was involved in briefing NGO representatives who participated in the Africa Regional Meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya. More recently, QUNO identified and coordinated the participation of several civil society organizations at a similar gathering held this May in Bangkok for the Asia-Pacific region.

In order to ensure strong, effective and focused civil society participation in the GD process, QUNO proposed the formation of an NGO Working Group on Armed Violence and Development. In January 2008, we brought together a small number of highly interested organizations from the security, development, conflict resolution and human rights fields to elaborate strategies for future civil society engagement with the process. The result was the creation of an international working group composed of a relatively small number of organizations with a good grasp of the issues and solid experience with global policy advocacy. The task the Core Group set before QUNO, a modest organization in terms of size and available resources, is rather substantial, but the establishment of the Working Group allows QUNO to partner with NGOs that have advocacy experience, regional connections and practical field experience in order to promote the GD and its aims.

It is worthwhile to note that work on the GD is connected in many ways to QUNO's work in support of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, which in a similar manner, is attempting to engage in a method of integrated thinking around a set of similar issues concerning security and its prerequisites. In addition, Burundi, a country where Quakers have long been active, is a common focus country of both the Peacebuilding Commission and the Geneva Declaration.

QUNO welcomes feedback on the issues highlighted in this paper from Quaker service organizations and our other partners involved in relevant areas of work. We are interested in finding out more about civil society organizations that are using development programming to reduce levels of armed violence, or alternatively, those working on weapons-reduction programmes with the aim of enhancing development initiatives. Please feel free to forward information about any such organizations or individual projects to QUNO at quno1@quno.ch, or dljackman@rogers.com. We will be happy to share this information with others through a regular newsletter we are producing as part of our engagement with the GD process. The newsletter aims to: a) promote among NGOs and governments an increased awareness of and engagement in the GD process; and b) generate awareness of the potential for action on armed violence and development issues more generally. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, please contact us at the addresses given above. You will also be able to access the newsletter, in addition to a range of other material on our website (www.quno.org), as well as the official website of the Geneva Declaration (www.genevadeclaration.org).

The following page provides a useful list of additional resources contact information. We hope that this background paper serves as an update of our recent work, and that it results in mutually beneficial discussion and collaboration around these issues.



Thank you
Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva.

Additional Information

WEBSITES

Quaker United Nations Office - www.quno.org
Geneva Declaration Official Website - www.genevadeclaration.org

NGO Working Group Members

Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation - www.csvr.org.za
Changemaker (Society for Social and Economic Development) -
www.changemaker-bd.org
Control Arms Foundation of India - <http://cafi-online.org/>
Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) - www.gppac.net
NonViolence International (Southeast Asia) - www.nonviolenceinternational.net/seasia
Norwegian Church Aid - <http://english.nca.no/>
Oxfam GB - www.oxfam.org.uk
Project Ploughshares - www.ploughshares.ca
Quaker United Nations Office - www.quno.org
South-Asia Partnership International - www.sapint.org
Uganda Joint Christian Council - www.ujcc.org
Viva Rio - [www.vivario.org.br/publicque/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?
tpl=home&UserActiveTemplate=vivario_en](http://www.vivario.org.br/publicque/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?tpl=home&UserActiveTemplate=vivario_en)
World Vision International - www.wvi.org

GD NEWSLETTER

Subscribe by writing to quno1@quno.ch
Previous editions available on the QUNO and GD websites

CONTRIBUTE STORIES

Share with us examples of activities which illustrate the links between armed violence and development that you or partner organizations may be involved in.

Write to us with your contributions at quno1@quno.ch

Endnotes

1. *Supplement to the Agenda for Peace*. United Nations General Assembly. A/50/60-S/1995/1, paras. 60-61. 3 January 1995.
2. *Setting a New Agenda for Demand Work: Next Steps in the Comprehensive Approach to Small Arms Control* p 1. Quaker United Nations Office April 2007 (Available online at http://www.quno.org/geneva/pdf/disarmament-peace/20070117SNADW%202704.pdf?ref_article=2580)
3. Background Paper: *The Future of Small Arms Demand Work* (appeared as Appendix 3 in *Setting A New Agenda for Demand Work: Next Steps in the Comprehensive Approach to Small Arms Control*. Quaker United Nations Office, April 2007).
4. Geneva Declaration Official Website: <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/context.html>
5. The members of the core group are Brazil, Guatemala, Finland, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom.
6. To refer to the *Framework for Implementation*, visit <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Framework.Implementation.AVD.Final.pdf>
7. IANSA Factsheet: *Gun Violence and Poverty* – <http://www.iansa.org/documents/index.htm>
8. Small Arms Working Group Fact Sheets: *Consequences of the Proliferation and Misuse of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, p 8. http://www.iansa.org/documents/2006/factsheets/SAWG_Small_Arms_Fact_Sheets_2006.pdf
9. *Ibid.*, p 14.
10. For the full report see Mandy Turner, Jeremy Giniifer and Lionel Cliffe, *The impact of armed violence on poverty and development: Full report of the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative*, Centre for International Cooperation and Security, University of Bradford, March 2005.
11. Owen Greene, “*Understanding Small Arms and Development: Recent Progress and Emerging Priorities*,” a paper presented at the expert seminar “Integrating Development into the UN Programme of Action Process,” Oslo, 22-23 March 2006 pp.1,2.
12. From a summary of a presentation by Kate Joseph, Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department, Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom, in Anne Thurin, “*Integrating Development into the UN Programme of Action Process, Report and Recommendations from an Expert Seminar, Oslo, 22–23 March 2006*,” PRIO, Oslo, 2006, p.9.
13. Robert Muggah, “*From Old to New: The Small Arms Demand Agenda*,” a paper presented at the QUNO Workshop “Setting a New Agenda for Demand Work,” Geneva, 17 January 2007, p 1.
14. *Integrating development and small arms control, IANSA policy recommendations for the RevCon*, IANSA, London, 2006, pp.3-4.

Annex I: The Geneva Declaration

Armed violence destroys lives and livelihoods, breeds insecurity, fear and terror, and has a profoundly negative impact on human development. Whether in situations of conflict or crime, it imposes enormous costs on states, communities and individuals.

Armed violence closes schools, empties markets, burdens health services, destroys families, weakens the rule of law, and prevents humanitarian assistance from reaching people in need. Armed violence kills -- directly and indirectly -- hundreds of thousands of people each year and injures countless more, often with lifelong consequences. It threatens permanently the respect of human rights.

Living free from the threat of armed violence is a basic human need. It is a precondition for human development, dignity and well-being. Providing for the human security of their citizens is a core responsibility of governments.

In the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, global leaders recognized the strong linkage and mutual reinforcement between development, peace, security and human rights. They stressed the right of people to live in dignity, free from fear and from want.

The international community has acknowledged that armed violence and conflict impede realization of the Millennium Development Goals, and that conflict prevention and resolution, violence reduction, human rights, good governance and peace-building are key steps towards reducing poverty, promoting economic growth and improving people's lives.

The Peacebuilding Commission, by establishing an institutional link between security and development, will also promote an integrated approach to post-conflict peace building and play a central role in addressing the problem of armed violence.

Recognizing these realities, we, Ministers and representatives from 42 countries, representing all the world's regions, have gathered in Geneva and have resolved to promote sustainable security and a culture of peace by taking action to reduce armed violence and its negative impact on socio-economic and human development.

We will strengthen our efforts to integrate armed violence reduction and conflict prevention programmes into national, regional and multilateral development frameworks, institutions and strategies, as well as into humanitarian assistance, emergency, and crisis management initiatives.

We will work individually and together, at national, regional and multilateral levels, on practical measures that:

- promote conflict prevention, resolution and reconciliation, and support post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction;
- stem the proliferation, illegal trafficking and misuse of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, and lead to effective weapons reduction, post-conflict disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and small arms control, including control of arms transfers and of illicit brokering;
- uphold full respect for human rights, promote the peaceful settlement of conflicts based on justice and the rule of law, and address a climate of impunity;
- foster effective and accountable public security institutions;
- promote a comprehensive approach to armed violence reduction issues, recognizing the different situations, needs and resources of men and women, boys and girls, as reflected in the provisions of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1612;
- ensure that armed violence prevention and reduction initiatives target specific risk factors and groups, and are linked to programmes providing non-violent alternative livelihoods for individuals and communities.

We will take further action to deal effectively both with the supply of, and the demand for, small arms and light weapons. This includes implementing fully existing instruments, in particular the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and promoting the development of further international instruments, including legally binding ones.

We commit to enhancing the financial, technical and human resources devoted to addressing armed violence issues in a cooperative, comprehensive and coordinated manner, including working *inter alia* to advance this issue within the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other relevant organizations.

We will support initiatives to measure the human, social and economic costs of armed violence, to assess risks and vulnerabilities, to evaluate the effectiveness of armed violence reduction programmes, and to disseminate knowledge of best practices. We will work with affected states and communities, and with the donor community, to promote solutions, including capacity-building, at the local, national, regional and global level.

We will strive to achieve, by 2015, measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security worldwide.

We will work in partnership with the development, peace and security-building, public health, humanitarian, human rights and criminal justice communities, and, recognizing the important role civil society has to play in reducing armed violence, promote active partnerships between governments, international organizations and civil society.

We will present this declaration to the upcoming UN conference to review the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

We commit ourselves to pursuing this initiative in all appropriate fora and to meeting again no later than 2008 to assess our progress in achieving these goals.

Geneva, 7 June 2006

Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, **Brazil**, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, **Finland**, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, **Guatemala**, Honduras, **Indonesia**, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, **Kenya**, Korea (Republic of), Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, **Morocco**, Mozambique, **The Netherlands**, New Zealand, Nigeria, **Norway**, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, **Switzerland**, **Thailand**, Timor Leste, **United Kingdom**.

Since 7 June 2006, further States have endorsed the Geneva Declaration. These States are:

Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Niger, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, **Spain**, Sudan, Tajikistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Regional Declarations on Armed Violence and Development

Each Regional Meeting in support of the Geneva Declaration Process has been accompanied by the formulation of a Regional Declaration in order to capture particular regional perspectives on armed violence and development.

April 2007 - Regional Declaration of Guatemala on Armed Violence and Development

http://genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Guatemala_Declaration_English.pdf

October 2007 - Africa Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

http://genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Africa_Declaration_English.pdf

May 2008 - Asia-Pacific Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

<http://genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Bangkok%20AVD%20Declaration.pdf>

- As of 1 June 2008, there are 92 signatories to the Geneva Declaration
- Core Group States are denoted by bold lettering

Notes

