



The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

An International Newsletter on integrating armed violence prevention and reduction into development strategies

Issue 3, October 2008

Introduction: This e-publication is designed to support the *Geneva Declaration* (GD) process and to encourage activities by governments, international organizations and civil society to link development programming with armed violence prevention and reduction strategies. The GD, which is now endorsed by 94 states worldwide, is committed to translate its objectives into concrete steps based on “**Advocacy**”, “**Measurability and Research**” and “**Programming**” as its three programmatic pillars. (For more information on the *Geneva Declaration* and its activities see the web site: www.genevadeclaration.org)

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1. Geneva Declaration Review Summit, Geneva, September 12, 2008. High level representatives from 85 of the endorsing states met in Geneva to assess the progress made on the GD and to reaffirm their commitment to the process. Along with the foreign and development ministers and other governmental officials were representatives from 16 international organizations and 35 NGOs from around the world. Kathleen Cravero, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery at UNDP, gave a very clear and powerful opening speech that emphasized the need to combine concrete action, driven by national leadership and sound programmes that depend in turn on solid, broad based partnerships. Keith Krause, Director of Small Arms Survey, followed this opening with the findings of a new SAS study assessing “The Global Burden of Armed Violence.” (See the description below.) During the rest of the very full agenda, individual state speakers talked about the GD as a framework for action, and a large panel of government and NGO speakers described the practical ways that the GD is being implemented on the ground in the six GD focus countries and other settings. The Summit left a very clear impression of the growing political support, both in the north and south,

for the GD process and of the increasing experience with practical programme applications in varied situations.

For the text of the Statement from the Review Summit see: <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Geneva-Declaration-Review-Summit-Statement-final-12092008-ENGLISH.pdf>

On September 11, the day before the formal Summit, some 40 NGOs met in Geneva for day-long programme of briefings and consultation, culminating in a public meeting that highlighted seven programmes around the world that vividly illustrated the key factors identified by UNDP at the Summit, especially the practical details of work at ground level and the crucial need for cooperation between governments and civil society. (For more information on these panel presentations contact Adam Drury at quno1@quno.ch)

2. “Global Burden of Armed Violence.” As mentioned above, in the report on the Review Summit, this new study by Small Arms Survey is a major contribution to understanding the nature of armed violence around the world and its impact on development.

In its summary the report concludes that “armed violence imposes a tremendous human and economic burden on individuals, families, and communities. More than 740,000 people die each year as a result of the violence associated with armed conflicts and large- and small-scale criminality. The majority of these deaths—as many as 490,000—occur outside war zones.” It goes on to underline that it is “the fourth leading cause of death for persons between the ages of 15 and 44 worldwide. In more than 40 countries, it is one of the top ten causes of death.” Its damaging effects on individuals also include physical and mental disabilities, brain and internal organ injuries, chronic pain syndrome, and a range of sexual and reproductive health problems. More broadly it also “corrodes the social fabric of communities, sows fear and insecurity, destroys human and social capital, and undermines development investments and aid effectiveness.” In affected countries it “reduces gross domestic product (GDP) growth by more than two per cent annually, with effects lingering many years after the fighting ends. The economic cost—in terms of lost productivity—of non-conflict armed violence (large- and small-scale criminal and political violence) is USD 95 billion and could reach up to USD 163 billion annually worldwide.”

The report insists that armed violence is preventable. The remedies include more consistent monitoring of trends, more effective measurement of risks and impacts associated with violence and of the effectiveness of intervention strategies to reduce it. “Investing in armed violence prevention and reduction will also mean supporting and reinforcing the capacity of public and private actors to design, execute, and monitor interventions.” The authors view the report as only a first, but nevertheless crucial step “towards achieving measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security worldwide.” You can view and download the text at <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/resources-armed-violence-report.html>

3. UN Third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS III) on small arms, New York, 14-18 July 2008. (Formal title: Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementa-

tion of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects). While the formal agenda of the BMS III was focused on the discussion of three relatively non-contentious issues related to the control of small arms and light weapons, a large number of states took the opportunity to emphasize a more comprehensive approach that includes reducing the demand for these weapons as well as their supply.

Among the 24 topics listed in the BMS report as “other issues” addressed by states were nine with crucial relevance to armed violence and development (AVD) programming. These included overarching concerns about “linkages between security, armed violence, development and human rights;” as well as demand and supply issues and addressing the root causes of the illicit trade in small arms. More specifically, states also pointed to the need for programming on security sector and governance reform, community-based policing, gender perspectives, victim assistance and the special needs of children. To underline these points, two of the many sidebar presentations at the BMS tackled issues related to AVD, including a panel presentation on practical programmes related to the Geneva Declaration itself. In connection with the GD event Small Arms Survey released a new *Background Paper* on “Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction: A Challenge for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals” (available in the *Resources* section of the GD web site). All the BMS III documents are available at <http://disarmament.un.org/cab/bms3/1BMS3Pages/1schedule%20of%20the%20side%20events.html>

4. Upcoming GD Regional Meeting for Eastern and S.E. Europe and the Caucasus, Sarajevo, November 13-14, 2008. This meeting, like the earlier ones in the Latin America, Africa and Asia-Pacific regions will be an opportunity for states and civil society to further widen the base of support for the GD and to look at ways to implement it that are responsive to local and regional conditions. The meeting will be co-hosted by the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Switzerland in close cooperation with UNDP. As at past meetings the process will include the final endorsement of a regional declaration on AVD, along with presentations and discussion about the specific impact of armed violence in the region and practical programmes for its reduction. For more information on the specific countries to be invited or to offer suggestions regarding appropriate NGOs participation, contact David Jackman at dljackman@rogers.com

5. Programming on the Ground: *The following are a few of the many examples of AVD field programmes that illustrate efforts to reduce armed violence through focused development work. These short descriptions provide ideas for initiatives that can be undertaken by government, civil society and international organizations.*

- **The Sub regional Programme on Small Arms in West Africa** was a two-year pilot project organized in four West African countries (Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia and Guinea-Conakry). It was designed to make a contribution toward reducing the proliferation of small arms in a region where weapons and the insecurity they cause have many cross border effects. The result has been improved se-

curity and better availability of economic opportunity in host areas and a diversified and well-trained capacity for further integrated work on small arms and development in the region. The programme was intentionally carried out through extensive collaboration with national and regional partner organizations. At the national level partners included development- and small arms-focused NGOs. Regionally there was advice and cooperation from diverse actors: Interpol (policing, security); ECOWAS (economic and political); and WAANSA (small arms control). After a design phase conducted with the national partner NGOs, the programme was implemented in four stages that focused on: capacity building; sensitization; arms collection and development projects; and monitoring (through a comparative legislative study and regional meetings). There was a major emphasis on extensive dialogue and education at the local level, and in addition the regional scale of the work allowed for much more extensive training and programming. The initial international partners CECI (Montreal, Canada) and Oxfam GB are seeking funding for a follow up programme for the region on “Security and Development,” a title that suggests the intended shift toward broader content and a more integrated style of work. For more information contact Mohamed Coulibaly (mocoulibaly@oxfam.org.uk) or Suzanne Dumouchel (suzanned@ceci.ca)

- **Working with young people in tribal areas in Pakistan.** This programme is organized by Community Appraisal and Motivation Programme (CAMP), a Peshawar based NGO. CAMP is working on improving the development indicators in remote and under-developed tribal areas, which creates hope for reducing armed violence. It uses development as an entry point in promoting and ensuring peace in those areas. The work began with capacity building of NGOs and community groups in conflict resolution and conflict transformation skills. This was followed by an initiative focused on working with High Risk Youth who are mostly unemployed and can become easy prey for recruitment by militant “Taliban” groups. CAMP has been mobilizing the youth of tribal areas through the formation of youth groups, followed by a series of preliminary skills training programmes focusing on building organizational and leadership capacities. As a follow-up step, CAMP is about to embark upon the second phase of the programme: the formation of a “Youth Jirga for Peace”, which aims to engage the unemployed and idle youth of tribal areas in productive activities. For more information contact: Naveed Ahmad Shinwari, at naveed@camp.org.pk or see www.camp.org.pk
- **Cross Border peacemaking by labour unions in Northern Ireland.** The Moving On Project equips trade union representatives with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to engage more effectively with and on behalf of their members on the issues of peace and reconciliation, good relations in the workplace, equity, diversity and interdependence. Moving On recruits and trains experienced representatives to become champions for change within their trade unions and workplace. Key objectives include mainstreaming themes relating to equality and reconciliation into the workplace thus contributing to better employment cultures and to a more peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland; and developing meaningful and sustainable cross-

border partnerships within and between trade unions to build peace and cooperation at the level of the workplace and in the community. The organizing group is City Bridges, a trade union initiative which aims to tackle prejudice and discrimination in society and the workplace. For more information contact citybridges@utvinternet.com or view www.citybridges.org

- **MENTOR-VIP global mentoring Programme.** The World Health Organization has launched a global mentoring program for injury and violence prevention practitioners seeking to share or develop new skills. MENTOR-VIP has been developed through the efforts of WHO and a network of global injury prevention experts. Mentoring allows for skills development through exchange of experience between a more skilled or experienced person and a person seeking to develop those skills. See www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/capacitybuilding/mentor_vip

6. Publication Notes: *The following are recent publications selected from a variety of sources that describe various aspects of work on armed violence and development issues:*

- **Linking development and security –the case of Sierra Leone.** This conference in London on 8 May, 2008, was a rare opportunity to bring together the key actors engaged in a country's SSR programme, to reflect on the process and to field questions and share experiences with audience members from government departments and other relevant organizations. The discussion touched on core debates echoed in SSR processes throughout the world, including local ownership and the need for a comprehensive approach to reform, as well detailing achievements and difficulties specific to Sierra Leone. See a detailed report on the conference at <http://www.ssrnetwork.net/events/development.php#report>
- ***Peace? Approaches to Peacebuilding:*** Global Peacebuilders, an international network of conflict resolution, conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives, presents a report on community-level activities contributing to a sustainable peace by creating opportunities for individuals and peacebuilding groups to strengthen relationships and share practice. In order to download the report see: http://www.humansecuritygateway.info/documents/GPB_peace-approachestopeacebuilding.pdf
- **The Sudan Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) Project:** The Sudan Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) is a multi-year research project administered by the Small Arms Survey, an independent research project of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. It has been developed in cooperation with the Canadian government, UNMIS, UNDP, and NGO partners. Through the active generation and dissemination of timely empirical research, the project supports violence reduction initiatives, including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, incentive schemes for civilian arms collections and security sector reform and arms control interventions across Sudan. The HSBA also offers policy-relevant guidance on redressing insecurity. The

project publishes its findings regularly in two separate formats, Issue Briefs and Working Papers, as well as in occasional op-eds and practitioner articles. Publications are available in English, Arabic and French (in the case of research on the Central African Republic and Chad). For details see: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/sudan/sudan.html>

- Also consult www.genevadeclaration.org/resources.html

7. Need for More information: *Do you want to share information about activities that are ongoing in your country and publications that show the interface between armed violence prevention and reduction with development?*

If you have some information about successful projects—previous or ongoing—that you think would be relevant, please share them with our readers. Send suggestions and any relevant web addresses to QUNO at quno1@quno.ch

Please visit <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/context.html> for more information.

To contact the editors regarding the content of this newsletter, send an email message to newsletter@genevadeclaration.org

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