



The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

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

Issue 6, May 2009

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 106 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)

Opening Words:

“This violence has not shaken us as yet because we do not see the boys, lying there in blood, as ours. Somehow, we have not connected that and it has worked against us. We talk about crime and gun violence in this country and see it in terms of poor, young, black youth. When we start to have a holistic look at crime, we begin to understand how crime on a higher level impacts this gun violence we have now. We need to track that and stop that trickle-down.” *Nadine Lewis Agard, quoted in Trinidad and Tobago Express, April 19, 2009.* http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161466530

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***Campaigning:** To date the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development has been adopted formally by 106 states, Nicaragua being the latest country to sign up. Over 100 countries now support the efforts by the promoters of the Geneva Declaration to link violence reduction and development efforts.*

1. Governments invited to send views on the relationship between armed violence and development to the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) by May 31. As reported in the last issue of the GD Newsletter, General Assembly Resolution A/RES/63/23 requests that UN member states send their views and other relevant information to the UNSG by May 31, 2009. Given the fast approaching deadline, the GD Core Group organized consultations in New York, Geneva and Vienna to encourage states to send useful and comprehensive replies to the UN SG. In addition the members of the Core Group are organizing diplomatic *demarches* in national capitals to encourage submissions. As of 4 May, the submissions of five countries have been posted on the UN website (Chile, Lebanon, Netherlands, Qatar, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). For more information on the resolution and its reporting process see:

http://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/SALW/Html/Armed_Violence-MSViews.shtml and

http://www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/UNSGconsultations_armed_violence.htm;

Civil Society organizations are also working to support national submissions. They have drafted suggested “Guidelines” for national reports that NGOs can offer as a resource to their own governments. The document lists a wide range of government initiatives that could be considered as aspects of national armed violence and development programming. For information on the Guidelines see:

(English) www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/documents/GuidelinesAVD.doc

(French) www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/documents/note_indicatrice.doc

(Spanish) www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/documents/lineamientos.doc

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2. Sub-regional Seminar on armed violence and development for the countries of Central America. A seminar on armed violence and development for the countries of Central America was organized in Cartagena, Colombia from 20 to 23 April. The organizers were Spain, UNDP(BCPR) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLiREC). The participants—government and civil society representatives from Central American countries and Colombia as well as representatives from various international bodies such as the World Bank and UNODC—discussed concrete experiences and practices that reduce armed violence for a better development as well as economic and social development strategies that can contribute to a reduction of armed violence in Central America, the world’s sub-region most affected by armed violence.

3. Kenya: Regional Briefing on the Geneva Declaration. Civil society groups were invited to a meeting at the Finnish Embassy in Nairobi and were briefed on the implementation of the Geneva Declaration in Kenya and East Africa. A number of Embassy staff based in Nairobi attended the meeting. Presentations were made by UNDP, key Kenya

government departments, including small arms and light weapons, peace-building and conflict management, and by Oxfam GB. This kind of effort to build synergy and complementarity is an approach that will help civil society and other like minded organizations to effectively implement the Geneva Declaration.

4. New Geneva Declaration Report on Armed Violence in Burundi. In 2008, more than 1,000 people were killed and nearly 1,300 injured by armed violence in Burundi, where the homicide rate is relatively high at 12.3 for 100,000 inhabitants. These and other findings are revealed in “Insecurity Is Also a War: An Assessment of Armed Violence in Burundi,” a new study by the Small Arms Survey on behalf of the Geneva Declaration. In order to combat armed violence, the report highlights priority areas for action, such as increasing the capacity to provide security and administer justice, reducing the vulnerability of populations at risk, and setting up a civilian disarmament programme. The Report was carried out in cooperation with the Burundian National Commission for Civilian Disarmament and Prevention of Weapons Proliferation (CDCPA) and the non-governmental organization Ligue Iteka, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Swiss and British governments. See: <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/resources-armed-violence-burundi.html>

5. Programming on the Ground. *The implementation of the Geneva Declaration focuses increasingly on concrete projects that link the reduction/prevention of armed violence and development. It is hoped that ongoing and future successful project activities can provide best practice approaches inspire governments, civil society and the international donor community to address this complex interrelationship. Civil society plays a key role in the realization of these projects thereby contributing significantly to one of the key aims of the Geneva Declaration, namely “to strive to achieve, by 2015, measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security worldwide”.*

Liberia: UNDP Receives Arms for Development Grant. The Government of Japan has made a \$1.6 million grant to support UNDP’s national armed violence programme and the Arms for Development project in Liberia. Despite the completion of the Disarmament and Demobilization (DD) phase of the DDR programme in November 2004, large quantities of small arms and light weapons are still in circulation in Liberia. Arms for Development provides project grants of up to \$40,000 to communities that have been declared arms free by the Liberia National Police and UNMIL, the UN peacekeeping force in Liberia. For more information check the “Small Arms and Light Weapons” section under “Country Programmes” at <http://www.lr.undp.org/>

Caribbean Region: Conference on Women and Violence Prevention. The Women's Institute for Alternative Development (WINAD), in conjunction UNICEF, hosted a 2 day regional conference “Women Talking with Women: Crime and Violence in the Caribbean” in Trinidad and Tobago (15-16 April 2009). The conference provided a forum for 150 women representatives from women, youth, labour and community organizations, as well as government agencies from Antigua, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trini-

dad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos, USA and Venezuela. The meeting outcomes included a 10 point Regional Action Plan, along with other policies and actions to promote women's involvement in violence prevention and peacebuilding. View the Regional Action Plan at: <http://www.winad.org/upload/winadresllpress2.pdf> and a news interview at: http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_news?id=161466530

Nepal: Perceptions of Security. In 2008, following earlier research from the year before, Saferworld and Interdisciplinary Analysts (IDA) conducted a survey of over 3,000 people from across Nepal to find out what they thought about major peace and security issues. The survey was complemented with key informant interviews and validation workshops. The research found that people are increasingly willing to go to the police and feel that security services are making efforts to improve the country's situation—but also that people are becoming less patient and are keen to see tangible improvements in their security. The number of people who think that the country is 'moving in the right direction' also dropped by 20% from the results in 2007. A summary is available at: <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/images/pubdocs/SW-IDA%20Nepal%20briefing.pdf>

Sierra Leone: Youth unemployment may derail stability. Most of the youths in Koidu were combatants in the 1991-2002 civil war, according to local youth councilor Tamba Kakarnbanja. With 60 percent of Sierra Leonean youths unemployed according to the government – one of the highest rates in the world – some youth employment experts fear young people's growing disaffection combined with chronic poverty and high cost of living pose a threat to stability. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83278>

USA/Canada: Prevention, Enforcement Beat Penalties in Curbing Gun Crime. “The U.S. Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has developed a best practices model for addressing existing or emerging youth-gang problems, focusing on a strategic planning process for communities with problems, which empowers these communities to undertake a full range of anti-gang programs and activities. There is a wealth of literature on the possibilities, and a clear indication that what works in one community may be quite different from what works in another. Former gang members are the most critical catalysts for change.” *From “Don't Message the Shooter,” Neil Boyd, Globe and Mail (Canada), March 7, 2009* <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20090306.wcoessay0307/BNStory/specialComment>

Yemen: Peacebuilding Training for Muslim Clerics. The Dar al-Salam Organization for Combating the Carrying of Weapons and Arms has completed a training course for Muslim clerics on combating extremism and promoting small arms control. The event was sponsored by Yemen's Ministry of Endowment and Guidance and the Dutch Ministry of Development and is part of a strategy that seeks to establish up to 80 courses for both Islamic clerics and private educational institutions on preventing armed violence and terrorism. 85 male and female students from the Sana'a governorate took part in a theatrical performance on peace building, which was also produced and directed by Dar al-Salam. http://www.iansa.org/regions/nafrica/yemen_demand09.htm

Ecuador: Gang members trade guns for scissors and nail polish. In the most dangerous neighborhood of Guayaquil—Ecuador's largest and most crime-ridden city—a dozen youths are busy working in the Paz Urbana Print Shop. By the entrance, a young man designs a T-shirt logo with graffiti paint. In the back, amid the hip-hop music and paint fumes, tattooed young men with baggy pants and baseball caps compile an order of worksheets for schools. The print shop is part of an organization of small businesses, including a bakery, a beauty parlor, and a dance school, with a surprising business model—they are entirely run by former Ecuadorean street gang members, many of whom were once rivals. At the heart of this operation that has helped produce a dramatic drop in neighborhood crime is a former nun and school teacher, Nelsa Curbelo, from Uruguay.

The Christian Science Monitor, January 22, 2009

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0122/p01s03-woam.html>

Pakistan: Civil Society Groups Urge Government to Support Global Gun Trade Treaty. Members of civil society organizations have decided to initiate an advocacy and lobbying campaign to urge their government to become a part of the Global Arms Trade Treaty and ratify the United Nations CRC Optional Protocol-II, which deals with the involvement of children in conflicts. In a press statement issued after the concluding session of the two-day event Karachi University Department of International Relations Assistant Professor Naeem Ahmed said that government alienation and poor infrastructure breeds violence. He was of the view that the increase in socio-economic and political opportunities for the common man can help minimize the use of arms. *Daily Times* (Lahore) 10 February, 2009

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C02%5C07%5Cstory_7-2-2009_pg12_9

Kenya: Community Policing. The Home Again Self Help Group has welcomed a new government initiative to introduce community policing in the slums. Members report that there is an alarming rate of armed violence in poor areas, particularly against women and girls, who have been raped in front of their families at gunpoint and also that many women were raped by armed police during the post-election violence in January. Home Again Self Help is running a door-to-door campaign to target youth groups on preventing gun violence and reporting any form of violence through the community police. See IANSA Update, Dec. 19, 2008 at www.iansa.org

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:*

Armed Violence Reduction—Enabling Development. The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) approved this policy paper in January 2009 to help the international community to better understand and respond to the dynamics of armed violence. It outlines how practitioners on the ground can combine different assessment methods and programming responses for more effective interventions to reduce and prevent armed violence, as for example taking a public health approach to map armed violence patterns, “hot spots”, risk factors and protective factors. The publication is designed to support the efforts of international actors to transform good words into concrete programmes. Policy

advisors at headquarters and programme staff on the ground—especially in countries with challenging armed violence problems—are strongly encouraged to benefit from the analysis in this policy paper. For more information see http://www.oecd.org/document/21/0,3343,en_2649_33693550_42281877_1_1_1_1,00.html

Strengthening the Economic Dimensions of Peacebuilding. This series of four case studies is published by International Alert. It explores the ways in which the economic causes, drivers and impacts of conflict have been tackled in different ways in a number of conflict-affected countries. The aim is to encourage cross-country learning, and inform the international debate on how to adapt economic development interventions to conflict contexts, to make them conflict-sensitive, and able to support longer-term peacebuilding. Each case study focuses on a particular aspect of economic recovery: in Uganda (enabling peace economies through early recovery), in Nepal (the role for business in post-conflict economic recovery), in Sri Lanka (rethinking the nexus between youth, unemployment and conflict), and in Colombia (the challenges of supporting 'alternative' livelihoods opportunities for peacebuilding). The full programme and four case studies are available at: http://www.international-alert.org/peace_and_economy/index.php?t=3

Lessons from Liberia: Integrated Approaches to Peace-building in Transitional Settings. (Dr Erin McCandless, Occasional Paper 160, Institute for Security Studies, March 2008) This paper takes as its starting point the fact that integrated, strategic processes lie at the heart of effective peacebuilding. Alongside national governments and civil society actors, integrated missions, where they exist, are key players in this process; however, the resources they can bring to bear need to be better understood and utilized in ways that genuinely serve our growing, collective understanding about how to sustain peace. As the Peace Building Commission and other UN partners work to shape consensus around the meaning of peacebuilding and the integrated strategic processes at the core of its practice, the Liberian case offers rich insights unfolding in one post-conflict setting. http://www.iss.co.za/index.php?link_id=3&slink_id=5915&link_type=12&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3

Public oversight of the security sector: a handbook for civil society organizations.

Governments tend to keep a tight reign on the security sector. However, civil society has a very important role to play in ensuring that the security sector is not only law-abiding but also transparent and accountable. This is especially true when there are insufficient public oversight bodies to keep the sector in check. This handbook aims to provide civil society organizations with the necessary tools to be able to monitor the security sector in a democratic setting. It not only gives guidance on awareness-raising, budget analysis, advocacy training and monitoring, but also offers specific recommendations regarding gender, human rights, international alliances and other issues. Produced by: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces the handbook is available at: http://www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/?doc=42007&em=2_30209&sub=conf

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 vi-

olence 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 qu-no1@quno.ch

Please visit <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/context.html> for more information. To contact the editor regarding the content of this newsletter, send an email message to newsletter@genevadeclaration.org

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