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Killing Many Birds with Few Stones: Integrating ERW and SALW Actions with Peace-Building Efforts

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NOTE

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This paper is based in part on a project undertaken by Fafo and Landmine Action UK called *Mine Action Contributions to Peace-building*. The project organized a series of mine action/peace-building roundtables with national and international mine action and peace-building practitioners in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka and Sudan. The roundtables were designed to generate substantive discussion based on and informed by the participants' own experiences, so as to generate more insights into the inter-relationships between the two sectors that reflects concrete, on-the-ground experience. Support for the project was provided by the Governments of Canada, Norway and Switzerland.

SUMMARY

All modern armed conflicts generate residual hazardous items, in the form of mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), and through unchecked proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). These constitute a real and tangible threat to the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities, and create serious obstacles to attempts to rebuild war-torn communities. Controlling and removing them is therefore a key element in establishing and sustaining peace, which in turn is a precondition for sustainable social and economic development.

This paper briefly examines the relationship between the peace-building and the mine/ERW and disarmament sectors, and identifies the concrete analytical and field-based linkages, synergies, potential complicating factors, and means of complementarity and integration between the two sectors. The paper argues that the efficacy and impact of mine/ERW action, SALW programmes, and peace-building are strengthened, not diluted, through greater mutual recognition of roles and responsibilities, cooperation, and integration. However, we also contend that the current ad hoc and instrumentalist approach of mine/ERW action, and to a lesser degree of SALW action, toward peace-building (and vice versa) can only be counteracted if policy makers and practitioners from all sectors actively plan for functional integration in the implementation of the activities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 1

Armed threats to human security in post-conflict situations 2

 Mines and ERW..... 2

 Small arms and light weapons..... 3

 Challenges of peace-building in a post-conflict environment..... 5

 Responses to the problems 5

 Improving interaction among the sectors and actors..... 6

 Mine/ERW action, SALW action, and peace-building efforts:
 analytical and field approaches 9

Recommended principles for European commission policies and practice..... 10

Acronyms..... 15

KILLING MANY BIRDS WITH FEW STONES: INTEGRATING ERW AND SALW ACTIONS WITH PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS

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INTRODUCTION

All modern armed conflicts generate residual hazardous items, in the form of mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), and through unchecked proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). These constitute a real and tangible threat to the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities, and create serious obstacles to attempts to rebuild war-torn communities. Controlling and removing them is therefore a key element in establishing and sustaining peace, which in turn is a precondition for sustainable social and economic development. Actions to control and remove mines, ERW and SALW have concrete and beneficial effects on people's daily lives: they also have a deeper significance, by dismantling and demobilizing instruments of war that belligerent parties are hesitant to give up unless an enduring peace is planned or foreseen.

It is generally assumed that the peace-building efforts that start once conflict ends naturally and automatically benefit from mine and ERW action¹ and SALW programmes. This paper briefly examines the relationship between the peace-building and the mine/ERW and disarmament sectors, and identifies the concrete analytical and field-based linkages, synergies, potential complicating factors, and means of complementarity and integration between the two sectors. The paper argues that the efficacy and impact of mine/ERW action, SALW programmes, and peace-building are strengthened, not diluted, through greater mutual recognition of roles and responsibilities, cooperation, and integration. However, we also contend that the current ad hoc and instrumentalist approach of mine/ERW action, and to a lesser degree of SALW action, toward peace-building (and vice versa) can only be counteracted if policy makers and practitioners from all sectors actively plan for functional integration in the implementation of the activities. This may be achieved through awareness of how the sectors can concretely and constructively interact; knowledge of what the other actors in the field are doing; an understanding of their own role and its broader impact—including potential unintended consequences; and openness to different methods, means of coordination, and participatory approaches.

There is no single way to deal with the complex problems arising from mines/ERW and the unchecked proliferation of SALW. Small arms, mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), ammunition, and other explosive remnants of war share similar features, such as the technical capacity to maim, kill and coerce people, but are also distinguished by specific characteristics that determine the parameters for the actions needed to address the problems. Nevertheless, we argue that the common features justify an attempt to see actions to reduce the humanitarian impact from mines, ERW, and SALW as a functionally integrated field, and not as isolated fields of knowledge and action. This view partly reflects the fact that Fafo's main and most recent experience is from the mine action field, as opposed to SALW. We contend, however, that our findings from research into how mine action relates to peace-building are, to a large degree, also relevant to SALW action. We also urge actors from the peace-building, mine/ERW, and SALW communities to look

beyond organizational or sectoral borders and increase their strategic and programmatic cooperation and coordination.

The relationship between peace-building and broader development efforts is not addressed extensively in this paper. It is difficult to draw clear boundaries between peace-building and development programmes, as they tend to overlap; but as a rule of thumb, they can be differentiated by the time horizons of the activities and by specific policies and practices involved. Peace-building tends to be viewed, rather unhelpfully, as a shorter-term project undertaken in immediate proximity to a period of conflict. In addition, peace-building encompasses governance, security, and justice/rule of law projects, in addition to poverty alleviation and other economic issues typical to development activities. Our work here is predicated on the assumption that, because successful peace-building is a component (if not prerequisite) of long-term development, any improvement to peace-building planning and implementation implies a strengthening of development efforts; however, as noted above, we do not focus specifically on development in this paper.

It is important to emphasize that establishing connections between, and arguing for greater cooperation and integration of, mine/ERW action, SALW action and peace-building is not intended to subordinate one objective to the other. Our purpose is simply to show how the sectors already interact, and how these linkages could be practically strengthened and improved to mutual benefit and in pursuit of a common goal: sustained peace and security in areas emerging from conflict.

In the following sections, we will briefly examine the challenges and activities involved in reducing the impact from mines, ERW and SALW, and in peace-building, followed by a short discussion and critique of the growing literature focusing on those sectors.

ARMED THREATS TO HUMAN SECURITY IN POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

MINES AND ERW

Actions to reduce the impact from mines and ERW are commonly referred to as humanitarian mine action (HMA). HMA is a relatively new endeavour, beginning in the late 1980s in Afghanistan, and has since become a key activity in many countries undergoing or emerging from conflict. Previously, mine clearance was conducted entirely by militaries; humanitarian mine action, in contrast, is performed largely by civilian organizations—chiefly non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—where the prefix “humanitarian” refers to the clearing of mines for humanitarian (rather than strategic or military) reasons, as well as the standards and practices used by these organizations. In this context, the term humanitarian does not primarily make claims about the impartiality, neutrality, or independence of the actors involved. Thus, national militaries can conduct humanitarian mine action so long as they follow the prescribed standards and procedures, even though militaries are clearly not impartial, neutral, independent, or humanitarian organizations.

According to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) promulgated by the United Nations, mine action refers to

activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of mines and ERW. ...
The objective of mine action is to reduce the risk from landmines to a level where people can live safely;

in which economic, social, and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine and ERW contamination, and in which victims' needs can be addressed.²

This definition is useful because it emphasizes that landmines and ERW are not just physical threats, but also impediments to development and post-conflict reconstruction—for example, by preventing the productive use of land and infrastructure rehabilitation. The presence of mines also has negative impacts on social and economic rehabilitation and recovery, by keeping citizens in a state of fear and distrust.

Explosive remnants of war are defined by Article 2 of Protocol V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as “unexploded ordnance and abandoned explosive ordnance,” where “unexploded ordnance” is understood as munitions (e.g. bombs, shells, mortars, grenades, etc.) that were used but did not detonate as intended.³

In practice, mine action agencies will strive to safely remove and destroy all kinds of mines and ERW found within their areas of operation, regardless of where the specific weapon or explosive belongs institutionally in a regulatory context. Many mine action operations are rooted in the political efforts to ban landmines, partly codified in the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine (APM) Ban Convention, but that background does not limit their operations to mines only: most mine action agencies will also attempt to collect and receive, store, or destroy SALW found within their operational areas. That said, such operations would, in most instances, be undertaken as additional tasks to their main responsibilities. Because these organizations are funded mainly from designated mine action budgets, extensive SALW management—however relevant to the security environment—may create certain administrative problems. Accordingly, some mine action agencies have recently started using separate SALW management responses.⁴

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

The category of small arms and light weapons is incredibly broad, potentially including all “weapons that can be carried by an individual”⁵ ranging from pistols, revolvers, and rifles to more military-style weapons like machine guns, light mortars, handheld rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers, and shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles. SALW could also encompass anti-personnel mines, but in this paper we are distinguishing between APM and SALW, for the reason that APM clearly fall into the domain of mine action while other small arms and light weapons traditionally have not—instead being the focus of disarmament and buy-back programmes. We use SALW to refer to civilian and military-style weapons in circulation outside of official (law enforcement and military/peacekeeping or security services) control.

The proliferation of SALW in conflict and post-conflict societies is a serious security, social, and political challenge on macro (national and regional) and micro (individual and community) levels. It also provokes criminality—including the consolidation and spread of transnational organized crime networks—and enables vigilantism, thus undermining the rule of law. The situation in Iraq following the 2003 invasion is one example of the destabilizing potential of large numbers of SALW; the failed attempt to disarm militias in Liberia in late 2003, another.

Yet the small arms community has been mainly policy-oriented, with less technical field experience than the mine/ERW sector in dealing with the hard end of the problem: the safe removal and destruction of the arms themselves. In this respect, it is problematic that there is no unifying comprehensive legal or political framework in which to deal with the problem of small

arms. The field lacks a mobilizing focus: unlike anti-personnel mines, there are no international conventions banning the production, use, or proliferation of SALW.

Operationally, furthermore, there are no commonly agreed standards, like IMAS, and few if any international organizations undertaking coherent actions to collect and destroy SALW comparable to what is seen in the mine action community. Instead, national and local organizations and authorities, together with various United Nations programmes, play a larger role, and activities are mainly conducted according to guidelines or best practices developed and promoted by individual organizations.⁶ While the *Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects* (agreed to at the July 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects) laid out a wide-ranging set of commitments for national governments that would greatly help prevent and reduce the negative impact of these weapons,⁷ its success will hinge on broad adoption and implementation.

What is being done about the collection and control of SALW in peace-building or post-conflict environments often occurs under the auspices of designated UN-led programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), which are intended to facilitate the transition of combatants from conflict activities to civilian life. The United Nations defines disarmament as “the collection, control, and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population”; demobilization as “the process by which armed forces (government and/or opposition or factional forces) either downsize or completely disband, as part of a broader transformation from war to peace ... [this typically] involves the assembly, quartering, disarmament, administration and discharge of former combatants, who may receive some form of compensation and other assistance to encourage their transition to civilian lives”; and reintegration programmes as “assistance measures provided to former combatants that would increase the potential for their and their families’ economic and social reintegration into civil society”.⁸ Although originally conceived of in stages—with disarmament first, demobilization beginning when disarmament is achieved, and reintegration starting when demobilization finishes—this notion of strict chronological order is increasingly questioned in principle, if still evident in practice.⁹ Disarmament and demobilization are primarily understood and practiced as military processes and funded through assessed funds.¹⁰ Conversely, reintegration is a less-technical, less-studied, and less-understood process that depends on voluntary funding and, in fact, is usually funded by the affected countries themselves; for these reasons, reintegration tends to fall by the wayside.

Despite the fact that disarmament and demobilization receive more consistent funding and programmatic attention, the technical and procedural challenges of destroying or decommissioning collected arms in a safe and transparent manner are still not met. There is a certain paradox at work: international and national military forces will probably have the technical skills needed to destroy SALW, but their very presence may intimidate people or raise fears of improper disposal, thus mitigating against the surrender of arms; whereas NGOs may have the skills and networks needed to communicate with and convince groups and individuals that possess SALW, but often not the technical skills or capacity to dispose of SALW themselves. Interestingly, some ex-combatants have been excluded from DDR programmes—such as in Sierra Leone—that require participants to either hand in a weapon or demobilize with their unit (be claimed by a commander); most of those excluded claim that they no longer had a weapon to turn in, either because they had shared weapons throughout the conflict or had otherwise lost access to their weapon after the conflict ended.¹¹ This illustrates another paradox for post-conflict disarmament: eligibility requirements for DDR programmes that are too stringent will

unintentionally disqualify ex-combatants; while eligibility requirements that are more relaxed will undermine the effectiveness of the operation. Furthermore, although DDR programmes may be effective in inducing individual fighters to disarm, they are not in themselves typically equipped to find and secure arms caches maintained by more organized (criminal or political) elements.

CHALLENGES OF PEACE-BUILDING IN A POST-CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

In contrast to mine/ERW action and disarmament, peace-building is a somewhat less precise concept, often confused or conflated with peace implementation, nation-building, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, democratization, or post-conflict reconstruction.¹² For the sake of clarity, this report relies on the definition of peace-building contained in the *Joint Utstein Study of Peace-building* as an attempt

... to encourage the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development. Peace-building activities are designed to contribute to ending or avoiding armed conflict and may be carried out during armed conflict, in its wake, or as an attempt to prevent an anticipated armed conflict from starting.¹³

The fact that peace-building encompasses activities that occur before, during, and after conflict is particularly key in relation to mine/ERW action, which can also be started in areas where peace processes are underway but comprehensive peace agreements have not yet been signed.

Peace-building activities are conducted across sectors and by a multiplicity of actors. Analytically and in practice, four pillars of activity are cumulatively considered to comprise peace-building: security, governance, justice and reconciliation, and economic and social well-being.¹⁴ Key tasks for practitioners include: DDR, the provision of civilian security through police and judicial reform, local capacity building for human rights and reconciliation, the demilitarization of politics and holding of elections in a reasonably fair and free process, the rapid revival of the economy to create a peace dividend, and the creation of the “economic foundations necessary to sustain peace”.¹⁵

As implemented, peace-building is activity oriented rather than process or policy oriented. In other words, peace-building in practice is typically comprised of discrete activities undertaken in various sectors by various actors and bound, to a greater or lesser extent, by the overarching goal of building peace, rather than a more concise or tailored strategy.¹⁶ Coordination among the many activities and sectors can therefore be challenging. Turf wars are common, and uniform progress—across sectors and throughout the entire affected area—is rare.

RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEMS

Mines and ERW, on one side, and SALW, on the other, present quite different challenges. Mines and ERW are dealt with through the fairly coherent field of activities that constitutes humanitarian mine action, defined by standards and procedures that are accepted and adhered to by the vast majority of mine action agencies. Responses to SALW occur in a much less integrated way, guided by a combination of practical experience, collections of best practices, and, to a certain extent, national guidelines—often, as previously mentioned, under the umbrella of UN-led DDR programmes. The mine action field is dominated by a handful of large, highly specialized NGOs, UN agencies, military forces or units, and private companies. On the SALW side, the international NGO presence is not as dominant as within mine action, and local and national organizations in affected areas probably have a larger role.

Mine action consists of five complementary pillars: humanitarian demining (including surveying, mapping, marking and clearing); mine risk education (MRE); stockpile destruction; victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration; and advocacy, which is primarily centred around the framework established by the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. As noted above, the civil society component of humanitarian mine action is unusually strong. Mine action as a sector is characterized by well-defined and functioning structures and frameworks for communication and coordination among HMA personnel at different organizations and working on different pillars. This cohesiveness is valuable and also quite unusual: peace-building and related activities—such as peacekeeping or peace implementation, including DDR programmes—are not typically as structurally coherent or well coordinated.

Indeed, as mentioned above, there remains a strategic deficit at the heart of peace-building. Shepard Forman, a prominent commentator on peace-building and peace implementation issues, notes:

At the present time, there is no authoritative governing mechanism for setting the broad strategic objectives, developing and maintaining institutional preparedness, or providing oversight for either conflict prevention or post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. While peacekeeping operations are characterised by common objectives and unity of command, peace-building to date has been largely an amalgam of projects devoid of a mutually agreed strategy and coherent plan of action. Multiple agencies, both intergovernmental and bilateral, are subject to diverse decision-making bodies, and they plan and implement programmes based on their discrete and sometimes contradictory political objectives and operational doctrines... The assets and capacities of all of these actors are critical to the successful outcome of multidimensional peace-building; yet, there is no systematic way to optimise their roles as part of a holistic, coherent strategy to meet both short and long term peace-building objectives.¹⁷

This strategic and coordination problem is evident in the implementation of DDR programmes. As noted above, DDR programmes are important, but often under-resourced, elements of post-conflict reconstruction; reintegration particularly suffers from lack of attention and resources. Yet despite a clear need to further develop knowledge and best practices in the area of reintegration, it is in most cases not fully integrated into economic programmes such as infrastructure development and job creation, despite the obvious synergies that exist. This is unfortunate because, for ex-combatants, the challenge is not just training them to learn new skills: it is providing them with the opportunity to operate within and contribute toward an inclusive and peaceful society, so that they do not fall back into the same harmful patterns of exclusion and marginalization that fed the conflict in the first place.

Programmes aiming to combat SALW face similar difficulties, owing to the sheer scale and transnational nature of the problem, as well as the lack of a cohesive and binding framework in which to conduct such activities (noted above). Because SALW projects—such as buy-back programmes, weapons amnesties, and disarmament as part of DDR—deal not just with regulation, monitoring, enforcement, and disposal issues, but also deep-seated social and cultural issues related to weapon ownership and security and insecurity, they need to be approached in a more strategic, coherent, and holistic way in order to be effective.

IMPROVING INTERACTION AMONG THE SECTORS AND ACTORS

In many respects, the three sectors of mine/ERW action, SALW action, and peace-building operate separately of each other. However, based on our research into both mine action and peace-building, and to a lesser degree SALW action, we contend that each of these three sectors stand to gain from increased cooperation. Mine/ERW action and SALW action are designed to

tackle different sets of problems, but with some common features. Each sector has its strengths and weaknesses, and would gain from more systematic efforts to identify what these may be and how, in particular, the comparative advantages of each can be operationalized for improved efficiency in both sectors. A similar exercise of identifying synergies, leveraging comparative strengths, and improving coordination between the two mines/arms sectors and the peace-building sector could also generate important gains in implementation capability and outcomes.

For example, the technical aspects of mine/ERW action, such as surveying, mapping, marking and clearing, all require negotiations for access with the relevant state authorities or non-state actors (NSAs), which require essentially political skills in sensitive areas. In spite of this, mine/ERW action is generally ascribed in the peace-building literature to the security area, together with DDR and SALW actions. However, this classification endorses too narrow a conception of mine/ERW action, thus marginalizing and undermining the potential positive effects of mine action for peace-building.

This point can be illustrated by recasting Smith's Peace-building Palette.¹⁸ The palette is essentially a description of 19 different policy instruments and activities that policymakers have at their disposal grouped into four sectors.

Table 1. The Peace-building Palette¹⁹

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian mine action • Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants • Security sector reform • Tackling SALW problems 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratization • Good governance • Institution building • Human rights
<p>Socio-economic foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical reconstruction • Economic reconstruction • Infrastructure of health and education • Repatriation and return of refugees and internally displaced people • Food security 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups • Grass roots dialogue • Other bridge-building activities • Truth and reconciliation commissions • Trauma therapy and healing

Applying to the peace-building palette all five components of HMA reveals how mine/ERW action may have broader and more beneficial implications for peace-building. Indeed, the various elements of mine action have important, tangible political, economic, social, and justice and rehabilitation ramifications—in addition to the obvious security gains—which have not yet been fully realized in the literature or in the field. Mine action contributes to the political objectives of peace-building by building and strengthening national and local institutions and competence (for example, through national Mine Action Centres, or MACs); supporting a critical and active role for civil society in spheres that were formerly exclusively military; constructively engaging with current or former non-state actors; and, through advocacy, promoting normative frameworks based on the primacy of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL).

Mine action also has demonstrable socio-economic effects, by improving food security and enabling infrastructure to be reconstructed, livelihoods reclaimed, and income generated—

especially in agricultural areas, where demined land can again be put to productive use, but secondarily among former combatants who can be trained and employed as deminers as part of a reintegration package.²⁰ Furthermore, mine action is critically related to the issue of return of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs).²¹

Reconciliation and rehabilitation are also facilitated through aspects of mine action, chiefly mine risk education—which, in addition to raising awareness about the threats posed by mines and ERW, provides a forum in which open communication and information sharing can occur—and victim assistance, particularly in the form of ex-combatant rehabilitation and therapy programmes for landmine survivors. Stockpile destruction can also have a strong confidence-building and reconciliation impact, and can occur in conjunction with collection and destruction of SALW. Finally, physical clearance of mines can be instrumental to rehabilitation and justice efforts, as seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the demining of booby-trapped mass graves allowed for the recovery of remains and for identification and evidence-gathering to occur.

Adapting Smith's peace-building model to encompass all aspects of HMA results in what we call the Mine Action Peace-building Palette.²² This matrix demonstrates how mine action does not just comprise one aspect of the security component of peace-building, but is also, to a large extent, integral to the other elements of peace-building. Undoubtedly, mine action, and the wide-ranging benefits it confers, warrants broader recognition in peace-building beyond the security arena where it usually is placed.

Table 2. The Mine Action Peace-building Palette²³

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking, fencing and clearance of minefields • DDR: Stockpile destruction, removal of instruments of war, employment for former combatants • Potential to engage with SALW challenges 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution and competence building; planning, diplomacy, advocacy and management • Human rights and IHL. Mine action is firmly based on a human rights approach and the implementation of IHL • Role for active and critical civil society • Engagement with non-state actors
<p>Socio-economic foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical reconstruction • Economic reconstruction • Infrastructure of health and education • Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs • Food security 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue between former opponents • Opening up of public space • Trauma therapy and healing—victim assistance • Facilitation of evidence gathering (on war crimes)

We have not attempted a similar exercise with SALW action but, given that social, cultural, political, and financial complexities within the SALW area are not less than with the mine/ERW area, and that there is considerable overlap between the two sectors, it is likely that a similar SALW Peace-building Palette can be developed.

The mine action peace-building palette is not intended to be a rigid framework or separation and parsing of responsibilities. Its point is simply to demonstrate that there is

considerable potential for improved performance within all sectors, particularly if more emphasis is placed on the functional integration of the implementation of the activities in the field.

MINE/ERW ACTION, SALW ACTION, AND PEACE-BUILDING EFFORTS: ANALYTICAL AND FIELD APPROACHES

The relationship between mine action, ERW, and peace-building is the subject of a growing body of literature. Thus far this literature has focused on establishing that mine action does, in fact, have peace-building effects, and exploring the nature of those effects, ramifications, and dilemmas, including politicization and prioritization issues that will be discussed below.²⁴ Although the literature is helpful in laying the groundwork upon which future integrative efforts can build, it takes an oddly narrow view of mine action, by engaging primarily with outputs derived from surveying, mapping, marking, and clearing while generally ignoring the other pillars. Neglecting the constructive peace-building effects of mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, and advocacy misses a vital opportunity to broaden and deepen the links between, and benefits of, both sectors at the community level.

In short, it appears that much of the current literature on mine action and peace-building is chiefly concerned with macro effects—the benefits derived from engaging with high-level actors or conducting large infrastructure recovery projects—while ignoring the micro impacts stemming from smaller scale, culturally sensitive projects grounded in participatory approaches, which are constitutive of mine risk education, victim assistance, and advocacy.²⁵ This trend undervalues the diversity of mine action and the ways in which all of its elements can be used to best effect. It is also indicative of the continuing disparities between the two sectors. Given the relative newness of attempts to link mine action and peace-building, the persistence of a cognitive gap on both sides is understandable. Different sectors operate on the basis of different mindsets and assumptions, which have yet to be fully engaged or interrogated in the mine action/peace-building literature or in practice.

Similarly problematic in terms of furthering collaboration between the sectors is the incidentalist approach that sometimes characterizes mine action's efforts to address peace-building.²⁶ In such an approach, the impact on peace-building is not so much misunderstood as seen as incidental—a pleasant bonus that is very much secondary to the mine action objective at hand. This reveals an assumption that mine action is automatically a boon for peace-building, regardless of how it is conducted;²⁷ it could even be taken by people resistant to increasing and formalizing inter-sectoral cooperation to imply that greater collaboration between the two fields is unnecessary. This would be a fallacy. If mine action and peace-building are to have meaningful, lasting synergistic effects, they must be deliberately anticipated and programmed for in a cooperative fashion by both sides. The natural overlap of the two fields is not sufficient to secure good outcomes in all cases, nor does it guarantee that an activity that benefits one sector will always benefit the other.

For its part, the peace-building literature is no better—indeed, apart from the acknowledgement of DDR programmes as a post-conflict requirement, the knowledge gap is just as acute, if not more so, on the peace-building side of the equation. Smith's peace-building palette is, in this sense, somewhat exceptional by highlighting mine action as one of the main policy instruments available. Conversely, much of the prominent grey literature on peace-building or peace implementation mentions mine action and small arms issues only very peripherally, if at all.²⁸ Yet the omission of these issues is not just a problem in the literature: it also has practical, costly, and potentially dangerous implications. As noted by a participant in the Fafo/Landmine

Action consultation on mine action and peace-building in Sri Lanka, it is not unprecedented for peace-building projects to be planned without awareness of or regard to the mine situation in the area. This oversight can understandably cause tension among HMA personnel and local citizens if demining teams and resources are subsequently diverted from planned work to instead clear the project site, particularly when—as happened in the situation our participant described—there is no funding in the budget to pay for it.²⁹ Clearly there is great scope for improvement in raising the awareness and sensitivity to mine action of peace-building actors and analysts.

Finally, it should be noted that, despite the potential benefits outlined above, there is resistance in some quarters, particularly on the mine action side, to the greater integration of mine action and peace-building.³⁰ Yet our argument—supported by engagement with practitioners and evidence from the field—is exactly the converse: that greater integration, undertaken in an informed and conscientious manner, will not dilute the effectiveness of either but, to the contrary, will strengthen them by taking better advantage of the synergies that exist and the range of methods and resources available on both sides that have thus far been ignored or under-utilized.

This endeavour is not far-fetched; its success will be more or less a function of the willingness of the two sectors to work with each other, share knowledge and information, and adopt new or adapt existing approaches. Simply shifting perceptions can spark new opportunities for collaboration. For example, in our practitioner roundtables, we found that using the notion of the mine action/peace-building palette as a jumping off point for discussion was very useful in getting practitioners from both sides to think creatively about the linkages between the sectors, and how they could be facilitated and fleshed out in practice. By reconceptualizing ERW and SALW actions as vital components in all aspects of peace-building, not just security, one can quite easily identify ways to significantly improve the effectiveness, reach, and impact of the work being done on the ground. In the same manner, mine/ERW action and SALW action that take place in a conflict transformation context should be seen with that broader political context—and not just as isolated technical activities. Making this argument does not imply the subordination of one sector or agenda to another, nor does it mean that the unique and technical aspects of mine action will be diminished. We contend simply that denying the linkages between mine action, arms collection and control, and peace-building—or claiming that they are merely secondary or distracting—is to be obtuse, particularly in light of ongoing concern over the future of mine action funding.³¹

RECOMMENDED PRINCIPLES FOR EUROPEAN COMMISSION POLICIES AND PRACTICE

Mine, ERW, and SALW actions in situations of open, suspended, or terminated conflicts have the potential to support peace-building efforts. Improved cooperation should take place on many levels, and actors on all sides should look beyond organizational and sectoral borders in order to facilitate this. Such cooperation is dependent on some changes in current practices and policies among both implementing actors and policy makers and decision makers. The European Community and its member states are major and key actors within these areas, as donors and as participants to all the relevant policy processes. Therefore, the EC has a possibility to introduce and encourage changes in the implementation, as well as in policy.

- In general, the European Commission (EC) and EU member states should ensure that mandates for peace-building operations facilitate increased functional integration in the implementation of Mine/ERW-action, SALW-action and peace-building efforts;

- The EC and EU member states should ensure that funding for peace-building operations reflect real needs for improved human security on the ground, not dictated by institutional mandates;
- The EC and EU member states, in close consultations with international and local practitioners, should encourage projects in affected areas that cross the sectoral borders between mine/ERW action, SALW action and peace-building actions;
- The EC and EU member states should support initiatives aimed at identifying how the mines/ERW and SALW sectors can improve in terms of cooperation, relevance, and efficiency in conflict and post-conflict situations; Particular focus should be on concrete actions in the field that actually reduce the threats from arms, mines, and ERW to civilians;
- The EC and EU member states should view mines/ERW and SALW actions in areas that still are in conflict as potential entry points for supporting conflict transformation. Funding for appropriate mine/ERW and SALW actions should not be contingent on comprehensive political peace agreements;
- The EC and EU member states should ensure that support for peace-building and other projects in conflict and post-conflict areas includes an assessment of needed mine/ERW action;
- The EC and member states should pursue coherence when supporting mine action and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and projects planned and implemented by the United Nations and the World Bank and other international and regional organizations in post-conflict situations;
- The EC and EU member state-supported arms and mines projects in the same geographical areas should be reviewed to ensure that they are mutually supporting, in spite of being planned and implemented by different actors; and
- The EC and EU member states should pursue or develop policy options aimed at reducing problems at their source, including policies that stop or significantly reduce the use of munitions that are likely to become ERW and significantly reducing the legal and illegal flow of SALW from its territories.

Notes

¹ In this paper, we have chosen to use the term “mine/ERW action” for all activities designed to reduce the negative impact of mines and ERW to individuals and communities. This includes all actions commonly known as or encompassed by humanitarian mine action.

² United Nations Mine Action Service, *IMAS 04.10*, 2nd ed., 2003, p. 18, § 3.150.

³ Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Protocol V, article 2, 2003, cited in Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, *A Guide to Mine Action*, 2nd ed., 2004, p. 9.

⁴ HALO Trust, “Small Arms and Light Weapons Destruction”, 2003 <<http://www.halotrust.org/global.html>>.

⁵ Michael Renner, “Small Arms, Big Impact: The Next Challenge of Disarmament”, Worldwatch Institute, *Worldwatch Paper #137*, 1997, p. 10.

⁶ However, there is probably more practical experience in the SALW sector in linking arms reduction with activities. See, for example, Claire Pike and Mark Taylor, “Swords for Ploughshares: Microdisarmament in Transitions from Conflict”, Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, *Fafo-report 332*, 2000.

⁷ Edward Laurance and Rachel Stohl, “Making Global Public Policy: The Case of Small Arms and Light Weapons”, Small Arms Survey, *Occasional Paper No. 7*, 2002, p. 1.

- ⁸ United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in a Peacekeeping Environment: Principles and Guidelines*, 2000, p. 15.
- ⁹ International Peace Academy, "A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations", 2002; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in a Peacekeeping Environment: Principles and Guidelines*, 2000.
- ¹⁰ International Peace Academy, "A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations", 2002, pp. 1–2.
- ¹¹ Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein, "What the Fighters Say: A Survey of Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone June–August 2003", interim report, in partnership with PRIDE (Sierra Leone), 2004, <http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/Report1_BW.pdf>.
- ¹² The term "peace-building" entered the international lexicon with the publication, in 1992, of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace*. As laid out in that report, however, the concept was broad, vague, and focused solely on post-conflict activities, a distinction later deemed unhelpful.
- ¹³ Dan Smith, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004, p. 20.
- ¹⁴ Center for Strategic and International Studies and Association of the United States Army, *Play to Win: The Report of the Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, 2003; Dan Smith, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; Mark Taylor and Kathleen Jennings, "In Search of Strategy: An Agenda for Applied Research on Transitions from Conflict", Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, *Fafo-report 480*, 2005.
- ¹⁵ Stephen Stedman, Donald Rothschild and Elizabeth Cousens (eds), *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, Lynne Rienner, 2002, p. 27.
- ¹⁶ Dan Smith, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; Mark Taylor and Kathleen Jennings, "In Search of Strategy: An Agenda for Applied Research on Transitions from Conflict", Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, *Fafo-report 480*, 2005.
- ¹⁷ Shepard Forman, "Building Civilian Capacity for Conflict Management and Sustainable Peace, A Discussion Paper Prepared for the Government of Denmark's Meeting on Strengthening the UN's Capacity on Civilian Crisis Management", Copenhagen, 8–9 June 2004.
- ¹⁸ Dan Smith, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Like other aspects of international assistance, large-scale mine action can also have distorting effects on local economies, particularly in poor areas emerging from conflict. See for example Kristian Berg Harpviken and Jan Isaksen, *Reclaiming the Fields of War: Mainstreaming Mine Action in Development*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo and United Nations Development Programme, 2004.
- ²¹ The connection between mine action and refugees and IDPs can be fraught. On the one hand, clearance of mines from villages, homes, schools and fields facilitates the safe return and resumption of some form of normality for refugees and IDPs. However, the priorities of the displaced and those of mine action workers may not always coincide. Many elements factor into peoples' decisions to return, of which danger from mines and ERW is just one; and people may be willing to risk returning to an uncleared area if they do not perceive the mine threat to be that acute, or feel that the demining work is progressing too slowly or is focused on other areas.
- ²² Dan Smith, *Towards a Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004.
- ²³ Kathleen Jennings and Christian Ruge, *Mine Action Contributions to Peacebuilding*, Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, forthcoming.

- ²⁴ See, for example, Kristian Berg Harpviken, "Humanitarian Mine Action and Peace Building: Exploring the Relationship", *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 5, 2003, pp. 809–822; Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts, "Introduction", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; Kristian Berg Harpviken and Jan Isaksen, *Reclaiming the Fields of War: Mainstreaming Mine Action in Development*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo and United Nations Development Programme, 2004; Wenche Hauge, "In Support of Peacemaking: Demining Sri Lanka's Highway A9", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; Stuart Maslen, *Mine Action After Diana: Progress in the Struggle Against Landmines*, Pluto Press, 2004; Rebecca Roberts and Mads Frilander, "Preparing for Peace: Mine Action's Investment in the Future of Sudan", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; Arne Strand, "Transforming Local Relationships: Reintegration of Combatants Through Mine Action in Afghanistan" in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004.
- ²⁵ The extent to which mine action should adopt standard participatory approaches is disputed. Roberts and Frilander, for example, argue that "using traditional governance structures to liaise with the local population" in Sudan is insufficient, though they give no guidance on which measures should be taken to remedy this situation (a particularly vexing one, since the population they are referring to is rural, dispersed, poor, with high rates of illiteracy and poor access to communications), Rebecca Roberts and Mads Frilander, "Preparing for Peace: Mine Action's Investment in the Future of Sudan", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004, p. 18. Circumventing or going over the heads of traditional authorities or structures is anathema to participatory development approaches and, at the very least, should not be done lightly or in the absence of strong knowledge of the society in which one is operating. We would argue that using participatory approaches should be the default mode for mine action, as well as in peace-building and development.
- ²⁶ Evidence of this approach can be seen in the project described in Wenche Hauge, "In Support of Peacemaking: Demining Sri Lanka's Highway A9", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004.
- ²⁷ Harpviken and Roberts caution against this assumption by reiterating the "Do No Harm" principle advocated by Mary Anderson, which has become increasingly accepted in the development world (see Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004; and Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace—or War*, Lynne Rienner, 1999). Anderson's basic point is that all interventions affect the local environment in profound and, perhaps, poorly understood ways, and that any intervention—no matter how well intentioned—has the potential to cause harm. Illustrating the point, Roberts and Frilander found that, at the grass-roots level in the Nuba Mountains in Sudan, "there is a risk that mine action may feed into the conflict rather than support peace-building ... the crosslines mine action programme has not responded fully to the contemporary situation in the Nuba Mountains ... [and] oversimplified the situation" (Rebecca Roberts and Mads Frilander, "Preparing for Peace: Mine Action's Investment in the Future of Sudan", in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004, p. 19).
- ²⁸ See for example, Center for Strategic and International Studies and Association of the United States Army, *Play to Win: The Report of the Commission on Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, 2003; James Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-building: From Germany to Iraq*, RAND, 2003; Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, Polity Press, 2001; Stephen Stedman, Donald

Rothschild and Elizabeth Cousens (eds), *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, Lynne Rienner, 2002.

²⁹ Hauge relates a similar situation, also from Sri Lanka. Plans to widen and improve Highway A9, the main north–south artery, were made by the Sri Lankan Road Development Authorities in cooperation with eight private contractors; the bulk of the 613 million rupee (US\$ 5.9 million) reconstruction was financed by the Asian Development Bank. However, the project did not include funding for clearing mines, which still infected the wider roadside verges. Eventually various NGOs cleared different sections of the road but, given the lack of funding, this was done at the expense of other tasks, such as marking (Wenche Hauge, “In Support of Peacemaking: Demining Sri Lanka’s Highway A9”, in Kristian Berg Harpviken and Rebecca Roberts (eds), *Preparing the Ground for Peace: Mine Action in Support of Peacebuilding*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 2004, pp. 30–31.

³⁰ This is less obvious on the SALW side, which tends to be more policy than operationally oriented.

³¹ For information on mine action funding and resources, see Kristian Berg Harpviken and Jan Isaksen, *Reclaiming the Fields of War: Mainstreaming Mine Action in Development*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo and United Nations Development Programme, 2004, pp. 12–16.

ACRONYMS

APM	anti-personnel mine
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
EC	European Commission
ERW	explosive remnants of war
HMA	humanitarian mine action
IDPs	internally displaced persons
IHL	international humanitarian law
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
MAC	Mine Action Centre
MRE	mine risk education
NGO	non-governmental organization
NSA	non-state actor
RPG	rocket-propelled grenade
SALW	small arms and light weapons
UXO	unexploded ordnance