

UNIDIR FOCUS

ACTIVITY

European action on small arms, light weapons and explosive remnants of war

At the request of the European Parliament and the European Commission, UNIDIR is undertaking the study "European Action on Small Arms, Light Weapons and Explosive Remnants of War".

The project takes place against the background of recent European Union involvement in small arms, light weapons and explosive remnants of war (ERW) programmes in key conflict regions. After the last round of enlargement, the EU represents an influential group of twenty-five European nations. The European Community itself has a wide range of instruments at its disposal to promote arms reduction and disarmament. Increasingly, EU Member States act together in a number of multilateral disarmament fora.

The first phase of work is to map and analyse global and EU-level activities related to small arms, light weapons and ERW. This research will determine where there are gaps, overlaps or divergences that could be ameliorated by the EU. The second phase of work is to develop a conceptual framework for addressing these matters. The third phase is to formulate recommendations for the EU. The research findings will be presented to the EU at a conference in late 2005. The fourth phase of work is a field validation study that will test some of the key research results in the field.

The project will be carried out over the next eighteen months by a dedicated team at UNIDIR, working closely with the International Security Information Service-Europe as an implementing partner. The project will also benefit from the expertise of a number of specialized agencies and institutes, contributing research papers on specific topics of relevance to the EU.

For more information, please contact:

Arnhild Spence

Project Manager

Tel.: +41 (0)22 917 21 17

Fax: +41 (0)22 917 01 76

E-mail: aspence@unog.ch

In each issue of *Disarmament Forum*, UNIDIR Focus highlights one activity of the Institute, outlining the project's methodology, recent research developments or its outcomes. UNIDIR Focus also describes a new UNIDIR publication. You can find summaries and contact information for all of the Institute's present and past activities, as well as sample chapters of publications and ordering information, online at <www.unidir.org>.

NEW PUBLICATION

Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Analysis of the Reports Submitted by States in 2003

In 2001 the United Nations General Assembly called on Member States to submit reports to the Secretary-General on the progress made in implementing the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA), adopted earlier the same year. This national reporting provides an opportunity for states to review their progress made in national implementation efforts and identify the challenges remaining.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Small Arms Survey analysed the national reports submitted in 2003 to identify major developments in the implementation of the PoA and highlight issues of concern for states. This was undertaken in the context of the project entitled "Capacity Development for Reporting to the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms".

Entitled *Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Analysis of the Report Submitted by States in 2003*, the goal of the study is to ascertain current levels of state commitment to the PoA by reviewing the various national, regional and international initiatives related to small arms underway, as well as identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the reporting process.

Overall, the findings are encouraging—103 out of 191 Member States submitted reports in 2003. The national reports show that notable progress has been made in implementing the PoA, especially in regard to national legislation, weapons collection and destruction, and awareness-raising activities. Regional and international cooperation is growing and involves an increasing number of governmental actors, regional and international organizations and elements of civil society. Moreover, national reports have proven to be an invaluable resource for information exchange and serve as an important reference for countries affected by illicit small arms proliferation as well as countries funding disarmament programmes around the globe.

However, there is still a need for enhanced implementation efforts if states are to prevent, combat and eradicate the menace posed by illicit small arms and light weapons. Tackling this problem effectively requires a comprehensive and inclusive approach in all related thematic aspects, incorporating national, regional and global dimensions. This publication is already contributing to reflection in Member States on how to make their next reports more comprehensive and thereby further improve implementation of the PoA.

Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Analysis of the Reports Submitted by States in 2003

Elli Kytömäki and Valerie Yankey-Wayne

UNIDIR, 2004

320 pages

United Nations

ISBN 92-9045-166-1

Sales number: GV.E.04.0.27

US\$ 34 (plus shipping and handling)

