

EDITOR'S NOTE

In celebration of UNIDIR's twenty-fifth anniversary, this special double issue of *Disarmament Forum* focuses on a topic of long-standing interest at UNIDIR—small arms and light weapons. With the preparations for the 2006 Review Conference on the Programme of Action well under way, the contributors to this *Disarmament Forum* hope to give governments, international organizations, researchers and the non-governmental community a wealth of ideas and reflections that will help to shape the implementation of the PoA over the next five years—and beyond.

This double issue features UNIDIR researchers and partners who are specialists in the small arms field. Authors look at the history of the PoA itself and its current state, special processes and cooperative frameworks that have developed to support the PoA, additional negotiations, and regional aspects of the small arms issue.

In addition to this issue of *Disarmament Forum*, other recent activities at UNIDIR on small arms have included a presentation of the interim findings of the “European Action on Small Arms, Light Weapons and Explosive Remnants of War” project. UNIDIR, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and the International Security Information Service-Europe co-organized a conference in Brussels on 7–8 December 2005, which was well attended by members of the European Commission, the European Council, Members of the European Parliament, national parliamentary representatives and civil society. The second phase of the project, field research in North Africa, is now under way.

UNIDIR was also present at the Preparatory Committee for the 2006 Review Conference in New York. Together with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and the Small Arms Survey, UNIDIR organized a side event on 17 January on national reporting entitled “Five Years of Implementing the UN Programme of Action: Regional Analysis of the Reports Submitted by States in 2002–2005”. The seminar presented findings from an analysis of national reports. It gave an overview of the reporting mechanism and its contribution to implementation of the PoA, pointed to successes and to where more progress could be made, and suggested possible avenues for action. Both the presentations and the discussion emphasized regional needs and challenges, as well as ways to improve both reporting and future implementation. An analysis of the national reports, to be published by UNIDIR, is in press.

As we approach the 10-year anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), issue 2, 2006 of *Disarmament Forum* will take stock of the history and tribulations of the CTBT. It will proceed from an analysis of the original intentions underlying the CTBT within the broader scheme of disarmament measures, and go on to discuss how relevant an operative CTBT would be in the current context of nuclear doctrines and developments. It will address the requirements and clear feasibility of CTBT verification. The issue will also look at the negative side of the issue in terms of what could go seriously wrong, for example if existing or aspiring

nuclear powers decide to test, and the consequences thereof. Additional short contributions will present arguments for different approaches: one arguing that the best course of action would be to maintain the moratorium as a de facto CTBT, another making the case for provisional entry into force, and a third looking at the option of treaty amendment, bearing in mind the experience of the Partial Test Ban Treaty.

Catriona Gourlay has joined UNIDIR as a visiting researcher, under the EU's Marie Curie Fellowship programme. Over the next 18 months, she will explore how the European Union can improve its crisis management capability for use in UN peace operations. The research will focus on the planning of crisis management and peace-building, a comparison of UN and EU practices, and a review of best practices collected by the United Nations in these areas.

Kerstin Vignard