

INTRODUCTION

At root, disarmament and arms control problems are issues of human security. Insecurity and violence hurt or kill people and undermine or destroy the communities they live in. Yet, until recently, security thinking in disarmament and arms control has been dominated by security concepts that focus on external threats to states, especially by other states. These orthodox approaches have been found wanting in the face of new and increasingly complex international security challenges, and many of the multilateral processes on disarmament and arms control have failed to make progress over the last decade.

This is of concern at many levels, not least because disarmament and arms control norms are integral to promoting human security and the protection of the individual from violence and insecurity. In late 2004, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) initiated a project entitled “Disarmament as Humanitarian Action: Making Multilateral Negotiations Work”. The project, assisted financially by the Governments of Norway and the Netherlands, examines the current difficulties of the international system in dealing effectively with arms control and disarmament challenges. These challenges include—but are not limited to—the effects of small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation, the risks of hostile use of advances in the life sciences, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Experience has shown that humanitarian approaches can add value to multilateral negotiation processes in international security. Examples include the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, negotiations that culminated in a protocol on explosive remnants of war (ERW) in late 2003, and, to a more limited extent, in the domain of SALW (where these perspectives have been resisted by some governments).

In November 2004, UNIDIR held a half-day meeting in Geneva that discussed the relevance of humanitarian and human security perspectives to moving the arms control and disarmament agenda forward. A compilation of papers from the meeting, and a summary of the discussions, can be found in the first publication of the “Disarmament as Humanitarian

Action" (DHA) project entitled *Alternative Approaches in Multilateral Decision Making: Disarmament as Humanitarian Action*.

One year later, on 25 November 2005, as part of the DHA project's work and on the occasion of UNIDIR's twenty-fifth anniversary, UNIDIR organized a commemorative debate with the support of the Government of Norway. Leading experts debated the motion that "human security should be the basis for multilateral disarmament and arms control negotiations". A discussion, including views from diplomats, NGOs and members of the public in the audience, ensued after the speakers and a vote was taken on the matter involving all of those attending. (A full report and transcripts are available on UNIDIR's web site.)

This second volume, *Disarmament as Humanitarian Action: From Perspective to Practice*, takes the ideas of its first volume one step further. As the title suggests, this volume provides practical insights from recent negotiating processes in which arms control and humanitarian perspectives have met, in particular those relating to landmines, ERW and small arms issues. Such analysis is necessary because each of these negotiations was functionally unique. As such, it is not self-evident what lessons (if any) policy makers, international negotiators and advocates should draw from these experiences. The aim of this volume is to provide multilateral practitioners with these insights in order to inform and help their ongoing work across the board in the disarmament and arms control context.

Many of the contributors to this volume have been closely associated with the humanitarian or disarmament and arms control processes, whether as non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives, members of government delegations or policy analysts observing them. These first-hand experiences are helpful in understanding the dynamics and characteristics of negotiating processes. Our intention is that the insights of our contributors will serve to challenge some of the conventional wisdom of disarmament and arms control negotiators, and to prompt them helpfully in developing ways to apply humanitarian concepts to other aspects of their work. Over the next year, we will be following up with practitioners to that end, as a further thread of the work of the DHA project. I now offer a few words about each of the authors.

John Borrie is the leader of the "Disarmament as Humanitarian Action" project. His research and work experience have covered many aspects of

arms control and disarmament. As well as editing and contributing to the preceding volume of the project's work, John is the author of *Explosive Remnants of War: A Global Survey*, published by the British NGO Landmine Action, which fed into the negotiations on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) protocol on ERW in June 2003. Prior to joining UNIDIR, John worked with the Mines-Arms Unit of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and, from 1999 to 2002, as Deputy Head of Mission for Disarmament in Geneva with the New Zealand government. His thematic analysis about disarmament as humanitarian action is included in this volume, as well as a paper analysing the contribution of the "Geneva Process" to multilateral decision-making in the realm of SALW.

Christian Ruge is Senior Adviser at the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies in Oslo, Norway, where he coordinates the Institute's New Security Programme. Prior to starting at Fafo in 2001 he was Landmine Policy Adviser in the mine action NGO Norwegian People's Aid, and member of the executive bodies of the ICBL and *Landmine Monitor*. He is involved in research and policy formulation on international responses to conflict, including war economies, humanitarian impact of arms and mines, post-conflict transitions and human security.

Rosy Cave is the Lead Researcher for ERW at UNIDIR. Before January 2005, she worked for the NGO Landmine Action, the UK arm of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). As part of her work, she regularly attends the conferences on the Mine Ban Convention and CCW. She is the author of *Explosive Remnants of War: ERW in Sri Lanka* and other publications, and undertakes research and advocacy on landmines and ERW. In this volume, Rosy compares the interactions of civil society with governments in the Mine Ban Convention and CCW ERW processes.

Mary Wareham is Senior Advocate at Human Rights Watch in Washington, DC. In May 1998 she joined the Arms Division of Human Rights Watch and helped to establish and oversee *Landmine Monitor*. She has also undertaken a range of activities within the United States and globally to support the mine ban, and has produced the documentary film *Disarm*. Mary came to the US in February 1996 to work with Jody Williams at the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation during the critical 1996–1997 "Ottawa Process" period of treaty negotiation. She had worked earlier

as a parliamentary researcher, and coordinated the New Zealand Campaign Against Landmines and, subsequently, the US campaign.

Vanessa Farr leads UNIDIR's project "Training for Women in DDR Processes". Her research focuses on how gender affects individual experiences of violent conflict, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants after war; the impact of SALW on women and men; and women's coalition-building in conflict-torn societies. She has conducted field research on women's involvement in disarmament in Albania, Kosovo and Rwanda; trained women and men on DDR in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan; and advised the United Nation's reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, the greater Great Lakes, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville), the Solomon Islands, Central and South America, Somalia, Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. Vanessa is editing the UN's multi-agency project on Integrated DDR Standards, and is engaged in analysing gender mainstreaming in weapons collection programmes and DDR processes.

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