

## FOREWORD

Until recently, the arms control and disarmament debate was focused almost entirely on external threats to states, especially those posed by other states. In our rapidly globalizing world, however, the range of threats to security has become much wider. These threats include the indiscriminate spread of small arms and light weapons, the effects of mines and explosive remnants of war and potentially other threats relating to new technologies, some of which are still under development. All threats come at great cost of human lives and prospects for development.

Thus the success of humanitarian efforts is closely linked to the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament efforts. Both would benefit from an understanding of the way “human security” and disarmament interact. Field-based perspectives, including evidence-based research and reports by civil society groups, contribute to this much-needed understanding.

In 1997, negotiations on the Mine Ban Treaty showed that a humanitarian approach could successfully add value to multilateral disarmament efforts. However, each multilateral disarmament process is different and has its own unique characteristics. Often it is not obvious how human security-based approaches relating to one particular multilateral disarmament process could apply to others.

Aimed at multilateral disarmament practitioners, the first volume of UNIDIR’s project “Disarmament as Humanitarian Action” discussed the relevance of human security perspectives to moving the disarmament agenda forward. Building on its predecessor, this second volume provides case studies of humanitarian approaches that have had—or could have—a positive impact on disarmament processes. The analyses presented here cover negotiations on anti-personnel mines, explosive remnants of war and small arms, as well as the evolving thinking on gender and human security.

In sparking discussion among negotiators, this book is a welcome contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament efforts.

For this reason, the Government of the Netherlands is pleased to join the Government of Norway in supporting UNIDIR's project "Disarmament as Humanitarian Action". This publication is a good example of the problem-solving approach adopted by UNIDIR in its research on disarmament and other security issues. Such innovative and fresh thinking is very timely.

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