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English only

**Preparatory Committee for the United Nations
Conference to Review Progress Made in the
Implementation of the Programme of Action to
Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in
Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
New York, 9-20 January 2006**

PREPARING FOR THE 2006 SALW PoA REVIEW CONFERENCE

ADDRESSING THE DEMAND FOR ILLICIT SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

(Submitted by Canada)

1. Introduction

Increasing documentation on the human impact of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has led to the realization that the effective control of these weapons requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses both supply and demand aspects. The UN Programme of Action (PoA) recognizes both aspects as important. While the PoA has a focus on supply-side measures, it also addresses demand-side issues in both preambular and operational sections.¹

Effective small arms control and disarmament depend not only on the cooperation of states and local governments, but also on the contributions of non-state actors, groups and individuals. An emphasis on the supply side would not succeed on its own and requires complementary actions addressing factors which drive demand for SALW by the full range of relevant actors.

Since 2001, a growing number of disarmament specialists and development practitioners have designed and implemented demand reduction initiatives. This practical experience has led a broad range of actors—including municipal and state-level governments, non-

¹ Direct reference to small arms demand is limited in the Programme of Action to I.7, there are many other places in the PoA where demand-related factors are mentioned: I.3, III.17, I.4, II.41, III.4, I.5, II.20, III.18, I.6, II.22, I.22 (c), II.21, II.30, II.34, II.35, III.16, I.16, II.5, II.24, II.40. See David Jackman, "Conflict Resolution and Lessening the Demand for Small Arms," Quaker UN Office, Geneva, 2004 (www.quno.org). See also Ernie Regehr, "Reducing the Demand for Small Arms and Light Weapons: Priorities for the International Community, Ploughshares Working Paper 04-2, Project Ploughshares, Canada (www.ploughshares.ca).

governmental and community-based organizations—to begin to integrate demand approaches into small arms control initiatives.

A demand approach reveals a number of important features relevant to the planning of small arms control interventions. First, local civil society actors are frequently the catalysts of demand reduction activities. Demand reduction efforts typically begin and are sustained at the local level. This is a dimension that is often overlooked in supply-side initiatives. Second, demand reduction efforts are most effective when they are undertaken in effective partnerships between state and local authorities and civil society actors. Third, there are intrinsic connections between demand, security and development driven approaches to arms reduction. Well balanced efforts in security sector governance and development can work to reduce both the demand and supply of small arms.

2. Existing legal/political commitments in international or regional agreements

Principles, policies and actions related to demand issues have been addressed in many global, regional and sub regional agreements since 2000, in addition to the Programme of Action. These include the following:

- In December 2000 the **Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons**, linked small arms control to peace, security, stability and sustainable development, and also supported measures to promote “democracy, the observance of human rights, the rule of law and good governance, ...economic recovery and growth, ...conflict prevention measures and the pursuit of negotiated solutions” through comprehensive solutions that “include both control and reduction, as well as supply and demand aspects” and “involve civil society in support of the central role of governments”.
- In March 2000 the **Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa** recognized “...the relationship between security and development and the need to develop comprehensive and effective peacebuilding and other measures aimed at reducing the resort to arms and to help curb the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons within the region”, encouraged its signatory states to “pursue positive policies and measures to create social, economic and political environments to reduce the resort to arms by individuals and communities”, and appealed for “international support for programmes and initiatives that advance human security and promote conditions conducive to long-term peace”. In April 2004, **The Second Ministerial Review Conference Of The Nairobi Declaration** acknowledged that “a comprehensive strategy to arrest and deal with the [SALW proliferation] problem must include putting in place structures and processes to promote democracy, the observance of human rights, the rule of law and good governance, as well as economic recovery and growth, and practical measures to ensure peace and security in Africa as expressed in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative and the African Union (AU) Protocols and structures agreed in the Durban and Maputo Summits of 2002 and 2003 respectively”.
- The European Union, through **Council Joint Action of 12 July 2002 on the European Union's contribution to combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons** aided in building international consensus on linking the control of small arms with reversing cultures of violence and providing assistance to eliminate surplus arms “where this may help to prevent armed conflict

or in post-conflict situations”. This could include projects as “weapons collection, security sector reform and demobilization and reintegration programmes as well as specific victim assistance programmes”.

- In March 2003, the **Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Secretary-General** stated, at the **UN – OSCE Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in South Eastern Europe**, that “in the course of their activities to build democratic institutions, promote respect for human rights and the rule of law, train multi-ethnic community police services, and facilitate cross-border contacts, our missions have helped to create conditions in which weapons reduction programmes can truly succeed. As an organization, we are bringing together our expertise and experience on early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation with our mandate and commitments on small arms and light weapons.”
- In April 2004 the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)** endorsed the policy statement and paper on Security System Reform (SSR), as a DAC Reference Document, and noted that: “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a security threat that many donors and developing countries are working together to address. Efforts to deal with the problems of destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms should be situated squarely in the context of efforts to defuse the tensions that encourage the acquisition and use of these weapons. International efforts to address ‘supply-side’ issues must go hand in hand with demand-side responses to small arms problems”. In addition, in March 2005, **the OECD DAC** reached consensus that “only certain specific activities in the areas of security and development will be ODA eligible or will come from ODA/aid budgets. Consensus has been reached on technical co-operation and civilian support for six items:
 1. **Management of security expenditure** through improved civilian oversight and democratic control of budgeting, management, accountability and auditing of security expenditure.
 2. **Enhancing civil society’s role in the security system** to help ensure that it is managed in accordance with democratic norms and principles of accountability, transparency and good governance.
 3. Supporting legislation for preventing the recruitment of **child soldiers**.
 4. **Security system reform** to improve democratic governance and civilian control.
 5. **Civilian activities for peace-building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.**
 6. Controlling, preventing and reducing the proliferation of **small arms and light weapons.**
- In the September 2005 **Outcome Document of the World Summit**, world leaders emphasized “that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing” (A/60/L.1, 9), and that they supported “implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects”.
- In December 2005, the **UN General Assembly** passed the First Committee resolution on "Addressing the humanitarian and development impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons" (UNGA60/68). This resolution calls on states to develop “comprehensive armed violence prevention programmes integrated into national development strategies, including

poverty reduction strategies”, and to include “national measures to regulate small arms and light weapons in longer term post-conflict peacebuilding strategies and programmes.”

3. Key challenges for further action on the issue, including in the context of the PoA

- Balancing attention to supply-side measures with an understanding and elaboration of the equally necessary demand-side measures.
- Gaining recognition of the importance at the international level of bottom-up actions, often initiated and carried out at local levels by states and civil society, and by providing an efficient means of support for such action.
- Gaining recognition of the varied ways that demand for small arms is shaped in different regional and sub-regional settings and the need for flexible and varied programmes to respond to each situation.
- Finding effective ways to integrate lessons and methodologies from a wide range of disciplines and processes (security, development, human rights, conflict resolution) into SALW policy and creating effective structures through which to manage their implementation
- Clarifying the relationship between development goals—specifically the Millennium Development Goals—and the control of small arms and light weapons, with a view to freeing up increased and longer term assistance for affected states.

4. Possible Outcomes for the PoA Review Conference²

The Review Conference could recognize, *inter alia*:

- *the importance of considering the impacts that various responses to SALW have on the demand for weapons and articulate the demand-related actions which will also be necessary for these steps to be successful.*
- *the need to incorporate small arms demand reduction into overall frameworks for sustainable development.* Under-development, inequality and insecurity are conditions which can manifest themselves in terms of small arms demand. Conversely, the alleviation of these conditions may lead to reduced demand. The Review Conference should recognize the importance of this fundamental relationship being addressed in national, regional and international policies and programmes.
- *demand reduction as part of governance and security sector reform.* Effective security sector governance is an essential part of successful small arms control and efforts to reduce demand.
- *the contribution that local approaches, along with cooperation between states and civil society, can make to reducing demand and furthering the goals of the PoA.* Genuinely participatory, bottom-up approaches to arms reduction have an essential role to play. By actively soliciting local engagement, such approaches have a greater chance of influencing the reduction in demand for weapons.
- *that demand reduction is closely connected to successful conflict resolution and peace promotion interventions.* Demand reduction is synergetic with other forms of non-violent conflict management within societies and can be aided by:

² These possible outcomes are more fully developed in Atwood, Glatz, and Muggah, “Demanding Attention: Addressing the Dynamics of Small Arms Demand”, Occasional Paper 18, Small Arms Survey, Geneva 2006. pp. 49-59. Available at <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/occasional.htm>

comprehensive peace education programmes, in particular in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs; joint development and arms control initiatives; the development of programmes directed towards longer-term reconciliation processes; and the appropriate inclusion of indigenous methods of conflict management.

- *that the impact on small arms demand varies considerably among specifically affected groups.* Different sectors of society, men, women, boys and girls, are affected differently by small arms violence and youth represent a particularly vulnerable group. Gender and youth considerations should be among the issues at the forefront of security and peacebuilding programmes.
- *the need to support and conduct focused and action-oriented research to evaluate the effectiveness of demand reduction.* Although important first steps in understanding demand dynamics have been taken, our knowledge of the complex and inter-related elements of supply and demand remains limited. There is an urgent need for further research in the years ahead to capture compelling, robust and programmatically relevant insights into supply, misuse and demand relationships and possible entry-points for intervention activities in the years ahead. Host governments, donor governments and non-governmental agencies are encouraged to sponsor such research.
