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**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

**Working paper submitted by the Netherlands and  
the United Kingdom**

**Preparing for the 2006 SALW Programme of Action Review Conference**

*Addressing the negative humanitarian and development impact of the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of SALW and their excessive accumulation*

**I. Introduction:**

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) is a threat to peace, reconciliation, security, stability, investment opportunities, economic growth and sustainable development. Both the human and socio-economic toll of armed violence perpetrated by the illicit use of SALW in society is huge. The objective of this paper is to discuss SALW and development issues more comprehensively. Providing an integrated approach to both issues will improve opportunities for development, and will help ensure that small arms interventions are more effective and sustainable. The paper suggests ways forward for discussion during the Programme of Action (PoA) Review Conference of 2006.

## II. Existing Commitments

During the past year considerable attention has been drawn to links between small arms and development. As recently as 8 December 2005, the 60<sup>th</sup> UNGA adopted a resolution [A/RES/60/68] on ‘addressing the negative humanitarian and development impact of the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation’. This resolution emphasized the relationship between SALW issues and development. It built on the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome document, which said on the interrelationship between human security and development that “we recognize that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing”.<sup>1</sup>

Another important milestone during 2005 was the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) decision in March to include “support for controlling, preventing and reducing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in those activities which qualify as development spending internationally”. This decision creates new opportunities for the integration of small arms reduction measures into poverty reduction frameworks. It also enables donor countries to classify many of their small arms reduction activities as official development assistance.

The 2001 PoA already makes mention of the connection between small arms and light weapons and the impact they can have on reconstruction and development: “... the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, which have a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and pose serious threat to (...) sustainable development”.<sup>2</sup>

Since 2001 many countries and regions have made considerable progress in fulfilling their commitments under the PoA. However, additional assistance for small arms reduction and capacity development is desperately

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<sup>1</sup> A/60/L.1

needed. Rooting such assistance in the context of development will create new opportunities to promote the PoA's implementation.

### **III. Key Challenges**

#### ***i. National poverty reduction strategies***

Resolution A/RES/60/68 calls for developing, where appropriate, comprehensive armed violence prevention programmes that are integrated into national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies.

Furthermore, it calls for establishing small arms funds to support the implementation of measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW.

*Basis in the PoA:* Para III.17: "States should make, as appropriate, greater efforts to address problems related to human and sustainable development, taking into account existing and future social and developmental activities, and should fully respect the rights of the States concerned to establish priorities in their development programmes." Also, Para III.6 mentions that "States and international and regional organizations should seriously consider assisting interested States, upon request, in building capacities in areas including the development of appropriate legislation and regulations".

*Implementation:* Several nations have already developed comprehensive National Action Plans on SALW. Some have integrated such plans or other small arms reduction measures into their national security strategies and poverty reduction frameworks. In doing so, they have acknowledged that the reduction of illicit small arms and of armed violence is closely linked to the provision of personal and economic security as basic entitlements of the poor. Unless people are safe, secure and free from extreme poverty, they will not feel able to give up their weapons. The inclusion of SALW issues in development policy dialogues based on the stated priorities and policies of the national government ensures that SALW control measures will be appropriate and sustainable. Indicators of success for such measures need to be developed and used in development reporting on both budget and sector support, and stand-alone projects. Good examples of this already exist in some countries. At the international level, the OECD DAC and relevant UN agencies should formulate guidance

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. para. 2

that would examine how best to integrate SALW measures into development frameworks, how interventions should be designed and implemented, which indicators should be used to measure success, and how donors can ensure better coordination. The UNPoA could provide a basis for this guidance.

## **ii. *Peace building***

Resolution A/RES/60/68 calls for “systematically including national measures to regulate SALW in longer term peace building strategies and programmes”.

*Basis in PoA:* Para II.2 calls for states, at the national level, “to put in place, where they do not exist, adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures [...] in order to prevent illegal manufacture of and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, or their diversion to unauthorized recipients.” Also, Para III.6. “With a view to facilitating implementation of the Programme of Action, [...] international and regional organizations should seriously consider assisting interested States, upon request, in building capacities in areas including the development of appropriate legislation”.

### *Implementation:*

In post conflict situations SALW often present a significant risk, which if left unattended will hold back reconstruction, recovery and development. The newly established Peace Building Commission (PBC) will need to ensure that measures to reduce illicit small arms availability are factored into post conflict reconstruction plans. Civilian weapons collection programmes, weapons amnesties, and the development of legislation to regulate weapons possession and use can be instrumental in preventing a resurgence of armed violence. The PoA will be a useful basis for such work in the Peace Building Commission and will help create awareness and capacity on SALW issues within the Commission and among all UN agencies engaged in post-conflict recovery.

## **iii. *Peacekeeping***

Resolution A/RES/60/68 encourages “UN peacekeeping operations to address the safe storage and disposal of SALW as an integral part of DDR programmes”.

*Basis in PoA:* Para II.21 calls on states “to develop and implement, where possible, effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, including the effective collection, control, storage and destruction of small arms and light weapons, particularly in post-conflict situations”. In addition, Para II.35 mentions: “To encourage the United Nations Security Council to consider, on a case-by-case basis, the inclusion, where applicable, of relevant provisions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the mandates and budgets of peacekeeping operations”. These two provisions have been combined in A/RES/60/68.

*Implementation:*

The Review Conference should welcome the significant progress that has been made during the last year to build the capacity of the UN and its agencies to develop and implement DDR programmes and to formulate guidance covering all aspects of DDR. This guidance recognises that technical and country-specific aspects of SALW collection, storage and disposal should be fully considered when designing DDR programmes. However, more guidance is needed on the links between formal disarmament and wider voluntary weapons collection programmes. These should complement each other but must be properly sequenced as part of post-conflict recovery. DDR programmes should also take into account how weapons are managed in newly created state security structures. The Programme of Action provides some guidance on these areas, but could be further enhanced with the support of DPKO, UNDP and other UN and regional organisations involved in the design and implementation of DDR programmes.

#### **IV. Recommendation**

We encourage the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, in his final statement, to make clear reference to the links between SALW and development and the consequent need to integrate SALW interventions into wider development programmes.