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General and complete disarmament

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/61. It summarizes the activities recently undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development in areas related to the subject.

* A/61/50 and Corr.1.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/61, entitled “Relationship between disarmament and development”. In that resolution, the General Assembly welcomed the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/59/119), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session.

II. Action taken

Activities undertaken by partner departments and partner agency of the Steering Group

2. The present report summarizes the activities related to disarmament and development undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development since the last report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/60/94).

3. The United Nations inter-agency working group on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was established by the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and mandated to carry out the work of improving the Organization’s performance in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Fifteen departments, agencies, funds and programmes¹ are represented in the inter-agency working group, and together they have developed new policies and concepts for planning and implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations in a peacekeeping context. These policies and concepts are known as the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards.

4. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards recognize the links between disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the need to coordinate this work with longer-term development strategies, including development programmes. Central to this approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, which is described in the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/60/705), is the need to situate this process within the wider recovery strategies and to ensure that any disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are coordinated with the wider peace, recovery and development frameworks.

¹ Department for Disarmament Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, Department of Public Information, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, United Nations Population Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Food Programme, World Health Organization.

5. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in chapter V of its forthcoming publication *World Economic and Social Survey 2006*, examines the role of institutions in accounting for the slow and sometimes negative growth of developing countries. Many of them are, paradoxically, rich in natural resources but suffer from conflict that has been driven and sustained by the ready availability of armaments. The chapter outlines the direct and indirect effects of armed conflicts on economic development and how even internal conflicts have a regional dimension. It shows, however, that resource-rich countries are not doomed to slow growth often caused by conflict. Indeed, through the development of institutions that produce a just and fair distribution of the wealth generated by natural resources, such resources could be a positive benefit to a country rather than a source and means to finance armed conflict.

6. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has supported more than 40 countries in addressing the issue of small arms control, armed violence reduction and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as part of its commitment to promoting human security and sustainable development and to assisting countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

7. UNDP support in the areas of small arms control and armed violence reduction has expanded over the years. UNDP now seeks to promote longer-term, multi-phase programming strategies that combine limiting weapons availability with efforts to explore and address the demand factors and the deeper causes of armed violence. By linking measures to improve security with the promotion of alternative livelihoods and the strengthening of national and local capacities, UNDP actively promotes both the human security and sustainable development dimensions of disarmament-related issues.

8. At the policy level, UNDP has also played an active role in promoting the linkage between armed violence and development. On 7 June 2006, UNDP, together with the Government of Switzerland, hosted a high-level ministerial summit in Geneva during which participating countries agreed to adopt concrete measures to reduce the negative impact of armed violence on sustainable development. These commitments are embodied in the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which also aims to make significant contributions to the global policy dialogue on armed violence prevention and reduction, and to the further integration of security and development agendas.

9. UNDP has also supported the development of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes both in peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping contexts. It has also contributed to creating a foundation for sustainable peace and development through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes by providing alternative livelihoods for ex-combatants and those associated with armed forces and their dependents. UNDP has also helped to build trust between these high-risk groups and receiving communities.

10. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are situated squarely at the intersection between peacebuilding, security sector reform and socio-economic rehabilitation, and as such are a central element in wider peace, recovery and development frameworks and strategies. In this context, UNDP places priority on supporting national actors in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts. Its work on institutional capacity development is complemented by a strong

focus on enhancing the capacities of local authorities and communities to engage effectively in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

11. UNDP has also facilitated the development of a new policy approach — integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards — in cooperation with other partners, and of several integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards modules, including ones on disarmament and arms control, security and development, with inputs from the Department for Disarmament Affairs. At the operational level, UNDP has been working closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on piloting integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the Sudan and Haiti within the framework of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti respectively.

12. The Department for Disarmament Affairs has focused its policy orientation and strengthened its human capacity to assist States in Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of disarmament and development, with the aim of offering improved assistance to States in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) has directed its disarmament and development efforts at policy dialogue; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration issues; good governance activities; and support to public security initiatives.

13. As part of the larger Central American firearms project, UN-LiREC is currently supporting two projects in Costa Rica and Guatemala, which are aimed at reducing the impact of firearms violence on development. In December 2005 and March 2006, UN-LiREC carried out discussions with the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean to further incorporate disarmament and development activities into the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

14. In the context of promoting a peaceful environment conducive to socio-economic development, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa of the Department for Disarmament Affairs continued the implementation of its project on the theme “Small arms transparency and control regime in Africa”. The participating States (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Togo) reached agreement on an operational definition of transparency in arms transfers within the framework of the project. National inventories on the local capacities of the production of small arms and light weapons were conducted in the participating States as a first step towards the adoption of legislation to regulate weapons manufactures. Participating States also agreed on a framework that led to the establishment and operation of an arms register and a database comprising eight categories of data: importations, exportations, manufactures, holdings, collections and seizures, donations, licenses and surpluses.