



DDA 1999 Update

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS

June 1999

Taking Aim at Small Arms: Defending Children's Rights

“One half billion light weapons circulating in the world—one for every 12 people. They are responsible for the deaths of 3 million people in the last decade alone. No fewer than 8 out of every 10 killed were women and children.”

This compact exhibit on display at the UN is a graphic and moving description of the victimization of children by the easy availability and excessive accumulation of small arms.

The exhibit is a hard-hitting international photographic and factual tour of the problem of small arms and their

reach into the lives of children around the globe—the plight of child soldiers and child victims; the psychosocial trauma of children in conflict, malnutrition and loss of education; the neglect of the special educational and psychological needs of children in post-conflict disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

The exhibit calls for urgent action to stop the use of children as soldiers and to protect children from gun violence. ❖UNDDA

“Small children have big dreams. Small arms cause big tragedies. Clearly, the two do not mix. And yet, from war zones to the streets of our cities and towns, this combustible blend is wreaking havoc and ruining lives.”

Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette upon inaugurating the exhibit on 20 July 1999



UNICEF and DDA, with the support of the Permanent Mission of Andorra to the UN, designed the exhibit to travel light and cheaply to as many countries as are willing to host it. The exhibit is at the UN Visitors' Lobby until 3 September. Thereafter, it will transfer to the UNICEF House Visitors' Centre from September—December. Starting in 2000, it will be on a 1-2 year international travelling tour.

Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette at the inauguration of exhibit. In the background (from left to right), UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Karin Sham Poo, UN Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas and Ambassador Juli Minoves-Triquell, Permanent Representative of Andorra to the UN UN/DPI Photo

PREPCOM FINALIZES PREPARATIONS FOR NPT REVIEW IN 2000

At its third and final session from 10 to 21 May 1999 at Headquarters, the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty reached agreement on the provisional agenda for the Review Conference, the draft rules of procedure, the allocation of items to the three main committees and the office bearers of the Conference. The candidacy of Mr. Jacob Selebi of South Africa for the presidency of the Conference was unanimously endorsed.

The PrepCom was slated to finalize consideration of substantive issues, including principles, objectives and ways to promote the full implementation of the Treaty, as well as its universality, and to make recommendations thereon to the Review Conference. However, strong divergences of views prevented agreement on any substantive matters.

Nevertheless, the parties agreed on organizational matters and procedures for the Conference, which will be held in New York from 24 April to 19 May next year. There was also agreement on the issues on which the Main Committees should focus their work:

- ◆ Main Committee I: nuclear weapons, disarmament and international security, and the issue of security assurances.
- ◆ Main Committee II: non-proliferation, safeguards and nuclear-weapon-free zones.
- ◆ Main Committee III: the inalienable right of all parties to conduct research, to produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

It was decided that the establishment of subsidiary bodies within Main Committees would be consid-

ered and resolved by the Review Conference itself.

The Committee also considered proposals concerning the expected outcome of the 2000 Review Conference. It recalled that the Conference should evaluate the results of the period under review, including the implementation of undertakings of the States parties under the Treaty; identify the areas in which, and the means through which, further progress should be sought in the future; and address specifically what might be done to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty and to achieve its universality.

At the request of the PrepCom, the UN Secretariat will prepare papers on developments since 1995 regarding the implementation of various provisions of the Treaty and the outcome of the 1995 Conference, including the decisions on "Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty", on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament" and on the "Resolution on the Middle East".

The IAEA has been tasked with preparing documentation regarding its activities relevant to articles II, IV and V of the Treaty.

The Committee invited the various secretariats or depositaries of the nuclear-weapon-free zone agreements to submit memoranda on activities related to their respective treaties.

NGOs and the PrepCom

NGOs are playing a more important role than ever before in the history of preparations for a NPT review. During the third session, as in 1997 and 1998, they addressed the delegates directly. They expressed a broad range of views of their constituents. NGOs, for the first time, organized a roundtable discussion with interested States parties during the session. ♦UNDDA

CD MEMBERS CONSULT ON WORK PROGRAMME

During its July recess, members of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) pondered ways to reach agreement on a proposal of the outgoing President, Ambassador Dembri of Algeria, to treat nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space on an equal footing through the establishment of two ad hoc working groups.

An ad hoc working group on nuclear disarmament would exchange information and views on endeavours towards nuclear disarmament and explore further prospects that could help attain that objective. The CD never had a working group or ad hoc committee on the issue of nuclear disarmament, though the item has been on its agenda as a separate item since 1982. In the early 1990s the Conference addressed issues of nuclear disarmament in informal meetings of the plenary.

The ad hoc working group on outer space would examine and identify specific topics or proposals that might be a basis for subsequent in-depth consideration, including possible confidence-building or transparency measures, general principles or treaty commitments. An Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space met with a non-negotiating mandate from 1985 to 1994.

There appeared to be agreement to start work in ad hoc committees on a fissile material treaty and negative security assurances, and on the appointment of special coordinators on transparency in armaments, improved and effective functioning of the Conference, expansion of the CD's membership and review of its agenda.

The third and last part of the 1999 session will be held from 26 July to 8 September. ♦UNDDA

MISSILE DEVELOPMENTS AND GLOBAL SECURITY

There has been increasing concern over the last several years about the dangers to international security posed by revived interest in missiles and missile defences. In addition to the nuclear-weapon States, it is estimated that more than a dozen States reportedly possess various levels of capability to develop and produce ballistic missiles. The risks are serious: exacerbating the already precarious possibility of accidental or authorized launches of missiles; new destabilizing strategic arms build-ups; provoking regional arms races; triggering an arms race in outer space; even heavier military expenditures at the expense of social and economic programmes.

“Currently there is no treaty regulating missiles. International agreements on such norms would substantially improve prospects for future progress on existing bilateral and multilateral disarmament and arms control treaties.”

Kofi Annan, 15 April 1999

On 22 April, DDA gathered five panellists from around the globe to address diplomats and representatives of NGOs. Istvan Gyarmati (Hungary) stressed that the MTCR was an effective non-discriminatory voluntary export control arrangement. Edmundo Fujita (Brazil) emphasized that export controls should unduly affect legitimate peaceful development programmes. Aaron Karp (US) claimed reducing reliance on deterrence would bring about a reduction in reliance on missiles. WANG Qun (China) placed the issue of missile proliferation in the framework of a broad range of security concerns. Kapil Kak (India) forecast that only a comprehensive and non-discrimi-

natory treaty prohibiting ballistic missiles as offensive weapons, within a time-frame, could serve the interests of global security in the 21st century.

DDA will publish, as *Occasional Paper 2*, the statements made at the Symposium. The remarks of the Under-Secretary-General are available on the UN website, go to Disarmament.

MAPUTO

Two milestones in the battle against landmines were reached this year: the Ottawa Convention entered into force on 1 March and the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention took place in Maputo, Mozambique, just two months later, from 3 to 7 May.

The First Meeting adopted a political statement, the Maputo Declaration, which called upon the international community to universalize the Convention as a “new international standard and norm of behaviour”. The States parties undertook to implement an inter-sessional work programme to advance their mine action efforts and to measure progress in achieving their objectives.

The Meeting also adopted the standardized formats developed by DDA in consultation with parties for annual reporting of transparency measures under the Convention’s article 7. DDA has now established a computerized database to handle the reports, and they will be made accessible to all interested in this field through its web site. As a State is obliged to make its first report within 180 days after the Convention’s entry into force for it, a State that was a party as of 1 March would be expected to report by the end of August.

See DDA’s web site for the report of the Meeting, the Maputo Declaration and a link to the UN’s demining database.

“Over the next years, concerted efforts will be necessary for us to win the long and protracted battle of building the national capacity of affected countries and developing new technologies for the demining process.... The landmines issue is above all a humanitarian one, and is intertwined with the evil that befalls landmine victims.”

President Chissano of Mozambique, Maputo, 3 May 1999

UN DISARMAMENT COMMISSION APRIL 1999

Guidelines on Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zones

Recent developments in disarmament and non-proliferation have led to increased efforts to consolidate existing nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) and to establish new ones. Already now more than half the Member States of the UN belong to zones in their respective regions.

In April, the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) adopted principles and guidelines for the establishment of NWFZs. In the concluding section of the paper, “The Way Ahead”, the Commission urged that all existing zones come into force as soon as possible and that the establishment of such zones in regions for which the General Assembly had adopted resolutions by consensus, as well as the development of zones free from all weapons of mass destruction, be encouraged.

Guidelines on Conventional Arms Control and Practical Disarmament

Today’s conflicts highlight the need for a comprehensive approach integrating practical disarmament measures in post-conflict situations, and, for further initiatives in conventional arms control/limitation. In April, UNDC negotiated and adopted a set of guidelines addressing these needs.



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Guidelines... (from page 3)

The Guidelines are primarily applicable for consolidating peace in situations where a conflict is approaching solution, where it has recently ended, or where steps are being taken to prevent it from re-emerging. They set out practical measures such as the collection, disposal and destruction of small arms and light weapons, mine action, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants into civil society, and also enumerate steps that can be taken to build confidence. The Guidelines consider other aspects as well: regional and international financial and technical assistance, other conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament measures, and the role of the UN.

No Consensus on SSOD IV

UNDC's Working Group on the fourth special session on disarmament met for an unusual fourth year of consideration of the issue, seeking consensus on the objectives and agenda of a future SSOD IV. Previous special sessions on disarmament were: SSOD I in 1978; SSOD II in 1982; and SSOD III in 1988.

The sticking point in the negotiations was the item that blocked consensus in previous years—reassertion of the priorities established by SSOD I, in particular nuclear weapons.”

Pursuant to resolution 53/77 AA, the convening of SSOD IV will be placed on the agenda of the upcoming General Assembly. Delegations will explore options for further action on the issue at that time.

Millennium voices

“Thus the greatest unfinished business of the century now ending is the need to eliminate this [nuclear] weaponry. It need only to fall into the hands of mentally vulnerable politicians to bring a nuclear exchange which, to repeat, could be the end of all civilized existence and, quite possibly, of all existence.”

John K. Galbraith, who is 90, in his speech upon receiving an honorary doctorate from the London School of Economics, 29 June 1999