

**General Assembly Resolution A/RES/63/23  
‘Promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed  
violence’**

**Views of the Federal Republic of Germany  
on the Interrelation between Armed Violence and Development**

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Armed violence constrains the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and has a negative impact on the socio-economic development of all societies but disproportionately severely affects those in low- and middle income countries. Reports of the Geneva Declaration Secretariat and the World Health Organization (WHO) show that armed violence is among the top 5 leading reasons of deaths for adults. Moreover, it leads to the destruction of property and infrastructure and also undermines the effects of local and foreign investments.

However, the human costs of armed violence are even higher. Armed violence disrupts access to education, health and social services, reduces the capacity of social and human resources by disseminating insecurity and fear. It can lead to large-scale displacement, restricts mobility and contributes to illicit markets, economies of violence and power structures which undermine governance and state stability.

Structural and proximate risk factors are often the reason and origin of armed violence. Structural risk factors include e.g. social, political and economic exclusion, un-/underemployment, rapid and unregulated urbanization, weak governance structures, oppressive and ineffective security sector, demographic youth bulges and resource scarcity (like access to necessities of life or basic goods and services). Proximate risk factors are the easy and unregulated access to small arms and/or alcohol and narcotics because they often can act as a trigger and turn a non-violent situation into a lethal encounter. Even the exposure to violence in the past – whether this has occurred at the national (political violence) or at the familial level (domestic violence) – is a typical risk factor.

Preventing and reducing armed violence and promoting sustainable development are priorities for German foreign and development policy. To tackle the problem of armed violence holistic and coherent approaches are needed – both at the international and national level. Multidimensional and multisectoral approaches have to be developed and implemented in countries suffering under the negative impacts of armed violence – aiming at reducing the level of violence within the societies through measures in the field of security system reform and through diminishing the risk factors and structural root causes through multisectoral development cooperation.

Therefore, Germany (re-)emphasizes the relevance of the UN Programme of Action To Prevent and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (2001), the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (2006) and the UN Resolution 63/23 on Promoting Development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence (2008). In addition, Germany supports the OECD DAC Initiative on Armed Violence Reduction and Prevention (AVR) by participating in and contributing to the DAC INCAF (International Network on Conflict and Fragility) task-team and the AVR advisory panel.

In this context, Germany also wishes to recall the concept of "Practical Disarmament" which goes back to former Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's "Agenda for Peace". Its basic idea was to focus attention, in a more integrated manner, on the relevance of practical disarmament measures for the consolidation of peace in conflict and post-conflict environments. Measures like control of small arms and light weapons including their ammunition, demining, conversion, demobilization, reintegration of former combatants have since then become an integral part of effective conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation.

In this logic, Germany first tabled in 1996 a resolution in the UN General Assembly First Committee entitled 'Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures'. The resolution promotes a comprehensive and integrated approach, combining a wide variety of aspects from disarmament to peace-keeping matters with an attempt to get tangible results. In many cases the implementation of this operational resolution has led to results with a direct impact on the lives of people in countries affected by conflict. Concrete work based on UN Resolution 63/62 on Consolidation of Peace through Practical Disarmament Measures continues in particular through the meetings of the so-called "Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures" (GIS) in New York.