

Intervention Text – Women, Children and DDR Delivered Weds, 13 July 05

- The availability and misuse of small arms undermines the safety of women, both in conflict and non-conflict situations. The presence of these weapons in the community compromises women's security, and can increase risks of death and forms of abuse including gender-based violence. In non-conflict situations, the presence of small arms in the home often contributes to a rise in domestic violence. The variety of threats posed also reduces women's capacity to perform family sustenance activities.
- We recommend that all states, civil society and international and regional organization give serious attention to the specific impact of small arms on women and urge states to put in place targeted national, regional, and international initiatives to end the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and reduce the adverse effects of small arms violence on women.
- Women have been involved in violent conflicts as combatants, as arms suppliers, as caretakers, as victims, and as peacemakers. Women can in fact become real assets in small arms disarmament and must be involved in practical disarmament as these weapons impact on their lives on a daily basis.
- In addition, we strongly urge Member States to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security which encourages all parties involved in the planning for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) to consider the different needs of male and female ex-combatants, and to take into consideration the specific needs of their dependents.
- Let me now turn to **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)**. Effective DDR programmes for ex-combatants represent a major pillar of the UN Programme of Action. In order for DDR programmes to be successful, it is important that the different needs of male and female combatants and their dependents are taken into consideration.
- Canada believes that successful DDR programmes should include equal opportunities for female ex-combatants and their dependents in the provision of security, education, health and socio-economic assistance throughout the process.
- In addition, Canada recommends that a revised Programme of Action in 2006 should incorporate the needs of female ex-combatants and their dependents in DDR Programmes.

- As well, small arms and light weapons continue to pose a serious threat to the security and well-being of children. As many as 300, 000 children continue to participate in armed conflicts around the world as child soldiers, many of which are abducted from their families or forcefully recruited. We urge the international community to exercise restraint in supplying arms to parties to armed conflict that target children and use children as combatants.
- At the same time, attention must be focused on prevention. Effective strategies could include educational opportunities, alternative source of income as well as counselling and family reunification programmes in the cases where children have served as combatants.