

Mr Chairman,

In the years since the Program of Action was agreed, many projects have been undertaken on post-conflict disarmament. Once a peace agreement is signed, it is essential that weapons be removed from circulation. The World Bank estimates there is a 44% chance of a conflict reigniting within five years of a peace agreement, and clearly the easy availability of weapons will increase the likelihood of that happening.

In addition to the danger of a political conflict re-uniting, these societies face another equally grave threat to human security, and that is from crime. Too often, families and communities survive the war only to find that so-called 'peace' does not bring freedom from fear of armed violence. Instead, the guns left over from the conflict are often taken up by organised criminal gangs or common thugs, who use them to rob and threaten civilians.

For women and children, the post-conflict phase may bring another menace – a rise in domestic violence. The availability of a gun in the home makes a domestic assault even more terrifying, and more likely to prove fatal.

Thus the outcome document of the Review Conference could contain the following commitments:

- Incorporate weapons collection and stockpile management programs into peacebuilding strategies.
- Ensure that disarmament processes are inclusive and designed in collaboration with the affected community.
- Prioritise the implementation of Article 13 of Security Council Resolution 1325 during DDR programming, which calls upon 'all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants'.
- Ensure that a long-term goal of post-conflict disarmament is to establish a norm within society that possession of small arms is a privilege carrying a range of obligations.
- Ensure that post-conflict recovery programs include implementation of effective national firearm regulation, as recommended by the 2005 UN General Assembly resolution on the humanitarian and development impact of small arms. The minimum standards of such legislation could be based on the 1997 Resolution of the UN Commission of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Thank you