

THE GENEVA FORUM

QUNO | UNIDIR | CCDP

A joint initiative of:

QUNO
The Quaker United Nations
Office, Geneva

UNIDIR
The United Nations
Institute for Disarmament
Research

CCDP
The Centre on Conflict,
Development and
Peacebuilding of the
Graduate Institute, Geneva

The Palais des Nations (UN
Headquarters), Geneva

Photo: Geneva Forum



ACTIVITY REPORT 2008

Acknowledgements

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- **The Government of Germany** (Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
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- **The Government of Norway** (Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- **The Government of Sweden** (Ministry for Foreign Affairs)
- **The Government of Switzerland** (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs)

Preface

Clearing paths to progress in disarmament and arms control

The Geneva Forum is a unique partnership of a United Nations body, a non-governmental organisation and an academic institution working together to improve human security through disarmament and arms control. Our organisations have been collaborating since the mid-1990s in pursuit of three core objectives: building agendas around new and emerging issues; supporting multilateral negotiations; and promoting the implementation of multilateral agreements in the areas of disarmament and arms control.

The work of the Geneva Forum is based on our common understanding that disarmament has not only security, but also humanitarian and development dimensions. The production, trade (licit and illicit) and use of arms have ramifications for all areas of human security. Whether it is the diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, illegal flows of arms into conflict zones, or the production and use of weapons in violation of international agreements and International Humanitarian Law, how States choose to acquire and use arms has direct and indirect consequences for the security and wellbeing of all people on this planet.

At the 2005 World Summit, global leaders explicitly recognised that “development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.” This important realisation has not yet, however, fully trickled down to the conference rooms and corridors where diplomats negotiate disarmament treaties. The real world of multilateral disarmament

diplomacy has still some way to go in grasping the ongoing and potential impact of weapons on the lives, limbs and livelihoods of women, men, girls and boys around the world.

The Geneva Forum works to fill this gap. In bringing humanitarian and human security perspectives to bear in its seminars, conferences and briefings, the Geneva Forum makes a unique contribution to supporting and advancing multilateral disarmament and arms control processes. This report sets forth the broad range of activities carried out by the Geneva Forum in 2008 and sets them in the context of our longer-term objectives.

This work would not have been possible were it not for the encouragement, guidance and support of our many friends and collaborators. The Geneva Forum is a completely self-financed initiative. We express our sincere thanks to the governments that supported our work during 2008: Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

We also thank the hundreds of representatives of governments, international organisations and NGOs who so actively contributed to our activities during 2008 and we look forward to further deepening our collaboration with them during 2009. We hope that you will find this report to be informative and that it will give you an insight into the Geneva Forum's way of working. We also hope that we will have the pleasure of welcoming you to one or more of our activities in 2009.

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About the Geneva Forum

Improving human security through disarmament and arms control

The Geneva Forum is the brainchild of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), and the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding of the Graduate Institute (CCDP). Its overarching objective is to contribute to building international peace and security by forging partnerships among and between governments, international organisations and NGOs on disarmament and arms control issues of common concern.

The Geneva Forum is a unique partnership between a non-governmental organisation, a UN body and an academic institute, each of which is engaged in its own right in research, policy and advocacy on issues related to multilateral security and disarmament. These organisations pool their extensive knowledge, skills and networks for their common work within the framework of the Geneva Forum.

The Geneva Forum Partner Organisations work together in pursuit of three core objectives:

- ⇒ **Building agendas around new and emerging issues in disarmament and arms control;**
- ⇒ **Supporting ongoing disarmament and arms control negotiations;**
- ⇒ **Promoting implementation of disarmament and arms control agreements.**

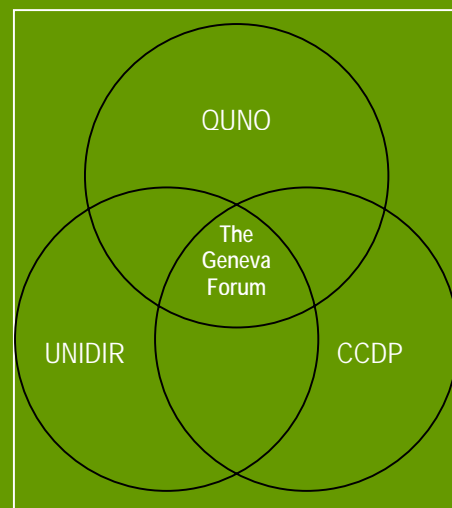
In carrying out this work, the Geneva Forum interacts principally with government missions to the United Nations in Geneva, but also with UN bodies, international organisations, NGOs and the media. The Geneva Forum also actively engages Geneva's important humanitarian, development, human rights and public health communities in its disarmament work.

A unique partnership

The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding operates as a policy-relevant academic research programme at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, and successfully organises activities that bring together scholars, activists and practitioners.

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) has been at work in Geneva since 1948. Through its seminars, encounters, active presence where possible in negotiations, and links both to the diplomatic and international organization community and to a whole range of international networks, QUNO is ideally placed to provide a critical non-governmental element in the Geneva Forum "triad."

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), an inter-governmental organization within the United Nations, conducts research on disarmament and security. Working with researchers, diplomats, officials and non-governmental organizations, UNIDIR acts as a bridge between the research community and governments and promotes informed debate within United Nations structures.



The 2008 Disarmament Year

Selected highlights

During 2008, discussions continued in the Conference on Disarmament around the adoption of a Programme of Work. Hopes were high that a stalemate of over a decade would finally be broken; while no agreement has materialized, encouraging signs have increasingly pointed to a positive change in atmosphere.

The UN Group of Governmental Experts tasked with examining the feasibility, scope and parameters of an Arms Trade Treaty conducted its three sessions during the year, and issued a report in August. The report concluded that further consideration to the issues it examined was necessary, and that such efforts should be conducted in an open, transparent and step-by-step process within the United Nations. This paved the way for the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group on the issue, scheduled to meet in six sessions between 2009 and 2012.

States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention continued their intersessional work with a Meeting of Experts and a Meeting of States Parties. These focused on: 1) national, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity; and 2) oversight, education, awareness-raising, and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct with the aim of preventing misuse in the context of advances in bio-science and bio-technology research with the potential of use for purposes prohibited by the Convention.

In July, the Third Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms was held in New York. The meeting concluded with a strong and action-oriented report, which made concrete recommendations for implementation of the Programme on selected thematic areas. The BMS report also made suggestions for strengthening the overall UN process on small arms, which were later taken up in the yearly omnibus resolution of the UN General Assembly.

After four international conferences, the Oslo Process reached its goal of concluding an international treaty banning cluster munitions. The Convention on Cluster Munitions, concluded in Dublin in May and opened for signatures in December, establishes the complete ban on the use,

production and transfer of these weapons; furthermore, it provides for far-reaching measures for clearance of contaminated areas, assistance to victims and destruction of existing stockpiles. To date, the CCM has been signed by 94 States and ratified by four.

Preparations for the 2010 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty continued in 2008. The Preparatory Committee held its second session in April-May; unlike the previous one, this meeting was not marred by disagreement on the agenda and devoted sufficient time to discussing substantive issues. Due to opposition from a minority of States, the factual summary of the discussions, prepared by the Chair, was not annexed to the report of the committee, which was limited to a few 'technical' and 'procedural' issues.

In September, the Summit Meeting of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development was held in Geneva. Attended by 80 States and 50 representatives from international and non-governmental organizations, the meeting reviewed progress in implementing the Declaration. It also decided to develop goals, targets and measurable indicators on armed violence and development as a complement to the Millennium Development Goals.

The UN General Assembly adopted 54 resolutions put before it by its First Committee on Disarmament and International Security in 2008. Two wholly new resolutions dealt with cluster munitions and illicit weapons brokering. The former noted the conclusions of negotiations on the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the date for the opening of signatures; the latter broadly called for efforts to combat illicit brokering of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, but essentially referred to implementation of already existing initiatives. The yearly resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons set up an ambitious roadmap for the UN process on the issue. According to the resolution, the following meetings will be held between now and 2012: the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the Programme of Action (2010); a Meeting of Experts (2011); a Review Conference (2012) and regional meetings. In the nuclear field, the General Assembly adopted several texts

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relating, *inter alia*, to the operational status of nuclear weapons, their non-first use and legally binding negative security assurances, but the resolutions did not mark significant changes in content compared to previous years. A resolution on “Transparency in armaments” decided to convene a Group of Governmental Experts in 2009 to review the operation and continuing development of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Based on the report of the previous GGE, the text

established small arms and light weapons as an unofficial, ‘voluntary’ eighth category for reporting within the Register.

2008 Disarmament Calendar			
Excerpt: Full version available at www.geneva-forum.org			
14-18.01	UN Group of Governmental Experts on Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus: 1st Session	Ammunition	Geneva
21.01- 28.03	Conference on Disarmament: 1st Part	Various	Geneva
11-15.02	Group of Governmental Experts on an Arms Trade Treaty: 1st session	Arms Trade	New York
18-22.02	Oslo Process on Cluster Munitions: 4 th International Conference	Cluster Munitions	Wellington
20-22.02	UN Secretarial General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters	Various	New York
25-29.02	UN Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles: 2nd Session	Missiles	New York
10-11.03	International Tracing Instrument on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Workshop for West and Central Africa	Small Arms	Lomé
31.03-4.04	UN Group of Governmental Experts on Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus: 2nd session	Ammunition	New York
7-11.04	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Group of Governmental Experts, 2nd Session	Cluster Munitions	Geneva
7-18.04	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW): 2nd Review Conference	Chemical Weapons	The Hague
7-25.04	UN Disarmament Commission	Various	New York
12-19.04	Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisors: 11th International Meeting	Landmines	Slovenia and Croatia
28.04-9.05	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT): Second Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference	Nuclear Weapons	Geneva
8-9.05	Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development: Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on Armed Violence and Development	Armed Violence & Development	Bangkok
12-16.05	Group of Governmental Experts on an Arms Trade Treaty: 2nd Session	Arms Trade	New York
12.05-27.06	Conference on Disarmament: 2nd Part	Various	Geneva

2008 Disarmament Calendar - continued Excerpt: Full version available at www.geneva-forum.org			
19-30.05	Oslo Process Diplomatic Conference to Negotiate a <i>Convention on Cluster Munitions</i>	Cluster Munitions	Dublin
2-6.06	UN Group of Governmental Experts on Missiles: 2nd Session	Missiles	New York
2-6.06	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: Standing Committees	Landmines	Geneva
2-4.07	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Informal Meeting of Experts on Protocol V	Explosive Remnants of War	Geneva
7-11.07	UN Group of Governmental Experts on Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus: 3rd Session	Ammunition	New York
14-18.07	Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms	Small Arms	New York
28.07-8.08	Group of Governmental Experts on an Arms Trade Treaty: 3rd Session	Arms Trade	New York
28.07- 12.09	Conference on Disarmament: 3rd Part	Various	Geneva
18-22.08	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC): Meeting of Experts	Biological Weapons	Geneva
1-5.09	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW); Group of Governmental Experts on Cluster Munitions	Cluster Munitions	Geneva
8.09	Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development: Summit meeting	Armed Violence & Development	Geneva
6-15.10	Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: Fourth Conference of States Parties	Organized Crime	Vienna
6.10-4.11	UN General Assembly: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security)	Various	New York
3-7.11	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW); Group of Governmental Experts on Cluster Munitions	Cluster Munitions	Geneva
10-11.11	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Meeting of States Parties to Protocol V	Explosive Remnants of War	Geneva
12.11	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Meeting of States Parties to Amended Protocol II	Mines, bobby traps and other devices	Geneva
13-14.11	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW): Meeting of States Parties	Inhumane Weapons	Geneva
24-28.11	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: Ninth Meeting of States Parties	Landmines	Geneva
1-5.12	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC): Annual Meeting of the States Parties	Biological Weapons	Geneva

Participants in Geneva Forum activities in 2008

Governments

1. Argentina
2. Armenia
3. Australia
4. Austria
5. Belarus
6. Belgium
7. Benin
8. Botswana
9. Bulgaria
10. Burkina Faso
11. Cambodia
12. Canada
13. Chad
14. Chile
15. China
16. Colombia
17. Costa Rica
18. Côte d'Ivoire
19. Croatia
20. Denmark
21. Ecuador
22. Egypt
23. Estonia
24. Finland
25. France
26. Georgia
27. Germany
28. Ghana
29. Guatemala
30. Guinea
31. Holy See
32. India
33. Indonesia
34. Iran
35. Iraq
36. Ireland
37. Israel
38. Italy
39. Japan
40. Kenya
41. Latvia
42. Lebanon
43. Lesotho
44. Lithuania
45. Malaysia
46. Mauritania
47. Mexico
48. Moldova
49. Monaco
50. Morocco
51. Mozambique
52. Myanmar
53. Nepal
54. Netherlands
55. New Zealand

56. Nigeria
57. Norway
58. Pakistan
59. Peru
60. Poland
61. Qatar
62. Republic of Korea
63. Romania
64. Russian Federation
65. Senegal
66. Serbia
67. Singapore
68. Slovakia
69. Slovenia
70. South Africa
71. Sudan
72. Swaziland
73. Sweden
74. Switzerland
75. Tanzania
76. Thailand
77. Timor-Leste
78. Turkey
79. Uganda
80. United Kingdom
81. Uruguay
82. United States of America
83. Venezuela
84. Vietnam
85. Zambia

Non-Governmental and Research Organisations

1. Al-Hakim Foundation
2. Amnesty International
3. Autonomous University of Mexico
4. BioWeapons Prevention Project
5. C King Associates Ltd.
6. Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding
7. Cluster Munition Coalition
8. Darmstadt University of Technology
9. Defend International
10. DiploFoundation
11. Fondation Suisse de déminage
12. Friedrich Ebert Foundation
13. Geneva Call
14. Geneva Centre for Security Policy
15. Geneva International Academic Network

16. Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
17. Geneva International Peace Research Institute
18. Green Cross International
19. Groupe de Recherche et d'Information sur la Paix et la Sécurité
20. Handicap International
21. Human Rights Watch
22. International Action Network on Small Arms
23. International Campaign to Ban Landmines
24. International Peace Bureau
25. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
26. Jenal & Partners Biosafety Consulting
27. Landmine Action UK
28. Landmine Survivors Network
29. Le Courier,
30. London School of Economics and Political Science
31. NHK (Japan) Geneva Bureau
32. Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
33. Norwegian People's Aid
34. Oxfam International
35. Pax Christi International
36. Quaker United Nations Office
38. Research Group for Biological Arms Control
39. University of St. Thomas
40. Saferworld
41. Small Arms Survey
42. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
43. Télévision Suisse Romande
44. University of Exeter
45. University of St. Thomas
46. Verification Research, Training and Information Centre
47. War Resisters International
48. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
49. World Council of Churches
50. World Forum of Civil Society Networks-UBUNTU

UN, Regional & International Organisations

1. Council of the European Union General Secretariat
2. European Commission
3. International Committee of the Red Cross
4. International Labour Organisation
5. Interpol
6. United Nations Children's Fund
7. United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
8. United Nations Development Programme
9. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
10. United Nations Mine Action Service
11. World Health Organisation

Supporting implementation of agreements

Small Arms & Light Weapons

Curbing proliferation and misuse

Background to the problem

The Small Arms Survey estimates that almost 900 million firearms are in circulation throughout the world and that three-quarters of these are in the hands of civilians. In the world today, in other words, there is roughly one firearm for every seven people. These weapons are used to kill hundreds of thousands of people every year, both in conflict situations and in otherwise peaceful settings.

The total value of the authorised annual global trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) is estimated at about US\$4 billion. The global illicit market is responsible for channelling firearms to parts of the world that are wracked by or attempting to recover from violent conflict, often bypassing arms embargoes and undermining the international community's efforts at conflict management.

The influx of these weapons exacerbates conflict, facilitates human rights abuses, genocide and other atrocities, and makes post-conflict reconciliation significantly more difficult. Moreover, the longevity, wide availability and misuse of illicit guns have a significant adverse impact on post-conflict socio-economic development.

The international response

In 2001, UN Member States agreed a Programme of Action (PoA) aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons through concerted action at the national, regional and global levels. This agreement – while not legally binding – constitutes an important step that should make possible a significant reduction in the illicit small arms trade with tangible security benefits for people living in affected countries and regions. For this to happen, however, the agreement must be implemented in a timely and thorough fashion across all countries and regions.

Biennial Meetings of States to consider implementation of the Programme of Action took place in 2003 and 2005. These were less than satisfactory, particularly since they did not clearly address challenges to

implementation or propose strategies to help States better live up to their commitments.

The first Review Conference of the Programme of Action took place in 2006 with the aim of evaluating the impact of five years of global action aimed at curbing the illicit small arms trade and of making the changes necessary to ensure the strengthened future implementation of the agreement. The two-week meeting ended, however, without any agreement on these key points.

At the end of 2006, the UN General Assembly agreed to hold a third Biennial Meeting of States in 2008, thus keeping the issue on the UN's agenda. Following the disappointing outcome of the Review Conference, there was an emerging consensus among States and civil society, that the 2008 biennial meeting would face the important additional challenge of putting the UN small arms process back on track. This challenge was successfully met: the third Biennial Meeting of States concluded with a far-reaching outcome document which put the small arms and light weapons issue back firmly on the international agenda, and prepared the ground for an ambitious roadmap later established with the yearly small arms resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly.

Key developments in 2008

Third Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the PoA

The third Biennial Meeting of States, held in July 2008 in New York, broke with past practice in two important ways. Contrary to previous biennial meetings, which had dealt with the implementation of all PoA commitments, the third BMS focused the discussions on a few issues, previously selected by the Chair Designate – Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis – in consultation with states and civil society. Also, for the first time since the 2001 UN Small Arms Conference, the meeting adopted its outcome document by vote, rather than by consensus. The BMS report gave concrete recommendations on PoA implementation in the thematic areas it discussed, and also

indicated suggestions for a strengthened UN process on small arms.

2009 Resolution on small arms

The yearly resolution on the 'illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects' built directly on the success of the third Biennial Meeting of States, and delineated an ambitious roadmap for future global steps on the issue. Adopted with 181 votes in favour and 1 against, Resolution A/RES/63/72 (12 January 2009) endorsed the report of the Third Biennial Meeting and decided that:

- ⇒ The next biennial meeting of states would be held no later than 2010;
- ⇒ An open-ended meeting of governmental experts would meet for one week no later than 2011 "to address key implementation challenges and opportunities relating to particular issues and themes;"
- ⇒ A second Review Conference on implementation of the PoA would be held no later than 2012.

Stressing the importance of the regional dimension, the resolution also encouraged states to convene regional meetings to consider implementation of the Programme.

The Geneva Forum's contribution

The proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons have occupied the core of the Geneva Forum's work programme since the initiative was created in 1996. During the second half of the 1990s, The Geneva Forum was instrumental in sensitising governments to the humanitarian consequences of small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse, thereby helping the issue to move up the international agenda and hastening a multilateral response to it.

Following the 2001 conference that agreed the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms, the Geneva Forum launched the *Geneva Process on Small Arms* to help maintain an international focus on this important issue and to promote and monitor implementation of the Programme of Action.

The initiative attracted the participation of key States, including the principal producers of small arms and light weapons, countries affected by their proliferation and misuse, and donor States (see the full list of participants below). One of the early Chairs of the Geneva Process was Ambassador Camillo Reyes Rodriguez of Colombia, the President of the 2001 small

arms conference that agreed the Programme of Action.

The work of the Geneva Process is greatly assisted by expert inputs from relevant international organisations and NGOs, who participate in the process on an equal footing with governments. The process systematically focuses on specific elements of the Programme of Action with a view to developing pragmatic, problem-solving approaches to their implementation; it also promotes coordination on more procedural issues, most notably through assisting in preparations for UN meetings on small arms.

In 2007 the Geneva Process on Small Arms was re-launched with a new sense of purpose and a new set of objectives. Part of this was the creation of two Working Groups: the first was tasked with developing effective mechanisms for assessing needs and matching them with resources to facilitate Programme of Action implementation. The second was set the task of developing options and proposals for making Biennial Meetings of States as effective as possible in promoting implementation of the Programme of Action.

Both Working Groups were highly influential in determining the structure and content of global initiatives on small arms; specifically, outcome papers of both Groups fed into preparations for the Third Biennial Meeting. Through direct consultations with the Chair Designate of the BMS, the Working Groups assisted in determining the focus themes of the meeting.

Activities in 2008

The Geneva Process on Small Arms

During 2008 the Geneva Process held five meetings; with the third Biennial Meeting of States scheduled for July, discussions were increasingly focused on preparing for the meeting.

Early in the year, the first Geneva Process meeting was dedicated to an informal discussion with the Chair designate of the BMS, Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis of Lithuania, with the specific aim of identifying thematic issues for the biennial meeting. Once the focus issues were delineated, a second meeting was dedicated to the role of the facilitators that were appointed by the BMS Chair on each of the thematic issues.

Two separate Geneva Process Working Groups fed into preparations for the BMS; both produced papers that were shared with the Chair-designate of the meeting in

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2007 and 2008 and directly fed into the delineation of the structure and outcome of the meeting.

As in the past, the Geneva Process offered a venue to share information on and discuss small arms-related activities at national, regional and international levels, as well as to reflect on developments in related disarmament and arms control initiatives. Finally, the Geneva Process helped to

prepare participants for the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, which started on 16 September 2008 (see below for details of the Geneva Process meetings held in 2008).

Participants in the Geneva Process on Small Arms 2008	
Governments Argentina Australia Austria Belgium Canada Chile China Colombia Ecuador Finland France Germany Guatemala India Ireland Israel Japan	Kenya Korea (Rep. of) Lithuania Mexico Netherlands Nigeria Norway Russian Federation South Africa Sweden Switzerland Turkey United Kingdom United States of America
International Organizations International Committee of the Red Cross United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms United Nations Development Programme United Nations Children's Fund United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs	
Non-governmental Organizations Amnesty International Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding Geneva Forum Groupe de Recherche et d'Information sur la Paix et la Sécurité International Action Network on Small Arms International Peace Bureau Oxfam GB Quaker United Nations Office Saferworld Small Arms Survey	

The Geneva Process on Small Arms in 2008

<p>5 February 2008</p> <p>The first meeting of the Geneva Process was dedicated to an informal discussion with the Chair-designate of the third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS), Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations in New York. The meeting focused specifically on identifying priority issues for the BMS, as stipulated by the UN General Assembly omnibus resolution on small arms of 2008 (A/RES/62/47). Time was also reserved for reports and updates from participants on events and activities relating to the implementation of the UN Programme of Action.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Conference on Disarmament</p> <p><i>Invited speaker:</i> Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations in New York and Chair-designate of the third Biennial Meeting of States</p>
<p>22 April 2008</p> <p>This special meeting of the Geneva Process was timed to coincide with the second visit to Geneva of Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis of Lithuania in his capacity of Chair-designate of the third Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the UN Programme of Action.</p> <p>The meeting focused on the role of the four Facilitators appointed by the BMS Chair in preparing, structuring and following up on the substantive discussions that were to take place at the biennial meeting on (1) international cooperation and assistance and national capacity-building; (2) illicit brokering; (3) stockpile management and surplus disposal, and (4) the International Tracing Instrument. Facilitators on each of these issues – Colombia, Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Egypt, respectively – were invited to brief on their plans in this regard. The meeting also explored how to transform the substantive discussions at the biennial meeting into concrete, action-oriented outcomes and how the Geneva Process could assist and support the Facilitators in their important task.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Conference on Disarmament</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis of Lithuania, Chair-designate of the third Biennial Meeting of States Ambassador Clemencia Forero Ucros of Colombia Mr. Reto Wollenmann of Switzerland Ms. Angela Robinson of Australia</p>
<p>10 September 2008</p> <p>This meeting reviewed and reflected on the proceedings and outcome of the third Biennial Meeting of States, as well as on the role that the Geneva Process and its Working Groups played in it. It also reviewed and analysed the outcomes of two important Groups of Governmental Experts: the first on an Arms Trade Treaty and the second on surplus stockpiles of conventional ammunition. Participants also discussed the opportunities and challenges facing the 2008 meeting of the UN General Assembly's First Committee and the issues that the Geneva Process could focus on for the remainder of the year.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Mr. Eric Berman, Managing Director, Small Arms Survey</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Chair of the UN GGE on an Arms Trade Treaty Mr. Albrecht von Wittke of Germany Mr. James Bevan, Small Arms Survey Dr. Glenn McDonald, Small Arms Survey Ms. Angela Robinson of Australia Mr. Daniel Avila of Colombia Mr. Masamichi Ito of Japan Mr. Meir Itzhaki of Israel</p>

The Geneva Process on Small Arms in 2008 (continued)	
<p>14 October 2008</p> <p>A meeting of the Geneva Process in New York: “Building the Geneva/New York nexus on Small Arms”</p> <p>This meeting, which was held in New York, was specifically dedicated to the New York-Geneva nexus and pursued two main goals: on the one hand, to review with New York colleagues the recent experience of the Biennial Meeting of States, particularly the ways in which the Geneva Process participants worked with their counterparts in New York towards a positive outcome for BMS3. On the other, to exchange ideas with New York colleagues as to how to build on this experience for effective collaborative work on implementation of the Programme of Action in the months and years ahead.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Mr. Eric Berman, Managing Director, Small Arms Survey</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Dr. David Atwood, Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva</p> <p>Mr. Dainius Baublys of Lithuania</p> <p>Ambassador Jürg Streuli of Switzerland</p> <p>Mr. Daniël Prins, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs - Conventional Arms Branch, New York</p>
<p>18 November 2008</p> <p>The last meeting of the Geneva Process in 2008 was dedicated to a review of draft resolutions adopted by the UN First Committee on Disarmament and International Security (63rd session of the UN General Assembly). Participants also looked to future activities, through a general discussion on the future focus of Geneva Process meetings and on planning and review of the existing Working Groups. Finally, there was an overview of the Geneva Declaration Summit, held in Geneva in September 2008, and of the ensuing report.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Mr. Eric Berman, Managing Director, Small Arms Survey</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Mr. Guy Pollard of the United Kingdom</p> <p>Mr. Yoshi Hiraishi of Japan</p> <p>Mr. Albrecht von Wittke of Germany</p> <p>Mr. Daniel Avila of Colombia</p> <p>Mr. Meir Itzchaki of Israel</p> <p>Ms. Kerry Maze, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</p> <p>Ms. Sarah Parker, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Dr. David Atwood, Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva</p> <p>Mr. Reto Wollenmann of Switzerland</p>

Other activities on small arms and light weapons

In addition to the Geneva Process meetings, the Geneva Forum hosted a residential seminar on the issue of long-term implementation of the PoA and related monitoring and evaluation. Held against the backdrop of the upcoming BMS, which had been set to focus on selected thematic areas, this residential seminar took a broader look at PoA commitments, their implementation trends, obstacles and potential solutions.

The Geneva Forum Coordinator and Principals also participated in outside

activities and initiatives. In October, they attended the 63rd session of the First Committee on Disarmament and International Security of the UN General Assembly. On 28-30 May, David Atwood, Director of the Quaker United Nations Office, represented the Geneva Forum at a “Synergy Conference for Regional Organizations on the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW” organized by the OSCE and NATO’s Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

Other 2008 Geneva Forum activities on small arms & light weapons

26 June

Forward Thinking on a Practical Implementation Agenda for the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons

This residential seminar focused on the broad question of how long-term implementation of the Programme of Action could be managed, monitored and evaluated; it addressed the following questions:

- ⇒ Why has the overall implementation of the Programme of Action, particularly at the national level, been so uneven?
- ⇒ What can be done about this? Are the reporting and follow-up mechanisms provided for in the Programme sufficient to address implementation shortcomings? Would a longer-term, practical implementation agenda help?
- ⇒ What ideas and proposals already exist for improving implementation of the Programme of Action? What are their merits and demerits?
- ⇒ Which elements of the Programme of Action are especially in need of (and ripe for) enhanced implementation?
- ⇒ In which sequence might they be addressed and how? Are there any specific elements requiring continuous or periodic follow-up?
- ⇒ How could current thinking on an implementation agenda, including the discussions that have taken place in this seminar, best be taken forward?
- ⇒ What is the role of the third Biennial Meeting of States in this regard?

Chairs:

Dr. Patrick McCarthy, Coordinator, The Geneva Forum

Dr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva

Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. Eric Berman, Managing Director, Small Arms Survey

Dr. Christiane Agboton-Johnson, Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Type: Residential Seminar

Location: Centre de formation du Léman

Participants: 34

Biological and toxin weapons

Preventing deliberate disease

Background to the problem

A revolution is taking place in the life sciences. Researchers in such areas as biotechnology, gene technology, microbiology, molecular cell biology and synthetic biology are making giant strides towards understanding what makes humans, animals and plants tick. This vast increase in knowledge has enormous potential for fighting disease and improving health. Like all scientific advancements, however, it also has the potential to be misused.

The danger does not only extend to the development and deliberate spread of new kinds of infectious diseases that do not respond to existing treatments – although this, in itself, is horrific enough. Following the decoding of the human genome and developments in synthetic biology, there is also now a potential to develop weapons that could interfere with the very genetic makeup of human beings or to create wholly new kinds of viruses and bacteria. It is not, therefore, an overstatement to say that the misuse of knowledge generated by the ongoing revolution in the life sciences could threaten the very future of the human race.

The international response

Current multilateral efforts to address this enormous risk face many obstacles. The main treaty codifying the ban on the use of diseases as weapons – the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) – lacks a system to verify that states are complying with its provisions on the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons. This shortcoming undermines confidence in the treaty's ability to ensure biological disarmament.

During the second Review Conference of the BTWC (1986), a system of confidence-building measures (CBMs) was established, with the goal of increasing transparency and information exchange, reducing “ambiguities, doubts and suspicions” and thus favouring cooperation in peaceful biological activities. Such measures, which have been revised throughout the years, currently cover seven main areas.

Participation in the CBMs system has been unequal and inconsistent; today, it remains unclear whether such measures have fulfilled their goal, and proposals have emerged for a radical revision of their content. States Parties to the Convention have agreed that the 2011 Review Conference will proceed to a thorough revision of the CBM mechanism.

Long-standing negotiations aimed at strengthening the BTWC by adding a verification mechanism broke down in 2001, leading to a one-year suspension of deliberations in the 5th BTWC Review Conference later that same year. When the Review Conference resumed at the end of 2002, a compromise proposal was agreed involving an intersessional programme of work before the next Review Conference in 2006.

These annual exercises in focusing attention on specific provisions of the BTWC with a view to strengthening their implementation by States Parties have proven surprisingly effective in stimulating exchanges of views and suggesting good practice. The constructive way in which, by and large, States have participated in the new process has strengthened the BTWC regime as a whole.

Key developments in 2008

The **Meeting of Experts** of the BTWC was held on 18-22 August in Geneva; it was attended by 96 States Parties, as well as by representatives of international, non-governmental and academic organizations. In accordance with the decisions taken at the Sixth Review Conference, the meeting's discussions focused on how to promote common understandings and effective action on:

- ⇒ National, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity, including laboratory safety and security of pathogens and toxins;
- ⇒ Oversight, education, awareness-raising, and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct with the aim of preventing misuse in the context of advances in bio-science and bio-technology research with the potential of use for purposes prohibited by the Convention.

The meeting concluded with a report, adopted by consensus, which included a set of proposals derived from the discussions.

The **Meeting of States Parties** to the BTWC took place on 1-5 December in Geneva. It was devoted to considering the work undertaken by the August Meeting of Experts as well as reports from the Chairman and States Parties on universalization activities and the report of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). It concluded with a report adopted by consensus.

The Geneva Forum contribution

The Geneva Forum has been active in supporting and facilitating the multilateral process on biological weapons since 1997. We have organised numerous activities around this issue, including press briefings, seminars and off-the-record residential seminars involving key governments.

Our activities have focused primarily on promoting interaction between governments and leading non-governmental

experts, and on providing opportunities for informal behind-the-scenes consultations at crucial times in the negotiating process.

Activities in 2008

Building on its 2007 activities, in 2008 the Geneva Forum continued focusing on the mechanism of Confidence-Building Measures established within the BTWC. In December, on the sideline of the annual Meeting of States Parties, we organized a seminar on “Preparing the Ground for the CBMs Content Debate: What Information Builds Confidence?” The seminar focused on the role of Confidence-Building Measures in strengthening the BTWC and on how these could be made more effective (full details below).

This seminar was inserted in a broader set of activities over the period 2007-2011, with which the Geneva Forum aims at assisting States in preparing for the “comprehensive” discussion on CBMs that will take place during the next Review Conference of the BTCW (2011).

2008 Activities on Biological Weapons

2 December

Preparing the Ground for the CBMs Content Debate: What Information Builds Confidence?

Although the issue of CBMs did not feature in the current intersessional work programme, the 6th Review Conference agreed that CBMs merited further and comprehensive attention at the 7th Review Conference in 2011. The intersessional Meetings of Experts and Meetings of States Parties provided an ideal opportunity to address the issue of CBMs on the margins.

This seminar highlighted the role that CBMs play in strengthening the BTWC, and examined ways of strengthening them and making them more effective. In particular, the meeting presented:

- ⇒ An overview of the role of the Implementation Support Unit in strengthening CBMs;
- ⇒ A review of the quality of information submitted within the CBMs mechanism, and an analysis of whether, in practice, such information enhances transparency and builds the necessary degree of confidence between States Parties;
- ⇒ A discussion on CBMs and an outline of some of the possible options for strengthening them.

The seminar also launched the study “Preparing the ground for the CBMs content debate: What information builds confidence?”, funded by the Government of Switzerland and carried out by the BIOS Centre of the London School of Economics.

Chair:

Mr. Reto Wollenmann, Delegation of Switzerland to the Conference on Disarmament

Invited speakers:

Mr. Richard Lennane, BTWC Implementation Support Unit

Dr. Filippa Lentzos, BIOS Centre, London School of Economics

Ambassador Jürg Streuli of Switzerland

*Type: Lunchtime Seminar
Location : Palais des Nations
Attendance : 86*

Supporting ongoing negotiations

Cluster Munitions

Preventing unacceptable harm

Background to the problem

Cluster munitions are ground- or air-launched containers that open over a target to scatter dozens or hundreds of small, explosive sub-munitions over a wide area.

From a military perspective, they are designed to be used against moving or stationary concentrations of troops, armour or artillery, or for destroying airfields. From a humanitarian perspective, however, they are problematic on two levels. First, because they are often inaccurate and are designed to cause destruction over a wide area, they are indiscriminate when used in or close to civilian areas. Second, because some sub-munitions always fail to explode – but can do so later if disturbed – they present a serious threat to the lives, limbs and livelihoods of civilians, especially children, for long after the bombs have stopped falling.

According to Human Rights Watch data from December 2007, cluster munitions are produced in 28 countries, stockpiled by 76 and have been used by at least 15 against at least 28 countries. Where they are present, unexploded cluster sub-munitions have a similar humanitarian impact to anti-personnel mines, although they tend to be more lethal and, because of their toy-like appearance, tend to kill and maim a higher proportion of children.

However, the level of humanitarian devastation caused to date by cluster munitions has not yet reached that of anti-personnel mines. This means that effective and timely multilateral action could prevent this problem from assuming similar proportions.

The international response

The issue of *Explosive Remnants of War* (ERW), of which unexploded cluster sub-munitions constitute a significant part, has been the subject of a multilateral process in Geneva within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). In 2003, States Parties to this convention finalised negotiations on a new, legally-binding protocol that obliges them to take measures to reduce the dangers posed by explosive remnants of war. This

protocol, the CCW's fifth, entered into force on 12 November 2006.

Protocol V of the CCW, however, focuses on post-conflict measures such as ERW clearance, risk education and information sharing. It does not regulate or prohibit the use of those weapons, such as cluster munitions, that leave behind so many explosive remnants or war.

Despite considerable pressure from a number of countries, the 3rd Review Conference of the CCW, which took place in Geneva in November 2006, could not agree to start negotiations on a sixth protocol covering cluster munitions. Frustrated by this lack of progress on a pressing humanitarian problem, Norway announced that it would convene a conference in Oslo in early 2007 with a view to initiating negotiations on a legally-binding instrument to address the humanitarian problems associated with cluster munitions. This marked the beginning of the so-called 'Oslo Process,' when 46 States committed to concluding a treaty banning cluster munitions by the end of 2008. In 2007, international meetings part of the Oslo Process took place in Lima, Peru (May) and Vienna, Austria (December).

Key developments in 2008

Wellington Conference. The fourth international meeting of the 'Oslo Process' took place in Wellington, New Zealand, on 18-22 February 2008. Attended by over 550 representatives from 122 States, it signalled that the commitment of the international community on the Oslo Process had taken solid roots. The Wellington Conference was also the last preparatory meeting before formal negotiations would open in Dublin, later in the year. Therefore, it focused on making progress towards consensus on the key issues of the scope and content of the treaty. By endorsing the outcome document of the meeting – the Wellington Declaration – States committed to participating in the Dublin negotiations on the basis of the draft text discussed in Wellington.

After intense debate, during which a few states tried to considerably water down the content of the draft treaty, the Wellington

Declaration was publicly endorsed by 70 States.

The **Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions**, held on 19-30 May 2008, adopted a comprehensive treaty banning the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions, as defined in the Convention. The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) also contains provisions on clearance of contaminated areas, destruction of stockpiles, assistance to victims and transparency. The Convention was opened for signature in Oslo, on 2-4 December 2008. As of March 2009, 94 States have signed the CCM, and 4 have ratified it.

The Geneva Forum contribution

Over the last few years the Geneva Forum has played an important role in highlighting for disarmament diplomats the adverse humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and in suggesting appropriate policy responses.

Since 2003, our work has focused on raising awareness of the serious adverse consequences of explosive remnants of war for the post-conflict development of affected societies and has examined strategies for

reducing their humanitarian impact. We have also organised a number of off-the-record brainstorming meetings with government officials, NGOs and international organisations to stimulate thinking on the modalities of an adequate international response to the humanitarian threat posed by cluster munitions.

Activities in 2008

In 2008, our activities aimed at strengthening the Oslo Process in two main ways: on the one hand, by regularly briefing Geneva Missions about current and upcoming developments in the Process; on the other, by creating venues to discuss substantive issues that were to be dealt with at the Dublin negotiations.

The Geneva Forum also contributed to work on the issue in other ways, by participating in other initiatives. For example, in May, our Coordinator participated in the second week of the “Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions” that adopted a new treaty banning the weapon. He also reported on proceedings of this conference on the Disarmament Insight blog (see below).

2008 Activities on Cluster Munitions

7 February

From Vienna to Wellington: Update on the Oslo Process on Cluster Munitions

This briefing was designed to bring Geneva Missions, international organisations, NGOs and media networks up to date on the rapid developments that had taken place in the Oslo Process over the preceding few months. It also previewed plans, preparations and objectives for the Wellington Conference, the fourth international conference of the Oslo Process, which was scheduled for February 2008.

The Wellington conference marked an important step toward banning the use and transfer of cluster munitions. Here States further developed common understandings on key elements of a treaty to address the humanitarian impacts of these weapons; 70 States publicly endorsed the ‘Wellington Declaration,’ which committed them to conducting discussions at the subsequent meeting in Dublin based on the draft text agreed upon in the New Zealand capital.

Chair:

Ambassador Don MacKay, Permanent Representative of the Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations Office at Geneva

Invited speakers:

Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch of Austria

Ms. Grethe Østern, Norwegian People’s Aid

Mr. Paul Eavis, United Nations Development Programme

Type: Lunchtime seminar

Location : Palais des Nations

Attendance: 85

2008 Activities on Cluster Munitions (continued)

<p>28 February</p> <p>Dialogue with African States on Addressing the Humanitarian Impact of Cluster Munitions</p> <p>This luncheon meeting gathered together representatives of African Governments that were already supporting international efforts to address the problem of the impact of cluster munitions. The meeting focused on ideas for a series of dialogues with African Missions in Geneva in 2008 on the issue of cluster munitions aimed at, <i>inter alia</i>, briefing participants on developments in the Oslo Process and in the CCW and at reflecting on the outcome of the Wellington Conference (18-22 February).</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Dr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Mr. Peter Herby, Mines/Arms Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross Ms. Jean Kimani of Kenya Ambassador Cissy Taliwaku of Uganda Hans Risser, United Nations Development Programme Patrick Mc Carthy, Coordinator, Geneva Forum</p> <p><i>Type: Round-table Discussion</i> <i>Location : Quaker UN Office</i> <i>Attendance: 17</i></p>
<p>25 March</p> <p>Meeting of African States on Cluster Munitions</p> <p>In advance of the Dublin negotiations, the Government of Zambia decided to host an all-Africa Regional Meeting on cluster munitions in Livingstone from 31 March – 1 April. The aim of the meeting was to consider “effective responses to the humanitarian consequences caused by the use of cluster munitions and the proliferation threat thereof.”</p> <p>Our meeting took place a week before the Zambia Regional Meeting and was designed to brief African Missions and stimulate discussion on some of the key negotiating challenges for the Dublin conference. The discussion specifically focused on definitions of cluster munitions. Experts from the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Cluster Munitions Coalition provided concise briefings on these issues.</p> <p>Our meeting also previewed the African Regional Meeting on Cluster Munitions and provided practical information on its goals, agenda, and rules of participation.</p>	<p><i>Chairs:</i> Ambassador Kwabena Baah-Duodu, Permanent Representative of Ghana Dr. Christiane Agboton-Johnson, Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Mr. Thomas Nash, Cluster Munitions Coalition Mr. Louis Maresca, Mines/Arms Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross Mr. John Borrie, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research Mr. Hans Risser, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, United Nations Development Programme Ambassador Cissy Taliwaku of Uganda Mr. Meebolo Chris Sitwala of Zambia</p> <p><i>Type: Round-table Discussion</i> <i>Location: Palais des Nations</i> <i>Attendance: 33</i></p>

2008 Activities on Cluster Munitions (continued)

6 November

Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM): Lunchtime briefing on preparations for signing of the new treaty

On 30 May 2008, 107 States gathered in Dublin, Ireland adopted the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). The Convention was the outcome of a process first launched in Oslo in February 2007, at which 46 States committed themselves to concluding a legally binding instrument to prohibit cluster munitions that “cause unacceptable harm to civilians” and to helping the victims. International conferences held in Lima (May 2007), Vienna (December 2007) and Wellington (February 2008) laid the basis for the Dublin negotiations and culminated in the new Convention, through an inclusive process that involved governments, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society. The CCM prohibits all use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions; it also establishes a framework for assistance to victims, for clearance of contaminated areas and for the destruction of stockpiles. It was opened for signature at a Signing Conference in Oslo, on 3 December 2008.

The Geneva Forum organised a lunchtime briefing on preparations for the signing of the new treaty. The seminar provided an overview of the Convention’s provisions, practical information for states about its obligations, and about joining. Representatives from governments, civil society and the United Nations also outlined current and recent initiatives in preparation for the signing ceremony.

Chair:

Dr. Christiane Agboton Johnson, Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Invited speakers

Ambassador Dáithí O’Ceallaigh of Ireland, Chairman of the Dublin Conference

Mr. Peter Herby, International Committee of the Red Cross

Ms. Annette Abelsen, Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Ivan Gospodinov of Bulgaria

Ambassador Cissy Taliwaku of Uganda

Mr. Khonepheng Thammavong of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic

Ms. Laura Cheeseman, Cluster Munition Coalition

Mr. Paul Eavis, Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery, United Nations Development Programme.

Type: Lunchtime Seminar
Location: Palais des Nations
Attendance: 53

Promoting new thinking on multilateral disarmament

The Arms Trade

Towards an arms trade treaty

Background to the problem

The global trade in conventional weapons – from small arms to attack helicopters and missile systems – allows responsible governments to outfit their armed and police forces with the weapons they judge necessary to ensure the national security of their borders, as well as the human security of those who live within them. As such, the responsible trade in arms allows States to equip themselves to exercise their legitimate right to self-defence, enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter.

States have a range of existing responsibilities under international law to trade in and transfer arms responsibly. These include commitments to ensure that arms transfers do not violate UN arms embargoes and that transferred arms are not used, *inter alia*, to violate international humanitarian law or to abuse human rights. These responsibilities are currently contained in a patchwork of overlapping global and regional instruments.

Nonetheless, arms continue to be transferred in irresponsible ways, for instance to regimes that turn those weapons against their own citizens or that re-transfer them to other destinations where they are mis-used. Irresponsible arms transfers continue to be carried out both by governments and by unscrupulous arms dealers, demonstrating the inadequacy of the current weak and disparate regulation of the global arms trade.

The international response

Following intense and sustained pressure from civil society, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution at the end of 2006 entitled “Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.” The resolution called on all UN Member States to submit their views to the Secretary-General on the feasibility, scope and parameters of such a treaty. An unprecedented 99 States and two regional organisations did so during the course of 2007, indicating a high level of international support for such a treaty.

The resolution also called for the creation of a Group of Governmental Experts

(GGE) that, informed by the views of Member States, would examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for “a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.” The Group submitted its report to the UN General Assembly in August 2008.

Key developments in 2008

The **Report of the Group of Governmental Experts** noted that there are different motivations for the production and acquisition of conventional arms and acknowledged the need to prevent the diversion of weapons from the licit to the illicit market. In this view, the Group stressed the need for States to “ensure that their national systems and internal controls are at the highest possible standards.” With regard to its specific mandate, the GGE concluded that further consideration was to be given to the issues of the feasibility, scope and parameters of an arms trade treaty, within the framework of an open, transparent and step-by-step process in the United Nations.

First Committee draft resolution. The GGE report constituted a very important basis on which the draft resolution on “Towards an arms trade treaty” was adopted by the UN First Committee in October 2008. The text, later adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 63/240 (8 January 2009) provided for the establishment of an open-ended working group (OEWG) to facilitate “further consideration of efforts within the United Nations to address the international trade in conventional arms.” It also directed that the OEWG further consider those elements in the GGE report where “consensus could be developed for their inclusion in an eventual legally binding treaty on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.” The OEWG was mandated to meet for a maximum of six one-week sessions, starting from early 2009.

The contribution of the Geneva Forum

In 2008 the Geneva Forum hosted two seminars on the Arms Trade Treaty. The first,

held early in the year, previewed the work of the GGE, by focusing on: how an ATT could prevent arms transfers having negative impacts on sustainable development; the challenges that the Group could meet in identifying parameters of an arms trade treaty based on human rights standards; and on lessons that this process could draw from other multilateral instruments negotiations.

In July the Geneva Forum hosted a residential seminar in Glen Cove (New York), which gathered 56 representatives from governments, NGOs, the industry and UN agencies. Organized jointly with Oxfam International, this seminar pursued two main goals:

⇒ To facilitate interaction between GGE members and a wider group of States,

together with civil society and industry experts;

⇒ To provide constructive input into the work of the third and final GGE session, by creating an opportunity for all stakeholders to share their views on substantive issues.

The discussions at the meeting confirmed a high level of support for an effective ATT, despite differences of views on the specific scope and parameters it should have. These differences did not seem insurmountable; on the other hand, preference seemed to emerge towards a treaty with a broad scope whose parameters would include, at a minimum, considerations relating to the respect for UNSC arms embargoes, human rights and international humanitarian law.

2008 Activities on an arms trade treaty

<p>31 January</p> <p>Next Steps towards an Arms Trade Treaty: The Group of Governmental Experts</p> <p>This seminar previewed the important work facing the Group of Governmental Experts during the course of 2008. During the meeting UNIDIR launched the second and final part of its analysis of the views of States on an Arms Trade Treaty, which also contained recommendations for the Group of Governmental Experts. Other presentations focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ the ways in which irresponsible arms transfers can have a negative impact on sustainable development; ⇒ how such irresponsible transfers could be prevented by an effective Arms Trade Treaty; ⇒ the challenges that the GGE could face in identifying arms transfer criteria based on human rights standards; ⇒ lessons that the Arms Trade Treaty process could draw from other standards-based multilateral instruments. 	<p><i>Chair:</i> Mr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Ms. Sarah Parker, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research Ms. Clare da Silva, Amnesty International Ms. Anna Macdonald, Oxfam International</p> <p><i>Type: Lunchtime seminar</i> <i>Location: Palais des Nations</i> <i>Attendance: 59</i></p>
<p>26 July</p> <p>Towards an Effective Arms Trade Treaty: Informal Intersessional Meeting (New York) <i>Organised jointly with Oxfam International</i></p> <p>The meeting took place immediately before the third and final session of the UN Group of Government Experts and sought to facilitate informal interaction and dialogue among the members of the GGE but also between these and other interested States, as well as selected non-governmental and industry stakeholders. The aim of the meeting was to air a range of views on how to make the Arms Trade Treaty currently under discussion by the GGE and the rest of the international community as effective as possible.</p> <p>Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, Chair of the GGE, participated in the meeting. All GGE Experts were invited to participate and as well as selected non-GGE States represented in New York.</p>	<p>Meeting held under Chatham House rule.</p> <p><i>Type: Residential Seminar</i> <i>Location: Glen Cove Mansion, Long Island, New York State</i> <i>Attendance: 56</i></p>

Disarmament Insight

Thinking differently about human security

At the beginning of 2007, the Geneva Forum teamed up with the *Disarmament as Humanitarian Action* (DHA) project of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to launch *Disarmament Insight*, a new initiative to encourage disarmament diplomats to think differently about human security.

The Disarmament Insight initiative comprised two components: a series of symposia bringing unconventional perspectives to bear on the practice of multilateral disarmament diplomacy; and web resources aimed at engaging government policy-makers and diplomats, as well as researchers, representatives of international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the general public on issues of human security and the development of more effective multilateral problem-solving in disarmament and arms control.

Symposia

The Disarmament Insight symposia were designed to be informal and interactive and to

engage key diplomats in out-of-the-box thinking on the contemporary machinery and practice of multilateral disarmament diplomacy.

During 2008, we held one residential seminar within the framework of the Disarmament Insight Initiative, aimed at identifying 'lessons learnt' from the international processes leading to the ban of landmines and cluster munitions, and at discussing the possibility of transferring or adapting these lessons to other, current or emerging initiatives of arms control and disarmament.

Web resources

www.disarmamentinsight.blogspot.com

As part of its outreach strategy, Disarmament Insight also launched websites in 2007. The Disarmament Insight blog was updated throughout the year with regular commentary from DHA and Geneva Forum staff on topical issues and ongoing negotiations, as well as with guest postings from leading arms control experts.

Disarmament Insight events in 2008

19-20 November 2008

Learn, Adapt, Succeed: Potential lessons from the Ottawa and Oslo Processes for other disarmament and arms control challenges

This informal symposium was designed to draw lessons from the Ottawa Process on anti-personnel mines and the Oslo Process on cluster munitions and to explore their possible application to other multilateral disarmament and arms control initiatives.

The Ottawa Process, which led to the adoption of the total ban on anti-personnel mines, was an approach – and a humanitarian disarmament outcome – that was often considered unique and unrepeatable. A decade later, however, the Oslo Process leading to the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was in many respects reminiscent of the achievement on landmines. Similarities related, for example, to the centrality of humanitarian perspectives; the perceived shortcomings of work in traditional, consensus-based UN structures; and the leadership of a group of small and medium-sized 'like-minded' countries

This symposium aimed at (1) identifying and fleshing out key lessons that could be drawn from the Ottawa and Oslo processes and (2) exploring if and how these might be adapted and applied to re-invigorating multilateral action in other areas of disarmament and arms control.

The symposium provided an opportunity for participants from governments, international organisations, civil society and academia to compare and test ideas in an informal yet policy-oriented atmosphere with a view to suggesting possible next steps toward common disarmament and arms control objectives.

Chairs:

Dr. Christiane Agboton-Johnson, Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Dr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office

Mr. John Borrie, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Dr. Silvia Cattaneo, Coordinator, Geneva Forum

Thomas Nash, Cluster Munitions Coalition

*Type: Residential Seminar
Location: Hôtel Victoira, Glion
Attendance: 33*

Other activities

And community-building

On top of its core work programme, the Geneva Forum also tries to reserve some time and capacity to respond to particular needs as they present themselves throughout the year and to help to build a knowledgeable and dynamic disarmament community in Geneva.

At the beginning of 2008, we organised our fifth annual orientation seminar for new diplomats on *working on disarmament and arms control in Geneva*. This event has become very popular over the years and in 2008 it was attended by 52 participants. Later in the year, we organized an orientation seminar specifically for newly arrived diplomats at the Mission of Egypt and for Egyptian civil servants wishing to update their knowledge on the broad spectrum of disarmament and arms control issues.

On International Women's Day, 6 March, and in cooperation with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), we held a seminar on "Women, wars, weapons and conflict prevention." The seminar offered a chance to discuss and share information on the financial, political, environmental and opportunity costs of military *versus* human security.

Other activities focused on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, illustrating its programmatic

pillars and steps since 2006; on evaluating disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Afghanistan; and on so-called 'synthetic biology,' that is, the recently perfected capacity to engineer living organisms, drawing attention to potential misuses, specifically in the context of the commitments of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. These activities are described in detail below.

In addition to hosting its own events, the Geneva Forum contributed to and participated in other initiatives; on 11-12 April, our Network Coordinator attended an International seminar on "Disarmament, Development and Peace: Perspectives for an integral disarmament" organized by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace of the Vatican. On 8-9 May, the Geneva Forum Coordinator participated in the Roundtable of the International Peace Academy (IPA) "Taskforce on Transnational Security Challenges" (one of the IPA "Taskforces on Strengthening Multilateral Security Capacity"). During the year, he also gave talks on disarmament and arms control to diplomats and military officers at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and to students at the Graduate Institute Summer School.

Other activities and community-building in 2008

<p>8 February</p> <p>Working on Disarmament & Arms Control in Geneva: An Orientation for Diplomats</p> <p>This orientation seminar was specifically designed for recently arrived diplomats and for those having taken over responsibility for security and disarmament issues, but was open to all interested diplomats. It pursued two main goals: first, it aimed at providing diplomats with a concise overview of the genesis, development, current status and future challenges facing multilateral activity in a range of issue-areas covered in Geneva – the Conference on Disarmament, small arms and light weapons, biological and toxin weapons, certain conventional weapons and anti-personnel mines. Second, the seminar provided diplomats with an opportunity to meet and interact informally with relevant Geneva-based actors from the United Nations, international organisations, NGOs and academic institutions.</p>	<p><i>Chairs:</i> Dr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office</p> <p>Dr. Patrick Mc Carthy, Coordinator, The Geneva Forum</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Dr. Patricia Lewis, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</p> <p>Mr. Richard Lennane, Implementation Support Unit , Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention</p> <p>Mr. Kerry Brinkert, Implementation Support Unit , Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention</p> <p>Mr. Peter Herby, Mines/Arms Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross</p> <p>Ms. Tamar Gabelnick, International Campaign to Ban Landmines</p> <p>Ms. Sarah Parker, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Ms. Chris Stevenson, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Mr. Ronald Dreyer, Geneva Declaration Follow-up Coordinator, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations</p> <p><i>Type: Half-day meeting</i> <i>Location: Château de Bossey</i> <i>Attendance: 52</i></p>
<p>6 March</p> <p>2008 International Women’s Day Disarmament Seminar: At What Cost? Women, Wars, Weapons and Conflict Prevention</p> <p>WILPF teamed up with the Geneva Forum to mark International Women’s Day, as well as the 30th anniversary of the First Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly, which produced a visionary document at a high point of international consensus and alarm around the dangerous waste of human and economic resources on armaments. A panel discussion took place at UN Headquarters in Geneva during which experts and prominent persons provided new analysis and shocking facts on the financial, political, environmental and opportunity costs of military security versus human security. This event (along with other WILPF events during the same week) honoured the late Randall Forsberg, a woman who left a remarkable legacy to those working for peace, disarmament and conflict prevention. She studied and made known global military policies, arms holdings, production and trade, arms control and peace-building efforts. Randall Forsberg combined expertise, passion and action, the very elements required today to prevent conflicts, to freeze and reverse the waste of human and economic resources on weapons that kill and mutilate in wars.</p>	<p>Ms. Rebecca Johnson, Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy</p> <p>Ms. Cora Weiss, The Hague Appeal for Peace</p> <p>Ms. Bineta Diop, Femmes Africa Solidarité</p> <p>Ms. Felicity Hill, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom</p> <p><i>Type: Lunchtime Seminar</i> <i>Location: Palais des Nations</i> <i>Attendance: 100</i></p>

Other activities and community-building in 2008 (continued)

<p>9 April</p> <p>The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development: What it is, what it seeks to do</p> <p>Armed violence is a major obstacle to sustainable economic and social development in the world. In response to this scourge, over 70 states have so far adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The Geneva Declaration emerged from a summit hosted by Switzerland and the UN Development Programme in June 2006 that aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Raising global awareness of the negative impact of armed violence on sustainable development; ⇒ Further supporting the work of governments, international organisations and civil society organisations committed to reducing armed violence within a development perspective; ⇒ Strengthening efforts to achieve a measurable reduction in the burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security by 2015, the year that was set for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. <p>The seminar introduced the Geneva Declaration and the steps it took since 2006. Speakers illustrated the three programmatic “pillars” of this initiative – advocacy, measurability and research, and programming – and demonstrated why each one is essential to the goal of achieving measurable reductions in the burden of armed violence and improvements in human security. Views were exchanged on how this ambitious effort could be promoted, particularly by Geneva-based actors.</p>	<p><i>Chair:</i> Dr. Patricia Lewis, Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Prof. Keith Krause, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Dr. Achim Wennmann, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Mr. Paul Eavis, United Nations Development Programme</p> <p><i>Type: Lunchtime Seminar</i> <i>Location: Palais des Nations</i> <i>Attendance: 62</i></p>
<p>1 July</p> <p>In-Depth Orientation for Egyptian Diplomats</p> <p>This orientation was designed specifically for recently arrived diplomats at the Mission of Egypt and for Egyptian civil servants who simply liked to update and refresh their knowledge on disarmament and arms control issues. Leading experts from the United Nations, civil society and governments provided concise briefings on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Conference on Disarmament (CD) ⇒ Nuclear Weapons ⇒ Biological and Toxin Weapons ⇒ Conventional Weapons ⇒ Anti-Personnel Mines ⇒ Cluster Munitions ⇒ Small Arms and Light Weapons ⇒ Inhumane Weapons (CCW and its Protocols) 	<p><i>Chair:</i> Dr. Patrick McCarthy, Network Coordinator, Geneva Forum</p> <p><i>Invited speakers:</i> Mr. Tim Caughley, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva Branch</p> <p>Ambassador Mohamed Shaker, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Mr. Richard Lennane, Implementation Support Unit, Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention</p> <p>Ms. Tamar Gabelnick, International Campaign to Ban Landmines</p> <p>Mr. John Borrie, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research</p> <p>Ms. Sarah Parker, Small Arms Survey</p> <p>Mr. Peter Kolarov, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs</p> <p><i>Type: Half-day meeting</i> <i>Location: Palais des Nations</i> <i>Attendance: 33</i></p>

Other activities and community-building in 2008 (continued)

7 July

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Afghanistan: An Evaluation

Between 2003 and 2006, the UN Development Programme and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan assisted the Government of Afghanistan to reduce the size of Afghan Military Forces. By the end of August 2007, more than 63,000 soldiers had been demobilised and more than 106,000 weapons collected.

Dr. Robin Edward Poulton led an independent evaluation of this project to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration process, to identify its impacts, and to draw lessons from the Afghan experience that could be usefully applied to other disarmament programmes. Dr. Poulton presented and discussed this evaluation, as well as the insights he gained through carrying it out.

Chair:

Dr. Patrick McCarthy, Network Coordinator,
Geneva Forum

Invited speaker:

Dr. Robin Edward Poulton, United Nations
Institute for Disarmament Research and
EPES Mandala Consulting

Type: *Lunchtime Seminar*

Location: *Palais des Nations*

Attendance: *45*

Management and Staffing

A small but efficient team

Direction and planning

Overall responsibility for shaping project activities and providing general direction during 2008 rested with a small Planning Group composed of the Principals of the Geneva Forum partner organisations and the Geneva Forum Coordinator. The Planning Group for 2008 was composed of the following individuals:

Prof. Keith Krause, Director, Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding of the Graduate Institute (CCDP)

Dr. Patricia Lewis, Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Dr. David Atwood, Director, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)

Dr. Patrick Mc Carthy, Coordinator, Geneva Forum (until September)

Dr. Silvia Cattaneo, Coordinator, Geneva Forum (as from October).

In July 2008, Patricia Lewis left UNIDIR; her role as member of the Planning Group was taken over by Dr. Christiane Agboton-Johnson, Deputy Director of UNIDIR.

As well as leading the planning process, the Geneva Forum Principals also participate actively in Geneva Forum activities. When planning these activities, we also solicited the advice of relevant governments and experts where appropriate. The work of the Geneva Process on Small Arms during 2008 was guided by a separate planning group, made up of the Geneva Forum Principals and the Geneva Forum Coordinator together with a troika of previous, incumbent and future Chairs of the Geneva Process.

Staff

Since 2007, the Geneva Forum paid staff has comprised one-and-a-half people: a full-time Coordinator and a part-time Project Administrator, Mr. David Ahmed. After eight years, in September, Dr. Patrick McCarthy left his position as Geneva Forum Coordinator. He was succeeded in October by Dr. Silvia Cattaneo, who brought to the position solid knowledge of small arms and

light weapons issues, as well as other contemporary arms control and security challenges, and a background in government-NGO relations. Before joining the Geneva Forum, Dr. Cattaneo worked for the Small Arms Survey (Geneva) and, as a consultant, for Amnesty International (UK) and the Biting the Bullet project (Amnesty International, Bradford University and Saferworld), specializing on conventional arms exports regimes, legal controls on arms brokering and monitoring of implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms.

During 2008 the Geneva Forum also benefited from the collaboration of a highly competent intern – Ms. Amina Farouque.

Project location

The Geneva Forum continued to operate out of offices located at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, just across the street from the entrance to the *Palais des Nations* (UN building).

Monitoring and evaluation

Responsibility for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the project during 2008 rested with the Geneva Forum Planning Group, which met seven times over the course of the year.

The Geneva Forum engaged an independent external reviewer during the first quarter of 2009 to assess the overall impact of its work during 2007 and 2008. The results of this work, which will be completed by the end of April 2009, will be made available upon request.

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