

A Moratorium on Light Weapons in West Africa

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Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfer/Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

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Preface

The Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) was launched in December 1997, with financial support by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Representing two of the world's largest non-governmental movements, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian Church Aid joined with the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs to initiate a joint international effort to study, control and limit the proliferation of small arms. The Initiative decided to conduct its activities along two main tracks: (1) regional arrangements to curb the flow of small arms, and (2) application of international humanitarian law on small arms transfers.

The first, specific activity of NISAT was organized in support of an initiative taken by the Government of Mali. At a UN conference in Bamako in November 1996, the President of Mali, Alpha Oumar Konaré, proposed a moratorium on import, export and manufacture of light weapons in West Africa. Within the political framework established by the moratorium, measures would be taken to mop up illicit arms and create a secure environment for development. The arms-producing states of the newly established Wassenaar Arrangement were invited to a dialogue with the West Africans on the matter, and asked to assist in the implementation of the moratorium.

During 1997, the moratorium was discussed among West African states as well as within the Wassenaar Arrangement. Facilitated by the UN, the first contacts were established between African representatives and representatives of Wassenaar. In its public statement of 10 December 1997, the Wassenaar Arrangement 'encouraged the initiative of the West African countries in establishing a moratorium on import, export and manufacture of light weapons'. On 12 March 1998, the ministerial meeting of ECOWAS asked the ECOWAS secretariat to undertake the necessary preparations for the moratorium to be declared later this year.

On 1–2 April 1998, NISAT, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), convened the first multilateral consultation of West African governments and Wassenaar member states. The UNDP perceives the small arms phenomenon as an integral part of the challenges to peace-building in the context of providing a more secure environment for sustainable development. Together with other UN departments, the UNDP has been facilitating the moratorium process through the programme for coordination and assistance for security and development.

13 West African governments and 23 Wassenaar states were represented at the Oslo conference, along with NGOs and scholars from a variety of countries. The opening speech was made by President Konaré of Mali. The conference was also addressed by Prime Minister Bondevik of Norway, who promised financial and political support for the implementation of the moratorium. The attitudes, clarifications, views and arguments that were put forward were constructive and encouraging for the further pursuit and implementation of the moratorium. The conference ended on a comparative note, discussing similar arrangements also for other regions, in casu Central Africa and Central America. The present publication contains the speeches and papers that were delivered, and the sense of the conference was summarized by

the Chairman at the end of the meeting (re the 'Oslo Platform', as printed in Section I).

In some parts of the world, governments tend to consider international efforts to curb the flow of small arms as possible sources of interference into their domestic affairs. In other regions, governments rather see such endeavours as welcome assistance in the establishment of real state sovereignty – monopoly on the physical means of control being at the core of what states are about. Where conditions are ripe, NISAT will continue to support regional arrangements and NGOs, cooperating with the United Nations, regional organizations and likeminded governments to give the fullest possible effect to the initiatives.

When approaching a difficult problem, single measures seldom do. Combinations of approaches usually have to be pursued. In this regard, the West African initiative is novel as well as constructive. For it has the virtue of locking suppliers and recipients into a joint effort to alleviate the problems associated with the flow of light weapons.

Together with the United Nations and others, NISAT stands ready to assist in forging broad coalitions to come to grips with the excessive accumulation and unlawful use of small arms.

Ivor Richard Fung

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The Oslo Platform for a Moratorium on Small Arms in West Africa

The International Conference in Oslo, 1-2 april 1998
as summarised by the convenors (NISAT and UNDP)

In the presence of 13 West African countries, members of ECOWAS, 23 countries, members of the Wassenaar Arrangement of arms-exporting countries, and relevant UN organisations, NGOs and observer governments, the proposal on a moratorium on the manufacture, export and import of small arms in West Africa was presented by the President of Mali, H.E. Alpha Oumar Konaré. Participants expressed strong support for the moratorium. The conference welcomed the decision of the ECOWAS ministerial meeting in Yamoussoukro on 12 March 1998 to instruct its secretariat to prepare a draft text in readiness for a declaration of a moratorium at the forthcoming summit of ECOWAS scheduled for July 1998.

Participants at the Oslo Meeting agreed inter alia:

- 1) A regional moratorium on small arms in combination with wider efforts to address the root causes of a conflict is a concrete and effective contribution to
 - v undertake conflict prevention, post-conflict consolidation and peace-building
 - v create a secure environment for development
 - v promote and protect human rights
 - v reduce crime and banditry.
- 2) Participants expressed the hope that the pioneering efforts of West African countries, members of ECOWAS, would encourage similar efforts in other subregions, which are subjected to the consequences of the illegitimate and violent use of small arms and light weapons.
- 3) Participants consider the subregional initiative of West Africa to be an important contribution towards strengthening the United Nations' resolve to prevent the excessive accumulation, proliferation and use of small arms in pursuance of General Assembly Resolutions 50/70B and 52/38J.
- 4) Directed to the ECOWAS countries, participants voiced
 - v their appreciation of the initiative of the Republic of Mali and its fellow ECOWAS members to work towards the world's first such moratorium
 - v their encouragement to ECOWAS members to keep up the momentum of their work towards preparing a draft declaration on the moratorium so as to have it formally declared without delay at the highest level of government

v their further encouragement to ECOWAS members to start work, assisted where appropriate by international partners, on carefully preparing for the implementation of the moratorium by harmonising national laws and making administrative reforms, e.g. regarding customs and police operations.

5) Directed towards arms-producing countries participating in the Wassenaar Arrangement, participants at the conference noted with appreciation the encouragement already expressed at Wassenaar meetings. Expectations were voiced regarding the need for the Wassenaar Arrangement to keep the idea of a moratorium high on its agenda for future meetings. The hope was also expressed that Wassenaar members will indeed state their support, respect and adherence to the principles of the future moratorium of small arms in West Africa.

6) Conference participants expressed their appreciation to donor countries who already have committed resources to support the implementation of the moratorium, as well as to those who used the occasion of the Oslo conference to pledge their future financial and other assistance. Considerable resources are needed to make the noble principles of the moratorium a reality and not only words on paper. Participants from donor countries offered to work closely with the countries of the subregions on the following problems: enhancing and harmonising national legislation; training of specialised services; and working out the scope, objectives, and definitions of the moratorium.

7) Participants expressed satisfaction with the associated measures that will support the moratorium regime. In this connection, they called on donor countries and ECOWAS member states alike to provide the financial and technical assistance needed to facilitate the implementation of the Programme of Coordination and Assistance on Security and Development (PCASED), which will be the supporting mechanism and secretariat for the moratorium. It was deemed necessary for PCASED to become operational as soon as possible.

8) Noting that a concerted, active UN input is called for in order to realise and implement the moratorium, conference participants expressed appreciation of the extensive assistance provided by the UNDP and other UN organisations for studying, preparing and facilitating the process within ECOWAS towards the realisation of the moratorium. Participants also expressed their appreciation of the strong support for the proposed moratorium by Secretary-General Koffi Annan, by Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Jayantha Dhanapala, by the UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth, and by the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Sergio Vieira de Mello.

9) Participants further expressed the belief that the role of non-governmental organisations is crucial in creating awareness of the importance of controlling and limiting the proliferation of small arms. Constructive interaction between democratic governments and responsible civil society groups and institutions, including religious communities, is crucial in creating an environment conducive to peace, development and human values.

10) Some participants represented countries already actively engaged in the fight against illicit trafficking of small arms through bilateral commitments in the region. They expressed their willingness to adjust their programmes or adapt them to the requirements of the implementation mechanism PCASED. Those programmes cover the training and equipment of gendarmerie units, specialised police and customs personnel.

11) Participants representing some of the member states of the European Union declared their intention to propose within that the EU provide financial, political and moral support for the establishment of the West African moratorium.

12) Participants proposed that a similar international conference, with high-level participation from ECOWAS countries, Wassenaar Arrangement members, and other interested parties, be convened by the United Nations as soon as the moratorium has been declared. The role of this meeting would be to enhance the substance of the dialogue between suppliers and recipients, and to be a pledging conference for the implementation of the moratorium and its associated measures.

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La Proposition de Moratoire sur la Circulation des Armes Légères en Afrique de l'Ouest

Alpha Oumar Konaré

Madame la Présidente de cette «Maison la Paix», Présidente de la Croix Rouge Norvégienne, Présidente de la Croix Rouge Internationale, Excellences, Honorables invités, Mesdames et Messieurs, je voudrais, au nom du Peuple du Mali et de son Gouvernement, exprimer toute notre satisfaction de participer à cette conférence dont le thème revêt pour nous une importance primordiale.

Je me dois de féliciter les initiateurs et organisateurs de ce forum qui nous permettra, deux jours durant, de réfléchir ensemble à une composante essentielle de la diplomatie préventive que nous ambitionnons de formaliser et d'appliquer pour une meilleure vie commune dans nos sociétés.

Parmi les multiples défis qui interpellent notre système international contemporain, en cette veille du 21ème siècle, il nous faut bien nous convaincre que la maîtrise des armes légères figure en bonne place.

Tout le demi-siècle dernier a été consacré essentiellement à la maîtrise des systèmes d'armes centrales, des armes nucléaires; systèmes d'armes dont l'accumulation a maintenu toute une génération humaine sous la menace permanente de mort apocalyptique. La raison humaine a prévalu fort heureusement, la guerre nucléaire n'a pas eu lieu; et depuis la fin des années 1980 et la disparition de l'un des deux super-blocs du système bipolaire qui alimentait la compétition stratégique mondiale, nous avons assisté à la résorption progressive de la course aux armements nucléaires avec les accords sur les FNI (Forces Nucléaires Intermédiaires) en 1987, la signature du premier traité de réduction des armes stratégiques en 1991 (START), l'adoption du Traité d'interdiction complète des essais nucléaires en 1996, le renouvellement pour une durée indéterminée du TNP (le Traité de Non-Prolifération) et la signature du traité de Pelindaba qui établit une zone exempte d'armes nucléaires en Afrique en 1996, après les traités de Tlatelelco et Rarotonga, respectivement de l'Amérique Latine et du Pacifique Sud.

Si de substantiels progrès ont été manifestement accomplis dans le domaine de la maîtrise des armes nucléaires, il n'en va pas de même dans le domaine des armes conventionnelles en général et des armes légères en particulier, dont l'accumulation et la prolifération anarchique à travers le monde menacent de constituer le plus grave danger contre la stabilité des Etats et du système international contemporain. Aussi, je placerai mon intervention dans le cadre d'un appel à la communauté internationale pour livrer un combat sans merci à cette catégorie d'armes.

En effet, la communauté internationale à l'ère de la guerre froide s'est plutôt préoccupée du maintien de l'équilibre nucléaire que d'un système global de sécurité; la course aux armements qui a alimenté pendant près d'un demi-siècle la compétition stratégique entre les deux super-blocs, est l'une des causes principales de l'afflux d'armes conventionnelles et d'armes légères qui circulent librement partout et alimentent les multiples foyers de tension allumés à cette ère d'après-guerre froide.

Loin s'en faut, ce ne sont pas ces armes qui sont les causes des conflits, des guerres entre factions, clans, ethnies et religions auxquelles nous assistons partout aujourd'hui; mais la fin de la compétition stratégique a rendu ces armes obsolètes pour les causes qui avaient motivé leur accumulation et, à l'inverse, les a rendu plus disponibles pour exacerber les simples litiges, différends ou tensions susceptibles de survenir entre les groupes dans leurs simples commerces quotidiens.

Du coup, cette disponibilité d'armes légères, la durée et la violence qu'elles peuvent imprimer aux règlements des conflits, encouragent les protagonistes à tourner le dos aux règlements des conflits et à recourir plus facilement aux moyens de la violence, créant de la sorte un sentiment d'insécurité qui conduira à son tour à une plus grande demande et recours aux mêmes armes, soi-disant pour rétablir la sécurité.

L'accumulation et la prolifération anarchique des armes légères en deviennent d'autant plus exacerbées qu'il n'existe que très peu ou pas du tout de réglementation en matière de maîtrise des armes conventionnelles, que la nature et la qualité de ces armes se prêtent facilement à toutes sortes de trafic, et que les petites armes de par leurs spécificités opérationnelles, sont bien adaptées aux types de conflits, internes pour la plupart, qui caractérisent le système international d'après-guerre froide: que ce soit en Bosnie, en Somalie, au Rwanda, au Burundi, en Centrafrique ou dans d'autres foyers de crise, ce sont ces systèmes d'armes qui ont alimenté les guerres meurtrières, non entre Etats, mais à l'intérieur des Etats entre groupes d'individus armés, de factions, des troupes irrégulières et, parfois, de simples gangs armés sans assise sociale ou politique.

Les multiples conséquences politiques, économiques et sociales de la prolifération anarchique des armes légères à travers le monde sont désormais bien connues de toute la communauté internationale; elles font des millions de victimes et pour la plupart des civils, des populations entières déplacées avec leurs cortèges de larmes et de sueurs, au phénomène d'enfants soldats, en passant par les phénomènes du terrorisme frontalier et du grand banditisme dans les centres urbains et les zones frontalières.

Les experts en la matière ont établi qu'en 1996, environ 35 millions de personnes dans 23 pays à travers le monde étaient en proie à une forme ou une autre des conséquences des conflits internes; et le rapport d'un comité d'experts gouvernementaux des Etats-Unis estimait que plus de 80% des victimes des guerres utilisant des petites armes ne sont pas des combattants, mais des femmes et des enfants; parmi les enfants soldats plus de 200.000 sont âgés de moins de 16 ans.

Une des conséquences les plus graves de l'accumulation et de la circulation anarchique des armes légères nous semble être le phénomène sociologique politique d'atomisation et de multiplication des centres de pouvoir de répression en Afrique.

La libre circulation des armes a permis dans certaines situations récentes à des groupes de pression, des insurgés, à des milices de partis politiques de s'opposer à la légalité et à la légitimité de l'Etat avec autant, sinon plus de moyens de violence. L'Etat n'est plus le seul détenteur du pouvoir de répression légal, il peut à tout moment se trouver en compétition avec d'autres centres de pouvoir, détenant les mêmes moyens; l'apparition d'un tel phénomène dans le paysage politique africain est un facteur de grande vulnérabilité, d'instabilité chronique et même délégitimation des pouvoirs légalement mis en place, qui hypothèque les fragiles processus démocratiques amorcés ici et là.

Enfin, les fonds mis dans l'acquisition des armes de la violence, tant par les gouvernements que par les différents groupes, les ressources investies dans les conflits armés par les protagonistes et par les Nations Unies pour les opérations de main-tien de la paix, sont autant de ressources diverties au détriment des problèmes réels de développement économique et social et de stabilisation politique des Etats africains.

C'est fort de cette vérité première, et instruit de la pénible expérience que le septentrion malien vivait, que je devais personnellement entreprendre le Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies afin qu'il aide mon pays et ceux de la sous-région qui partageaient la même conviction, à maîtriser le flux d'armes illicites qui prolifèrent dans toute la zone.

Je ne me doutais pas un seul instant, que l'initiative que j'entreprenais était certes généreuse, mais qu'elle était complexe et très délicate au regard de la matière concernée: les armes, et que sa mise en œuvre était jalonnée d'obstacles multiples.

Mais je ne doutais pas, aux regards des enjeux que comporte l'entreprise et de la pertinence de l'objectif poursuivi, que je pouvais compter sur l'appui et la coopération des Nations Unies, des Etats de la sous-région et des organisations régionales de sécurité collective en Afrique, telles l'ANAD (Accord de Non-Agression et d'Assistance Mutuelle en Matière de Défense), de la CEDEAO et l'OUA.

En la matière, si nous considérons le chemin parcouru, nous pouvons dire que nos espoirs n'ont pas été déçus, et que plus que jamais, l'objectif de la «maîtrise des armements» par la stratégie du micro-désarmement est bien à la portée des Hommes d'Etat Africains.

Dès 1994, le Secrétaire Général avait dépêché une mission exploratoire au Mali, suivie en 1994–95 par une mission consultative, qui devait visiter six autres pays de la sous-région et dont les conclusions nous confortaient déjà dans deux de nos convictions:

- v le phénomène de la prolifération des armes illicites est une réalité dans presque tous les Etats visités; il convient de s'attaquer au problème dans le cadre plutôt d'une coopération sous-régionale;

- v l'importance du phénomène, et les difficultés liées à son éradication exigent l'engagement de la communauté internationale.

Dans cette perspective, la mission consultative recommandait quatre axes d'efforts qui devraient structurer la conduite de l'entreprise:

- v l'établissement de commissions nationales dans les Etats impliqués dans l'initiative;
- v la révision et l'harmonisation des législations nationales en matière de port et de circulation des armes;
- v la création de registres d'armes et de réseaux d'échanges d'informations sur la circulation des armes dans la sous-région ouest-africaine;
- v et le renforcement des services de sécurité.

A partir de ce moment, le Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies et l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies devaient accorder une attention particulière à cette initiative ouest-africaine, en lui procurant diverses formes d'assistance et d'appui, comme «un instrument important de diplomatie préventive et de consolidation de la paix et du développement en Afrique de l'Ouest».

C'était là le fondement philosophique de notre approche de la sécurité de notre pays et de la sous-région; l'ONU a beau s'investir dans les opérations de maintien de la paix en Afrique, opérations a posteriori dont les résultats sont forts mitigés, il convenait de s'investir plutôt à prévenir les conflits qu'à les gérer ou à les résoudre, notamment en agissant sur la maîtrise des moyens de la violence armée, dont les armes légères qui prolifèrent partout sur le continent.

D'où cette campagne de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères en Afrique de l'Ouest, comme instrument de la diplomatie préventive dont nous devons désormais nous faire l'apôtre; comme pays pilote, nous nous devons d'une part de partager le bien-fondé et la bonne compréhension de la cause avec les autres pays de la sous-région, et de l'autre, traduire notre conviction politique et philosophique en actions concrètes.

Les années 1996-97 furent consacrées à des échanges de points de vue, à des réflexions et concertations avec d'autres pays sur la question, à travers des séminaires et conférence sous l'égide des Nations Unies et avec la participation d'experts de divers organes du système des Nations Unies.

Parmi ces multiples rencontres, l'on retiendra le séminaire international de Bamako sur les relations civilo-militaires de juillet 1996, la conférence internationale de Bamako sur le désarmement, la prévention des conflits et le développement en Afrique de l'Ouest en novembre 1996, et la rencontre d'experts de haut niveau, en marge des cérémonies commémoratives de l'anniversaire de la Flamme de la Paix en mars 1997 à Bamako.

La conférence sur le désarmement de novembre 1996 a marqué une phase décisive de maturation de l'initiative ouest-africaine de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères; c'est au cours de cette conférence que l'idée d'un moratoire sur la production, l'importation et l'exportation des armes légères dans l'espace ouest-africain fut lancée

par la diplomatie malienne et soumise à débats tout le long des travaux de cette conférence.

Il était dans la nature des choses que le sujet soit l'objet de polémique des uns et de scepticisme des autres, au regard du caractère novateur de l'idée en matière de désarmement conventionnel.

Dans l'esprit de la diplomatie malienne, le moratoire n'était pas une interdiction juridique destinée à attenter à la souveraineté des Etats, à leur liberté de pouvoir, à leurs défenses; mais un acte de foi, démontrant à la face du monde l'engagement politique irréversible de nos Etats à combattre l'accumulation d'engins de mort et de destruction, pour promouvoir le développement économique et social de nos peuples si durement éprouvés.

Aussi, un acte d'intelligence diplomatique, qui pose l'autocensure, la retenue, la simple abstention momentanée des Etats de la sous-région à ne pas produire, à ne pas recevoir et à ne pas exporter d'armes, comme étape préliminaire nécessaire pour renforcer les moyens de la sécurité effective et engager les actions positives de micro-désarmement dans les phases ultérieures.

En effet, comment autrement convaincre les autres partenaires, les producteurs et vendeurs d'armes, les agences et organes du système des Nations Unies de nous aider à nous débarrasser du poids des armes pendant que nous-mêmes ne sommes pas capables du simple acte de l'abstention, même limitée?

A un moment où les experts ont établi qu'environ 7 à 8 millions d'armes illicites circulent dans la seule sous-région ouest-africaine, comment peut-on éradiquer ce flux d'armes en continuant d'en produire et d'en recevoir?

En tout état de cause, les débats techniques dans les ateliers ont permis de faire plus de lumière sur l'idée de moratoire et d'aboutir à un accord de principe. Aux termes des résolutions finales, le Mali fut chargé de poursuivre les contacts avec les Etats et le système des Nations Unies pour réunir les conditions d'une déclaration effective de moratoire sur les armes légères par les Etats de l'ouest-africain.

En exécution de ce mandat, depuis 1997, la diplomatie malienne a entrepris de multiples contacts avec les instances techniques et politiques de la plupart des Etats de la sous-région à travers les commissions nationales, ou des émissaires lors des différents fora africains. Quant aux contacts avec l'ONU, ses organismes et agences impliqués dans les problèmes de sécurité, ils sont désormais quasi permanents à travers le PNUD-Mali et l'émissaire du Département des Affaires de Désarmement de l'ONU pour l'Afrique.

Nous sommes à même d'affirmer aujourd'hui, que l'idée du moratoire sur les armes légères a fait beaucoup de chemin auprès de la communauté internationale et beaucoup d'Etats de la sous-région; à preuve les résolutions 42/75 G et 50/70 H des 49ème et 50ème sessions de l'Assemblée Générale de l'ONU, relatives à l'assistance aux Etats pour l'arrêt de la circulation illicite et la collecte des petites armes. Du reste le sujet vient de faire l'objet d'une autre recommandation, lors de la 52ème session de l'Assemblée Générale, en des termes suffisamment éloquents «l'Assemblée Générale

prend note des conclusions de la concertation ministérielle sur la proposition d'un moratoire sur l'importation, l'exportation et la fabrication des armes légères dans la région tenue à Bamako le 26 mars 1997 et encourage les Etats concernés à poursuivre l'examen de la question; elle prie le Secrétaire Général de poursuivre l'examen de la question, et de lui présenter à la 53ème Session un rapport sur l'application de la présente résolution».

La rencontre ministérielle des Etats de la région impliqués dans le processus à Bamako en mars 1997, a adopté un mécanisme de coordination des mesures concourant à la mise en œuvre du moratoire, le PCASED (Programme de Coordination et d'Assistance pour la Sécurité et le Développement), ledit mécanisme est destiné à entrer en fonction dès qu'un pays aura déclaré le moratoire.

J'ai personnellement entrepris des démarches auprès de mes pairs; et je les ai fait part de mon intention de déclarer le moratoire sur la fabrication, l'importation et l'exportation des armes légères sur le territoire de la République du Mali, dans un avenir très prochain.

Entre temps, d'autres réseaux de la diplomatie malienne, le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et la Commission Nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères, s'activent à la préparation des conditions optimales de déclaration du moratoire.

Partout et à tous les niveaux, nous avons constaté que cette démarche n'était pas seulement le nôtre, mais qu'elle était largement partagée. Il ne pouvait en être autrement, tant nos préoccupations sont communes, tant nos destins sont liés.

Le Mali, c'est quoi d'autre qu'un peu du Sénégal, qu'un peu du Burkina, du Niger, de Côte-d'Ivoire, de Guinée, j'en passe...

Notre futur n'est-il pas l'UEMOA ? La CEDEAO ?

Notre combat commun c'est aujourd'hui une Afrique démocratique. Notre conviction forte est que c'est seulement dans une Afrique démocratique que réside la stabilité de l'Afrique, l'unité de l'Afrique. Seule une Afrique démocratique peut créer les conditions d'un réel développement au service des peuples africains. La situation actuelle de l'Afrique n'est pas une fatalité; l'Afrique a les moyens de s'en sortir, l'Afrique restera une constante référence.

Il n'est donc pas surprenant que le Sommet Extraordinaire des Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement de la CEDEAO réuni à Lomé (Togo) le 1er décembre 1997, ait instruit aux ministres chargés des Affaires Etrangères, de la Défense, de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité de se pencher sur cette question importante. Depuis la rencontre des Ministres des Affaires Etrangères, de la Défense, de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité de la CEDEAO à Yamoussoukro (Côte-d'Ivoire) les 11 et 12 mars 1998, il a été retenu que le Secrétariat Exécutif de cet organisme sous-régional soumette un projet de déclaration du moratoire lors de la prochaine conférence statutaire des Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement prévue avant la fin de cette année.

C'est le lieu d'adresser un vibrant appel à tous les Etats africains pour prendre part à cette entreprise exaltante de «micro-désarmement de l'Afrique»; nous devons franchir ensemble ce pas décisif d'une déclaration de moratoire sur les armes légères en Afrique, comme contribution de notre cher continent au mouvement universel de désarmement général, pour un mieux-être des générations futures.

Pour notre part la République du Mali reste résolument engagée à l'accomplissement de l'idéal que poursuit le micro-désarmement en Afrique comme instrument d'une diplomatie préventive, seule stratégie de sécurité individuelle et collective adaptée à nos moyens, et à nos objectifs de stabilité politique, de développement économique et social.

Cette foi en la cause du désarmement ne procède ni d'un idéalisme, ni d'une naïveté d'état; nous y croyons d'autant plus fermement que notre histoire récente à travers la gestion de la crise de notre septentrion nous a clairement enseigné «que la meilleure stratégie de gestion ou de prévention des conflits armés est d'agir directement sur les moyens de la violence».

Nous y croyons comme seul moyen de préserver l'héritage d'une nation malienne plurielle; nous y croyons comme seul moyen d'approfondir le processus démocratique dans notre pays, comme seul moyen de transmettre aux générations nouvelles un Mali uni mais pluriel, capable de gérer ses différences, un Mali de tolérance, de justice, de solidarité et de partage.

C'était là toute la signification et toute la pédagogie de notre cérémonie de la Flamme de la Paix à Tombouctou en mars 1996; une cérémonie au cours de laquelle environ 3000 armes individuelles restituées par les Hommes des Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azawad et ceux du Mouvement Gandha-koy ont été solennellement brûlées.

Cette cérémonie de la Flamme de la Paix par delà la symbolique politique qu'elle marquait, participe d'une stratégie de désarmement rationnellement pensée, qui devait définitivement mettre fin au conflit du nord et créer les conditions de sécurité nécessaires au lancement de divers projets de développement dans le nord du pays.

Bien que le Pacte National fut signé en 1992, que de 1993 à 1996 il y eut de multiples rencontres: négociations, accords, cessez-le-feu et rupture de cessez-le-feu, il aura fallu passer par la nécessaire séquence d'actions stratégiques agissant directement sur la maîtrise des armements (installation des unités spéciales, opérations de cantonnement des combattants sur des sites choisis et leur désarmement de 1994 à 1996) pour aboutir au retour définitif de la paix: la vraie paix, c'est à dire l'existence de conditions de sécurité permettant la reprise des actions de développement, ne date que de la destruction des armes de la violence et de la déclaration d'auto-dissolution des mouvements lors des cérémonies de la Flamme de la Paix de mars 1996. Cette paix reste à consolider. Elle sera gagnée chaque jour par les maliennes et les maliens eux-mêmes, avec le concours de leurs partenaires. Ils ne seront pas payés pour cette paix. Ils la gagneront pour eux-mêmes au prix de leurs sacrifices. La pédagogie de l'opération Flamme de la Paix devait enrichir notre réflexion nationale sur la paix et de la nécessité de soutenir une politique hardie de micro-désarmement de la sous-région.

La pédagogie de l'opération Flamme de la Paix continuera à s'appuyer sur les «concertations régionales», grands rassemblements populaires au niveau local et les «rencontres intercommunautaires» pour le partage d'une culture de la paix, nourriture authentiquement démocratique.

Elle se vivifiera de la décentralisation et de l'intégration régionale.

S'il y a éclatement des centres de pouvoirs armés jusqu'à l'échelon des clans, des bandes, des groupes ethniques ou religieuses, en tout cas à des formations infra-Etats, c'est qu'il y a eut à une étape antérieure prolifération des armes, accumulation de surplus et dissémination incontrôlée: la lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères doit être comprise comme une stratégie de prévention des conflits moins coûteuse à conduire qu'une stratégie de gestion des conflits dont les actions se situent en aval des effets pervers et destructeurs des armes de la violence.

Le mouvement universel de désarmement en cours que traduisent les traités et accords en matière de maîtrise des armes nucléaires, des armes chimiques et biologiques et des mines antipersonnel, n'aura son plein effet que s'il s'étendait au domaine des armes légères, dont tous les experts sont convenus qu'elles constituent la plus grande cause de morts violentes, de conflits armés internes, de massacres massifs de populations innocentes et d'abus massifs des droits de l'homme.

La maîtrise des armes de cette zone grise constitue le défi sécuritaire majeur qui nous interpelle en cette veille de 21^{ème} siècle; si des efforts concrets ne sont pas entrepris pour contrôler et limiter la production et le transfert des armes légères, les chances de réussir le règlement des conflits présents et à venir et de promouvoir la démocratie en Afrique resteront désespérément minces.

C'est au relèvement de ce défi que le Mali est engagé, à travers sa politique africaine de micro-désarmement; mais comment mener à bon port une entreprise aussi complexe, aussi délicate et lourde sans le concours et l'appui de l'ensemble des acteurs du système international, en particulier les plus puissants!

Je ne saurais terminer cet appel en faveur du soutien de notre politique de maîtrise des armes légères sans remercier les différents partenaires qui nous ont accompagné dans nos efforts jusqu'à cette phase; je voudrais tout particulièrement remercier la Croix Rouge Norvégienne, l'Institut International pour la Recherche de la Paix d'Oslo, l'Aide de l'Eglise Norvégienne, l'Institut Norvégien pour les Affaires Internationales et le Gouvernement Norvégien qui sont initiateurs de cette campagne; je voudrais remercier aussi les pays donateurs et qui se sont engagés à apporter leur appui au PCASED; les pays du Groupe de Wassenaar dont les concours nous sont absolument nécessaires. Je voudrais enfin remercier très sincèrement l'ONU, les agences et instituts spécialisés des Nations Unies, tout particulièrement le PNUD-MALI, l'UNIDIR, le Centre Régional pour le Désarmement de l'Afrique, dont les soutiens constants nous ont été acquis dès la naissance de l'initiative.

Je m'en voudrais de ne pas signaler la part personnelle prise dans cette œuvre par M. Tore Rose, Représentant du PNUD au Mali et M. Fung du Centre Régional pour le Désarmement de l'Afrique des Nations Unies.

J'invite tous ces partenaires à redoubler d'efforts afin que nous franchissons ensemble ce pas décisif de la Déclaration du Moratoire pour enfin couronner tant d'années d'efforts, d'abnégation de la communauté internationale.

L'Afrique ne peut pas ne pas saisir l'une des rares chances qui s'offre à nous pour apporter notre part de contribution à l'histoire universelle du désarmement, pour la paix, la stabilité et le développement de notre chère patrie pour un mieux-être des générations futures.

Vive la campagne pour le contrôle et la limitation des transferts d'armes légères!

Que se consolident les relations amicales entre la Norvège et l'Afrique!

Que vive une Afrique unie et démocratique au service du bonheur de nos peuples et au service de la paix universelle!

Je vous remercie.

L'auteur est Président de la République du Mali depuis 1992. M. Konaré a été Ministre de la Jeunesse, des Sports, des Arts et de la Culture (1978–80). Il tient un doctorat d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Université de Varsovie. Il a également été chercheur à l'Institut Supérieur de Formation et de Recherche Appliquée (1980–89). Ses activités socio-culturelles comprennent la création de la revue 'Jamana' et du journal 'Les échos'.

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International Support to Efforts to Control Small Arms

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik*
Prime Minister, Norway

[statement on 1 April 1998, multilateral consultation on the West African arms moratorium]

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure for me to address this Oslo Conference on small arms, in connection with the visit of President Konaré to Norway.

The unlawful use of small arms is a global problem, which affects every country. At the global level, we know that far more people are killed in armed conflicts through the use of small arms than by tanks and bombs.

Excessive accumulation of small arms can be a threat to basic human security in many countries. The unlawful use of small arms can lead to widespread atrocities and the violation of human rights. It can undermine the legitimate authority of the state and hinder efforts to promote development.

We cannot tolerate this. We have a moral obligation to alleviate the human suffering caused by small arms and to work towards greater control of these weapons. There is a role for all of us in such efforts, whether we represent governments, multilateral organisations or NGOs.

Firstly, we must stop the most lethal handguns from getting into the wrong hands. It is estimated that at least 50 per cent of all small arms transfers are illicit. Automatic guns and other military weapons are meant for the use of security forces, not for civilians.

Although it is not the focus of this conference, I would like to note at this point that developed countries like Norway are also not immune to problems connected with small arms. As recent tragedies have shown, this is a concern that we also have to take seriously on a national basis.

Secondly, we must control excessive accumulations of small arms, particularly at the end of violent conflicts. When former combatants return to civilian life, their handguns should be handed in. Civilians should be persuaded to give up guns not needed in peace. These surplus guns should be stockpiled safely, or – even better – destroyed. Experience shows that such arms collection programmes are difficult to implement and that they have the greatest chance of success when integrated into a broader reintegration and developmental strategy.

The international community can and should help in these areas. Initiatives to stop the unlawful use and excessive accumulation of small arms ought to be an integral part of countries' internal and foreign policy. We need more effective international co-operation to curb illicit transfers, and we should increase transparency and improve

the supervision of international transfers. In some countries, support is needed to restructure the national security sector and train its personnel. Efforts to collect and destroy small arms after the end of conflicts also merit support.

Many of these initiatives need financial and technical assistance. My government is prepared to contribute its share to a concerted international effort. Norway has long supported demobilisation programmes in a number of countries. The restructuring of the security sector is a crucial element in our overall aid strategy. In Mali, we have spent some USD 2.5 million on supporting the demobilisation and reintegration programme. We were the first country to firmly commit funds to the moratorium that has been proposed, and have already granted USD 1 million to this proposal. We are ready to contribute additional funds once the moratorium has been declared.

We have heard a powerful and moving story here today about Mali's experiences. My government fully supports President Konaré's innovative proposal on a moratorium on small arms. This proposal is a unique combination of many of the elements I outlined: it will stop the influx of small arms and contribute to the collection of surplus guns, all within a broader developmental framework.

A moratorium will represent a milestone in the lives of millions of West Africans. At the same time it will be a historic example for countries in other regions and merit great respect and support from the international community.

The idea of a moratorium is very attractive and should be pursued vigorously. It is very heartening to see the number of participating countries at this conference. It shows their interest and willingness to support the moratorium. It is also encouraging to learn that the moratorium proposal has now been placed on the agenda in ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States) and that work is in progress to enable state leaders to declare the moratorium.

The bold initiatives of President Konaré and other state leaders in West Africa have created a momentum that must not be allowed to weaken. I sincerely hope that this Oslo Conference can make a modest contribution towards an early declaration of a subregional moratorium in West Africa.

My government will be following the outcome of this conference and its follow-up with the utmost interest. I wish you every success in your endeavours.

Thank you for your attention.

*The author is Prime Minister of Norway since 1997 and a Member of Parliament since 1973. Mr Bondevik was Minister of Foreign Affairs (1989–90), Minister of Church and Education (1983–86) and leader of the Christian Democratic Party (1983–95). He is a theological candidate from Norway's Free Faculty of Theology and was ordained as priest in the (Lutheran) Church of Norway in 1979.

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Le Contrôle du Flux des Petites Armes Illicites

Yahaya Tounkara

Monsieur le Président, permettez-moi tout d'abord, au nom du Gouvernement du Niger, de m'associer aux félicitations méritées qui vous ont été adressées ainsi qu'aux autres membres du bureau qui vous assistent si efficacement dans l'accomplissement de votre importante tâche.

Le Gouvernement du Niger salue l'initiative norvégienne d'organiser la présente réunion sur le contrôle du flux des petites armes illicites en collaboration avec le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD).

La prestigieuse ville d'Oslo est devenue une place incontournable en matière de désarmement grâce aux efforts des autorités et du peuple norvégien.

En effet, c'est ici même à Oslo qu'en septembre 1997 a été conclu un important accord sur l'interdiction de l'utilisation, de la fabrication, du stockage et du transfert des mines antipersonnel.

Fidèle aux nobles idéaux de paix et de sécurité internationale contenus dans la charte des Nations Unies et dans la charte de l'Organisation de l'Unité Africaine, le Niger a toujours œuvré en faveur d'un désarmement général et complet.

A cet égard, il me plaît de rappeler que le Niger a signé plusieurs traités internationaux tels que:

- v Le traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires (TNP)
- v Le traité d'interdiction des armes nucléaires
- v La convention sur les armes chimiques
- v Le traité sur la dénucléarisation de l'Afrique
- v Le traité sur l'interdiction de l'utilisation, de la fabrication, du stockage et du transfert des mines antipersonnel.

Le Niger a également adhéré (voire même parrainé) à toutes les résolutions de l'Assemblée Générale de l'Organisation des Nations Unies relatives au désarmement.

Mon pays est cosignataire de la résolution concernant le moratoire sur l'importation, l'exportation et la fabrication des armes légères présentée devant l'Assemblée Générale de l'ONU par la République du Mali.

Cet engagement du Niger en matière de désarmement se justifie par la situation dramatique de conflit armé que vit l'Afrique, situation causée par la prolifération des armes illicites.

Permettez-moi d'insister sur le cas particulier du Niger.

En effet, au Niger, la circulation des armes illicites découle de la rébellion armée vécue dans le nord et l'est du pays ainsi que des conflits internes survenus dans certains pays voisins du Niger.

Cette situation a engendré une prolifération d'armes illicites provoquant une insécurité dans les zones affectées dont les paisibles habitants paient les frais.

A titre illustratif, je m'en vais vous communiquer le bilan des actes du banditisme armé ou vols à main armée enregistrés ces deux dernières années.

v En 1996, 113 attaques à main armée ayant fait 40 personnes tuées, 83 blessées, 545 têtes de bétail volées, 18 500 000 francs CFA – 19 véhicules automobiles et divers autres objets emportés.

v En 1997, il a été enregistré 96 attaques à main armées ayant entraîné la mort de 59 personnes, 93 blessées, 1564 têtes de bétail (toutes espèces confondues) enlevées, la somme de 58 000 000 francs CFA – 15 véhicules automobiles volés et divers objets de valeur emportés.

Même si la sécurité s'installe progressivement au Niger depuis la signature de l'accord de paix du 24 avril 1995 avec la rébellion touareg et toubous, il n'en demeure pas moins que de nombreuses petites armes illicites circulent dans les villes et campagnes de mon pays.

Monsieur le Président, Honorables délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs, convaincu que la consolidation de la paix et de la sécurité passe par la prise de mesures concrètes de désarmement, notamment la maîtrise des armes de petit calibre et des armes légères, le Niger recommande une coopération internationale en matière de lutte contre la prolifération des armes illicites.

En attendant de recevoir l'aide des pays et organisations amis, le Niger a créé une commission nationale pour la collecte et le contrôle des armes illicites (CNCCAI) dont le fonctionnement est assuré sur fonds propres.

La tâche est immense pour cette commission qui œuvre sur le terrain avec les moyens très limités.

Malgré les résultats probants qu'elle a enregistrés, elle ne pourra pas enrayer l'insécurité engendrée par la prolifération des petites armes au Niger sans l'aide accrue des puissances économiques, des organisations internationales et des ONG.

Le règlement de tout ce qui précède requiert à l'évidence une coopération étroite entre les états, les organisations internationales et les ONG qui doivent désormais prendre en compte le volet sécurité dans leur politique d'aide au développement.

Ce n'est qu'ainsi que nous pourrons tous ensemble progresser vers l'édification d'un monde plus sûr, un monde de paix et de progrès auquel aspirent légitimement nos peuples.

Au Niger notre credo est: «Il n'y a pas de développement sans sécurité.» C'est pourquoi nous attachons la plus grande importance à ces travaux en formulant le vœu qu'ils débouchent sur des propositions pertinentes, voire des décisions concrètes concernant le moratoire sur les armes légères ainsi que le projet de structure de sa mise en œuvre. Nous fondons à cet égard de grands espoirs qui, pensons-nous, ne seront pas déçus au terme de nos travaux.

Je vous remercie.

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The Challenge of Controlling International Small Arms Transfers

Jayantha Dhanapala

Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to share this platform in the distinguished company of Prime Minister Bondevik and President Konaré. I wish to express my admiration to the President of the Norwegian Red Cross and the Secretary-General of Norwegian Church Aid for their choice of yet another cause worthy of their support. I am not surprised that working behind this important event is the innovative mind of Mr. Jan Egeland to whom I offer my best wishes for the success of the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers. I am delighted to learn that the UNDP is closely involved in organising this conference and I extend my appreciation to Mr. Tore Rose.

Mr. Chairman, at the very outset, I want to express support for the proposed Moratorium on Small Arms Transfers for West Africa. It takes more than courage to conceive, put together and commit to a course of action which would be the first of its kind in the world. I feel assured that history will view this as a pathfinding step in a global search for effective subregional measures to prevent and reduce the incidence of violence and criminality resulting from excessive accumulation, transfer and use of small arms and light weapons.

There cannot be a more reassuring guarantee to control the arms trade than through voluntarily assumed commitments by affected governments to ban their import, export and manufacture. A subregional moratorium in West Africa might well become a test-case in assessing the real problems and implications of controlling transfers of small arms at the field level.

It is a matter of gratification for me to recall that the staff of the former Centre for Disarmament Affairs was closely associated with the developments throughout the period 1993-97 described by President Konaré today. This is the second time in just two years that Mali has shown a way to do it differently. The extraordinary spectacle when, on 27 March 1996, Mali made a bonfire of nearly 3,000 small weapons to light a flame of peace has become a symbol. To you, President Konaré, I extend my greetings on the second anniversary of the lighting of the flame of peace.

Mr. Chairman, my tribute to the statesmanship of the leading figures in West Africa and to ECOWAS is enhanced as we acknowledge the size of the daunting challenge that faces the world. The damage and destruction caused by the recent use of small arms are out of proportion to their size. Killings on a massive scale have resulted from the use of weapons so ordinary that they were rarely seen as instruments of large-scale violence in modern times. Intra-state armed conflicts fought with small arms have claimed more lives in the last five years than those lost due to natural disasters like cyclones, earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides and wildfires combined.

Available in abundance, cheap to buy, requiring little training to use, small arms have become the weapons of choice for the present-day conflicts fought mostly in the

streets and back lanes by irregular troops in violation of accepted standards of humanitarian law. Over 90 per cent of the victims of the use of small arms are civilians with women and children accounting for 80 per cent of the casualties.

In virtually all the armed conflicts currently dealt with by the United Nations, small arms and light weapons are the primary or sole tools of violence. And with few exceptions, none of the countries where these weapons were used in recent armed conflicts actually manufacture them. In many cases, neither the manufacturer, nor the exporter, nor even the buyer really knows the purposes for which the weapons will be ultimately used because unlike the trade in any other category of weapons, nearly 40 per cent of the trade in small arms is carried out through illicit means. Although it may be difficult to quantify, an estimated 3 billion dollars worth of small arms cross national frontiers each year representing the equivalent of roughly one-eighth of all international sales in conventional weapons.

In a pioneer work undertaken by the Panel of Governmental Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to assist him in preparing his first ever report on 'Small Arms' last year, it is pointed out that the small arms in circulation today have been accumulated over years of procurement through regular and irregular channels of supply. Included in this accumulation are massive quantities of weapons and ammunition supplied during the Cold War in the Horn of Africa, Southern, East and West Africa, South East and South West Asia, and Central America.

As a fallout of earlier procurements, an estimated 2 million small arms and light weapons are still circulating in Central America, 7 million in West Africa and an estimated 10 million in Afghanistan. Through circuitous routes, and after changing many hands, sometimes in collusion with traders in other contraband goods, several of these weapons have been used in places far removed from their original places of regular supply. In stuff reminiscent of fiction, illicit international transfers of small arms are believed to involve multi-party deals involving false documentation, concealment, smuggling and coded bank accounts.

Small arms are also transferred within a country, through theft from government arsenals, capture from the government or from subnational groups, transfer between subnational groups, armed deserters and demobilised soldiers and acquisition from criminals or drug traffickers.

As of now, it may seem that even a rough estimate of the real size of the challenge could amount to a step forward. This is important because within the broad category of small arms could fall anything from shoulder-fired missiles to machetes, not to mention home-made weapons capable of inflicting severe damage on civilians caught in crossfire between irregular fighting groups.

Thanks to the meticulous rigour of research institutes and concerned scholars compiling such statistics, it is possible to get some idea of the magnitude of the challenge in sheer numbers. I, for one, am intrigued by its implications when I read that small arms and light weapons are being currently manufactured in over 70 countries which is almost twice as many as the manufacturers of other categories of weapons. Depending upon their metric calibre, there are at least 20 known types of pistols available in close to 200 models, which means that 400 varieties are being

manufactured. Over 40 models of rifles are being manufactured to at least one dozen specifications, the better known AK-47 being just one of the 500 known varieties.

Mr. Chairman, the critical choice facing us today is not whether we can face this challenge, but how? I firmly believe that the enormity of this challenge will be met by policy responses to the ground swell of civil society groups committed to overcome it as much in the affected countries subjected to the violence and dislocation as by others moved by their plight. It will be met by national initiatives for subregional arrangements to stem cross-boundary movements of contraband goods, including illicit arms transfers. It will be met by inter-governmental conventions to establish accountability of weapons manufactured to military specifications. It will be met by non-governmental organisations sharing the objectives of the United Nations as it continues to be the focal point for global efforts to move into the next millennium with better and more effective means to save the coming generations from the scourge of unprecedented damage and destruction unleashed by small arms and light weapons during the closing decade of this century.

Mr. Chairman, we at the United Nations are gratified that there is so much political energy to act worldwide. It is important to channel these energies into some attainable priority goals. Control of illicit arms transfers should become a priority goal for which initiatives like the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers provide an early starter. Conventions like the one signed by the OAS should pave the way for similar other regional arrangements. Also helpful will be codes of conduct for international arms transfers, which are now being considered in more than one forum.

Let me assure you that the Secretary-General is personally committed to raising public awareness of the direct and indirect consequences of the illegitimate use of small arms and of the illicit arms trade. Among the new tasks he has assigned to the re-established Department for Disarmament Affairs is that of effectively fulfilling the mandates given to the Secretariat in the area of small arms and light weapons. He recognises that this will entail the challenge of working with diverse quarters keen on controlling the illegal trade in small arms. In his latest statement on the subject, made in Geneva on 17 March, during the occasion of the release of a book entitled *A Peace of Timbuktu*, the Secretary-General upheld the Malian experience as an example of the virtues of close co-ordination within the UN system and expressed his strong support for subregional moratoria on small arms.

Since assuming office as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs in February this year, hardly a day has gone by when I have not been approached by a public interest group, a committed non-governmental organisation, a subregional or regional body or an inter-governmental assembly willing to lend its weight and support in meeting the challenge facing us. I will earnestly endeavour to ensure that the United Nations retains its outreach, acts as a catalyst for concerted action and develops a coherent strategy to channel various initiatives towards the early achievement of shared objectives. My statement here is but one indication of the importance I attach to this area of my responsibilities. In carrying it out, I have closely followed the wealth of ideas emerging from different sources.

In my personal view, one of our first priorities would appear to be the elaboration of practical proposals of specific concern to particular regions. We must focus on

initiatives which could be matched by financial commitments and implemented at the field level with real-time, tangible results for the civilians whose lives are immediately and most affected by the increased incidence of violence, criminality, delinquency, and anti-social activities aggravated by easy availability of weapons freely acquired in illicit transfers.

To attain the best results, it is imperative that the United Nations sustains and broadens the gathering momentum for action. Not unlike the proposed moratorium in West Africa, we will have to test our ideas in the field and determine whether progress in one region can be used as positive momentum for preventing the spread of small arms transfers in another region or in reducing their incidence.

Mr. Chairman, as I conclude here, I wish to reiterate that the United Nations' activities in the field of small arms are broad-based, practical and results-oriented. We feel that the organisation is well-positioned to provide governments, regional bodies and collaborative networks such as the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers with co-ordinating and norm-setting strategies to facilitate their efforts to monitor and control the transfer of small arms. As the international community's central multilateral forum and as its pre-eminent organisation with offices and programmes worldwide the United Nations, together with these partners, is prepared to meet the challenge of controlling the transfers of small arms. We must spare no effort in working together to ensure that when history looks back on our endeavours, it will recognise that although it amounted to a daunting challenge, the trade in small arms was met successfully in the interests of international peace and security.

I thank you for your attention, ladies and gentlemen.

The author is currently the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs in the United Nations. He was a member of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service and functioned as his Country's Permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva (1984-87) and Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the USA (1995-97). He was Director of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research from 1987-92. Mr Dhanapala has presided over the Conference on Disarmament and the NPT Review and Extension Conference and was a member of the Canberra Commission.

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The Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development in West Africa (PCASED)

Tore Rose

Mr. President of Mali, Ministers, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, as you may already know, PCASED, the Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development, would be the technical and secretariat mechanism for the proposed Small Arms Moratorium in West Africa. But before presenting PCASED, I would like to briefly sketch out the context of UNDP and United Nations involvement in post-conflict peace-building and practical disarmament in Mali – and beyond. It is from this process that the so-called ‘security first’ approach to development has emerged.

‘Security first’, based on a proportional and integrated approach encompassing development and security, refers to the obvious fact that without security in civilian life there can be no serious and sustainable development; and, conversely, that without serious and sustainable development, there will be insecurity or worse. Operationally, ‘security first’ means that development partners, aid donors, should draw the necessary conclusions from this obvious linkage between security and development. But unfortunately, experience has shown that, for many donors, such operational conclusions can present significant difficulties. This is because of the logical, but not always realistic, view that it is the responsibility of the State to assure a secure environment for development.

But aid money can, in certain circumstances, be justifiably spent on helping countries to strengthen their capacity to assure internal security. Such assistance must be viewed as totally different in its rationale and execution as compared to traditional bilateral military co-operation. It must not be confused with weapons supplies and training in military doctrines for political aims. For historical reasons which have to do with the image of foreign governments supporting oppressive regimes and their security apparatus, ‘security first’ assistance is a very hard idea for parliamentarians and ministers in donor countries to swallow. But I think that recent experience, certainly in Africa, demonstrates that the time is ripe for a paradigm shift in our thinking on this issue.

First of all, consider the enormous amount of aid money, spent over two or three decades, which has gone down the drain as a consequence of conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Rwanda, ex-Zaire, Congo, the Central African Republic, Mozambique, Angola, and even Uganda. Secondly, consider the cost of UN or African regional interventions, or even bilateral interventions, to restore and maintain order in conflict and post-conflict countries: millions of dollars can be spent in only days or weeks. Thirdly, let me mention the case of Mali’s so-called ‘Tuareg rebellion’: basically because of the wisdom of Mali’s traditional leaders and its President and the depth of Mali’s social capitals – civil war was averted. The ‘security first’ approach played a major role, at a cost to the international community of a

couple of million dollars, plus ten million for the demobilisation of ex-combatants. Countless lives were saved, socio-political stability was maintained, and the economic impact of the conflict was relatively limited. This positive experience is, of course, not well known; fortunately there was not enough visible mayhem and bloodshed to attract a great deal of international media attention.

So, when the donor community is able to take a holistic view of development, and focus on the overall welfare of the peoples in the countries they try to assist, it becomes possible to achieve the necessary paradigm shift, and accept that aid money can legitimately be used to re-establish and maintain security. 'Security first' is simply a way of supporting good governance when conflicts risk getting out of hand. Democracy becomes fragile in an unstable socio-political environment.

The 'Mali story', involving the application of 'security first' and intensive and sustained peacebuilding, is told in the book *A Peace of Timbuktu* which each delegation has received. On a wider canvas, these ideas, and many others around the theme of conflict prevention and peace-building, are presented in a second book, *Back to Basics*, which each delegation has also received.

The peace-building process in Mali has had some important side effects. United Nations support had begun in 1994 when the Secretary-General, at the request of the President of Mali, sent a UN mission to study, and make recommendations on, the proliferation of illicit small arms. This was followed by UN missions to neighbouring countries, and the establishment of national commissions on the control of small arms in the six countries visited.

Another by-product was that Mali launched itself into a re-examination of the role of the military in its society. Recent history has unfortunately provided only too many examples of armed forces that are abusive, anti-democratic and anti-civil society. But all states have military forces: they are here to stay. So-called mature democracies have developed formal and informal mechanisms, which result in a military institution that is a positive – or at least neutral – part of society, and even a force for stability rather than instability. Indeed, the professionalisation of the military institution is perhaps a pre-condition for democracy. So it should be logical that, again taking a holistic view, helping a society to find a stable and respected role for its military can be as important to that society's well-being as improving the vaccination coverage. This may even require increased military expenditures in the short run, during the professionalisation process when the police, the gendarmerie, the customs service and the military receive training and appropriate equipment and conditions of service. The United Nations has assisted the Malian process of re-examination of the role of its uniformed forces, and their relations with the rest of society. One result is the issuing of a Code of Conduct booklet to all uniformed personnel, which describes, in simple language, the role and duties of a professional and republican army, and introduces soldiers to human rights concepts. This is a first in Africa.

Another important event was a joint Mali/UN Conference on Conflict Prevention, Disarmament and Development in West Africa, in November 1996, which was followed by a special ministerial-level consultation in Bamako in March 1997. The 'security first' approach was further endorsed by another high-level consultation on post-conflict peace-building in West Africa which took place in New York on 21

October 1996 under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General. These gatherings gave shape to the Malian President's proposal for a moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of small arms. This moratorium proposal made its way, via discussions on the occasion of OAU meetings in 1997, to the current agenda of the Heads of State of ECOWAS. The proposed voluntary moratorium, which must be seen as basically a confidence-building and security-enhancing measure, is a visionary new departure. President Konaré has himself presented this vision to you this morning.

I will now return to the suggested technical and secretariat mechanism for the moratorium, PCASED: the Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development. For the sake of administrative simplicity, PCASED is foreseen, at least initially, as a UNDP project that seeks co-financing from interested donors. PCASED is a 'security first' aid project which needs multi-country financing. The arguments about 'security first', which I developed a few minutes ago, are valid for PCASED, and I can say that the paradigm shift is already taking place: three donors, including the host country for this conference, have given firm indications of financial support, and five others have already expressed themselves positively. But this support needs to be translated into specific financial or in-kind commitments, and we must hope that our discussions today will permit us to move rapidly towards that goal. In addition to contributions from states, the great interest shown in conflict, peace and development issues in the European Commission's aid fora, and in the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, are extremely positive signs for the moratorium and for PCASED.

PCASED is designed to support and give technical backstopping to the moratorium, and to assist interested states on other issues related to peace-building, micro-disarmament, and the control of light weapons. This includes support for the setting up or revitalising of the national commissions in charge of the fight against the proliferation of small arms. It also includes the establishment and maintenance of a database on the flow of light weapons in the region, and the establishment of a subregional register of light weapons. Furthermore, it would provide technical support for improved border controls to suppress the passage of illicit arms, and training programmes for the forces of law and order in modern approaches and techniques in these areas.

Also, PCASED would be a focal point for updating and harmonising national legislation on the bearing, the use, and the production of light weapons, and on other technical issues arising in connection with disarmament and security matters. It is to be expected that when the moratorium becomes effective, the declaring states – which would constitute the governing body of PCASED – would amend, delete and add to these tasks according to their perceived needs. It is also foreseen that PCASED would benefit from an Advisory Group of recognised experts in its field of activities.

From the United Nations' side, backstopping for PCASED is expected not only from UNDP, but also from the Departments of Political Affairs and of Disarmament Affairs of the UN Secretariat, and from the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, UNIDIR. PCASED will initially be set up for the projected three-year period of the moratorium, plus an additional two years to consolidate the likely post-moratorium regime.

UNDP, a development agency with the most comprehensive field presence of all, is now committed to working with governments, donors and civil society organisations on the 'security first' approach, and therefore with its concrete manifestation, PCASED, which is such a promising initiative for underpinning sustainable human development in Africa.

Finally, let me point out that United Nations support for the proposed moratorium, and for PCASED, is an example of the new synergies which the UN Secretary-General seeks to deepen through his reforms of the UN system. Following the UN missions to West Africa on small arms proliferation, a novel and fruitful collaboration began between UNDP and the UN Department of Political Affairs. Without this close partnership on the ground, little of the support for conflict resolution and peace-building in Mali that I have described would have been possible. I have said that UNIDIR is being very supportive; I should also mention that UNESCO through its Culture of Peace programme, and the UN Centre on Human Rights, are now involved with UNDP in helping the Malian Minister of Primary Education to insert peace and human rights into the primary school curriculum. Only a few days ago, on the second anniversary of the Flame of Peace in Timbuktu – the occasion of the burning of 3,000 arms laid down by ex-combatants – a conference on such a peace and human rights curriculum took place in Bamako.

We must also note some recent developments which are complementary to the vision of the moratorium and PCASED: firstly, the members of the Wassenaar Arrangement of arms-exporting countries recently declared themselves ready to work with moratorium-declaring countries; secondly, the France-Africa summit preparatory meeting in Ouagadougou last week decided that this year's summit would focus on cooperation for security for conflict prevention; thirdly, the recent multi-national military exercises in Senegal supported by three major aid donors who are also military powers – operation 'Guidimakha' – trained African standby peacekeeping forces; fourthly, Belgium, with the European Union, is preparing a conference on small arms control later this year; and finally, next week the major donors' aid ministers will discuss peace and security issues at their annual high-level meeting at the OECD.

Ladies and gentlemen, clearly the world's attention is turning toward the linkage between security, conflict prevention, peace-building, and sustainable human development. The two books I mentioned give a wealth of insights into the challenges, difficulties and successes in addressing these linkages. The paradigm shift, toward an understanding that security can, in appropriate circumstances, be a legitimate concern of aid programmes, is beginning to appear. I am sure that what we discuss here today, and above all President Konaré's keynote speech, will serve to deepen our understanding of these processes.

Thank you very much.

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Centre on Transnational Corporations.

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The Wassenaar Arrangement and the Proposed Moratorium for West Africa

Staffan Sohlman

With the end of the Cold War the serious threat to peace posed by confrontation between East and West was replaced by a more diffuse set of security concerns. The spread of weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation of sophisticated conventional arms and sensitive dual-use technologies, where they could foster instability, definitely are among such new transnational challenges.

The demand for weapons and respective 'know-how' remains high. At the same time weapons became more accessible after the removal of the Cold War barriers and restrictions. The explosion of trade and technology exchange that followed it has produced a new global economy in which people, ideas and capital come together more quickly and more easily than before.

That is why concerns regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, advanced conventional weapons, and sensitive technologies have emerged at the top of the international political agenda in recent years. Great attention has been paid to improving already existing networks of treaties, transparency measures and export control systems and to introducing additional multilateral efforts to address questions of proliferation.

The Wassenaar Arrangement, which I currently chair, is one of them. It is the first global multilateral agreement covering export controls on both conventional weapons and sensitive dual-use goods and technologies.

This 33-country arrangement is named after the Dutch town of Wassenaar, a posh suburb of The Hague. With the Gulf War still on the mind of many participants, agreement was reached there in 1995 to start a new type of multilateral cooperation to prevent destabilising accumulations of arms and sensitive technologies by establishing a process of transparency and consultation, and by promoting greater responsibility in transfers of controlled items.

The Wassenaar Arrangement contemplates and reinforces, without duplication, the existing regimes for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. As its long, full name indicates, the arrangement is designed to respond to the new threats through vigilant export control efforts.

Vigilance through export controls is necessary because many of the materials and technologies that have legitimate, peaceful applications are also used in the manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction or more conventional weapons. Moreover, part of the commitment to responsibility undertaken by the Wassenaar

members also entails controlling conventional weapons transfers in order to ensure that the objectives of the arrangement are carried out.

Export controls could help to ensure that exports of controlled commodities and technology do not assist in the development or manufacture of weapons or do not contribute to the regional destabilising military capabilities in critical situations.

The Wassenaar Arrangement is not another formal international organisation, but rather a forum of like-minded countries. Members use it as a venue to exchange information and share concerns in the area of export controls, with the objective of preventing accumulations of military capacity where they would threaten regional or international security and stability.

Participants commit themselves to carrying out effective controls at the national level on transfers of conventional arms and dual-use technology, as well as to exchange information confidentially within the arrangement on transfers of controlled items to non-members, on denials of licences to destinations where the concerns are greatest, and on worrisome military build-ups and other threats to security in various regions of the world. Denial reporting helps to bring to the attention of partners the transfers that may undermine the objectives of the arrangement. I might add that frankness in exchanging such sensitive information can help eliminate inadvertent undercuts and thereby foster national export policies more compatible with each other's security concerns.

The arrangement's specific information exchange requirements involve notifications of arms transfers to third countries, currently covering seven categories derived from the UN Register of Conventional Arms (tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft, helicopters, warships, missiles). However, unlike in the UN, this information is provided more frequently (twice per year) and includes more details than previously requested.

Participants meet regularly in Vienna, and on the basis of information exchanged on international dual-use and arms transfers discuss risks associated with destabilising acquisitions of armaments in certain regions.

The instruments of the Wassenaar Arrangement are not overly burdensome or intrusive. Much tougher multilateral arrangements exist in other non-proliferation areas, such as those to prevent the proliferation of chemical weapons or nuclear testing, which rely on legally binding treaties, clear rules, and mechanisms for monitoring and inspection. In contrast, the Wassenaar Arrangement is a political undertaking devoid of legally binding rules.

Through transparency and consultation, suppliers of arms and dual-use items can develop common understandings of the risks associated with their transfer and assess the scope for coordinating national control policies to combat these risks. Information exchange, persuasion by peers, and reasoned discussion among responsible countries are its characteristics.

The arrangement does not impede bona fide civil transactions and is not directed against any state or group of states. It does not interfere with the rights of states to

acquire legitimate means with which to defend themselves pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The arrangement is open on a global and non-discriminatory basis to prospective adherents that comply with the agreed criteria. To be admitted, a state must be a producer/exporter of arms or industrial equipment respectively, maintain non-proliferation policies, effective export controls, and appropriate national policies.

At their last plenary meeting in December 1997, participants publicly appealed to all non-members to support the goals of the arrangement. They also agreed to provide more transparency with respect to the activities of the arrangement through establishing dialogue with non-member countries as well as with relevant international organisations.

When the Wassenaar Arrangement was being negotiated, I do not believe that the concerns arising from the proliferation of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons were the foremost post-Cold War security concern on the minds of its negotiators. However, our consciousness of the problems of insecurity due to unwanted proliferation of weapons has been enhanced recently by the work of those associated with this conference. In particular, the efforts of West African states involved with Mali's initiative to tackle the demand side of the problem have been important in getting our attention.

The arrangement took note of the initiative to establish a West African moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons, which was proposed in the Bamako Conference of November 1996. I sent a representative of the Chair to the follow-up conference in Bamako in March 1997, the first anniversary of the 'Flamme de la Paix'. Following our report on the initiative, we discussed the matter in several meetings. Several of our participating states, including your host country today, pointed out the importance of such an initiative in countries that have suffered from the dangerous proliferation of such weapons.

Further briefings by Malian and other officials involved in this effort in several of our capitals were instrumental in developing sympathy and support for the moratorium initiative. In our December 1997 plenary meeting, representatives of the 33 countries participating in the Wassenaar Arrangement joined a consensus to welcome and encourage publicly the moratorium development.

I mentioned that the security concerns caused by small arms were not foremost in our minds in the establishment of the Wassenaar Arrangement. Our members, however, recognise that their commitment to responsible transfers and effective export controls does not preclude small arms and light weapons. We, as responsible suppliers, must be responsive to the security concerns posed by small arms and make sure that lapses in the effectiveness of our export controls do not result in our contributing to an exacerbation of the problem.

In our meetings and papers we have looked at other areas of the world where the proliferation of light weapons contributes to instability. Central Africa and Afghanistan are examples. Our members take these problems seriously and are

working to strengthen their commitments to responsible export controls on these items.

Under one initiative aimed at thwarting illicit trafficking in weapons, members have been urged to exchange more information that will alert control authorities to potentially risky situations.

Our objective is to contribute to peace and security in a safer world. Wassenaar can contribute only one small part to the effort to ensure more responsible trade in sensitive items, such as weapons. I trust that the commitment of our 33 participating countries will complement and make all the more effective efforts like the West African initiative and those being undertaken or contemplated in several international organisations.

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Support of the International Community for the Implementation of a Moratorium in West Africa on Import, Export and Manufacture of Light Weapons

Helga Hernes

Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me begin by saying how honoured I am to be here today and say a few words on a subject of great concern to all of us, namely the proliferation of small arms and efforts to control this dangerous trend. Prime Minister Bondevik stated the government's support for the moratorium in his keynote address this morning. I myself was present at Mali's one-year celebration of the Flamme de la Paix in Timbuktu in March last year, and I am certain I am not the only one in this room to have participated in this joyous event. Norway has expressed its approval and admiration for the initiative to create a moratorium on small arms in West Africa both in words and in deeds, and we have contributed substantial funds for the purpose. We have every intention of following up our financial support through diplomatic and political support as well. When it comes to the Norwegian position, I would like to point out that we will, of course, fully respect an eventual moratorium in West Africa. We have expressed our support through our participation in the Wassenaar cooperation and will continue to do so.

I assume that all of us in this room admire the valiant efforts by the government of Mali, well knowing that the hardest tasks are still ahead of us. I use the words 'us' and 'we' advisedly in this context, because I was asked to speak about the support of the international community, which represents the most universal 'we'. We are gathered here at a conference organised by a consortium of NGOs with high-ranking representatives from governments from many parts of the world, the United Nations, the academic community and other NGOs present. Our common efforts to stem the uncontrolled flow of small arms from one area of conflict to another will need concerted thought and action on the part of all of these diverse actors. The task ahead of us is demanding in every way – conceptually, intellectually, politically and organisationally. Each of us will have his or her role to play and I will confine myself to say a little about what governments can do in this respect, both when it comes to the notion of a regional moratorium in one geographic area of the world and when it comes to the problem of small arms in general. As I will try to show, the two are not really that different, because more and more of us are concluding that a regional approach, such as the one launched by President Konaré, is the most viable one.

Governments will first need to agree on an agenda. In the most general of terms this is not difficult. I think most of us can agree that we should do all we can to reduce and perhaps in the distant future even eradicate illicit transfers. After all 50 per cent of all transfers are said to be illegal. Even though some government officials might at times be involved in clandestine activities, most legitimate governments will see it in their interest to support such a goal. That does not mean that it is easy to control such transfers. I therefore use the term 'reduce' advisedly. This will take time and

resources on everybody's part. It is a long-term strategy. Secondly, we should increase transparency in regard to legal transfers. It is to hope that more and more governments will be willing to be open about their own exports and imports. The number of countries willing to follow a policy if transparency is growing slowly but steadily. Thirdly, we should make concerted efforts to reduce the number of arms in war-torn societies, especially at the end of protracted armed conflict. This goal could become part of peace implementation plans, of peacekeeping operations, of all forms of peace-building policies both on the part of governments and intergovernmental organisations. Schemes for demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, collection and destruction of small arms, enhancing law enforcement capabilities and reforming the security sector in general are part and parcel of this. What is admirable about the Malian moratorium proposal is that it addresses all these three fundamental aspects. Governments should therefore seek to support regional efforts such as this one.

I am often asked which is the best forum for this kind of work. My answer is simple: There is no one single arena, organisation, forum or institution that can handle all aspects of this intractable problem as it unfolds today in our societies. The multiple issues raised by the problems created by the excessive accumulation and unlawful use of small arms require a comprehensive approach. This complex problem will have to be pursued in different fora, searching for solutions to partial problems, and then pursue a coherent comprehensive strategy. This will put great demands on our capacities for coordination, concerted action, consensus-building and so on. It is neither feasible nor desirable that all aspects of the subject be dealt with in one setting alone. We will continue to work with like-minded countries in all parts of the world and pursue the various humanitarian developmental human rights, humanitarian law and security concerns in whichever forum is best for the issue at hand.

Let me, however, end by repeating that this work will not be done by governments alone. It will be necessary to forge networks of cooperation from the communal level straight up to the international one. Organisations such as NISAT can play a vital role in such endeavours. We are therefore very gratified to be able to participate here today at a gathering of so many concerned individuals, governments and organisations.

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A Moratorium on Light Weapons in West Africa

Sverre Lodgaard & Ivor Richard Fung

1. Definitions

There are no generally agreed definitions of small arms and light weapons. However, the ones that are being used contain some common elements¹

First, the focus is on lethal equipment, i.e., weapons and their ammunition, generally used by military and paramilitary forces, excluding items such as knives and hunting rifles. Second, the emphasis is on weapons that are man-portable or transportable by light vehicles, i.e., on the weight and size of the equipment. Third, this equipment is easy to maintain, can function without much logistical back-up, and requires little training for use. Fourth, to be militarily and politically relevant, the definition comprises weapons that are in frequent use, i.e., 'weapons that really kill'.

In short, these are weapons that are man-portable or transportable by light vehicles and that do not require much in terms of service, logistical back-up or training. The relevance of the definition has to be ensured through properly up-dated operationalizations.

The moratorium proposal for West Africa is based on an operationalization offered by the Bonn International Center for Conversion, drawing on a categorization used by Jane's Information Systems.² Small arms comprises pistols, rifles, sub-machine-guns, machine-guns and ammunition for them. In addition to small arms, the wider category of light weapons comprises small-caliber cannons, light support weapons, combat grenades, anti-personnel mines, mortars, anti-tank weapons, anti-tank mines, shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles and their ammunition. So far, it has been assumed that the West African moratorium would impose a temporary ban on light weapons.³ However, the scope of the moratorium is ultimately for the participating states to decide. A tentative listing and technical specification of such weapons were agreed upon at the high-level consultation in Bamako in March 1997 (cf. 4.2., and Appendix).

2. Objectives

Why is it important to curb the proliferation of light weapons in a region like West Africa? What is the purpose?

Three objectives are of particular import. One of them is conflict prevention.

To have a fair chance of success, strategies of conflict prevention and post-conflict consolidation have to be comprehensive. Six components should be considered whenever such a strategy is being devised, though not all of them will necessarily be relevant to every situation. They are: (1) 'security first'; (2) disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration of combatants; (3) repatriation and reintegration of refugees; (4) rule of law and respect for human rights; (5) democratization; and (6) socio-economic development. The problems posed by small arms are addressed in a general way in (1) and in a more specific way in (2).⁴

Another objective is to pave the way for socio-economic development in general, and for donor-supported development projects in particular. The latter are particularly sensitive to incidents of violence. A fundamental condition for development in any country is that an adequate level of security is maintained by the state.

This is the idea underlying the 'security first' approach. Without security, conditions will not exist for development programmes to be conducted. It is therefore important to convince donors that in many countries, part of the development aid may best be invested in a more effective law and order mechanism to be developed under international supervision. It is only when functional substitutes are offered for the role that weapons now play that incentive schemes to collect arms can work well. And it is only when arms have been brought under control and the security environment has become stable that development programmes can be conducted. Hence the quest for an integrated and proportional approach to security and development – in short, 'security first'.⁵

The third objective is to come to grips with crime and banditry. This is often a big problem in weak states where civil society is poorly developed and the social fabric is in dismal condition. Furthermore, it is almost a law of nature that when internal wars come to an end, there is a burst of crime and banditry in the aftermath.

What is more important in this connection: the human beings/combatants or the weapons that they carry? Is it more important to address the humans behind the gun than to eliminate the material vehicles of violence? The question is often raised. However, as is so often the case, it is not a matter of either/or: both are important. Many other factors can also help reduce the crime and banditry that disrupt so many societies.⁶

If there is a lot of arms around, easy access to weapons may invite violent solutions to problems and, per implication, acquisition of arms for self-defence since there may be no effective police to rely upon. The proliferation of arms breeds cultures of violence. If arms are carried at public places, it tends to stimulate violent behaviour. If a peace operation deployed to a country in conflict winds up before measures have been taken to control the flow of arms, post-conflict reconstruction may be jeopardized.⁷

3. Regional Approaches

Some countries see international efforts to come to grips with the proliferation of light weapons as interference into their domestic affairs and, therefore, something they cannot go along with. They are afraid that their sovereignty may be compromised. This is not difficult to understand, since monopoly on the physical means of control goes to the core of what states are about. For instance, states in South Asia see it this way.

In many parts of Africa, governments take the opposite view. Here, efforts to mop up light weapons and curb illicit flows of arms are seen as a welcome contribution to the (re)construction of states, and something that may help them establish real sovereignty.

The scope for universal, global efforts to bring light weapons under control is therefore limited. Different from a specific, neatly defined type of weapon like anti-personnel land mines, light weapons are a much wider category involving a variety of interests. Obviously, these interests vary a great deal from region to region. Therefore, regional approaches should be pursued where conditions are ripe while sensitizing more countries to the issues involved. In the regions of Africa and in Central America, regional arrangements can do much to improve the situation.

Regional measures are based on the premise that the state will continue to be the main organizing unit in international affairs. The state is not an old phenomenon, and it is an open question how long it will last. In a globalizing world, many of them seem to be on the decline. However, in recent years we have seen the chaos and misery that erupts when states collapse. Until further notice, the international community has no better choice than to build on the state in its efforts to enhance security and reduce violence around the globe.

It should be noted that national agendas may have important regional ramifications. Following cease-fire agreements, arms tend to flow into other countries. In Africa, it is well known that arms tend to move around following the ebb and flow of conflicts. If national efforts to collect and eliminate arms are successful, it may come to a point where the prices of arms go up and international arms dealers move in to reap profits. In situations where borders are porous and states are generally weak, disarmament measures are critically dependent on regional commitments to control cross-border traffic. Single states are usually too vulnerable to go it alone. National programmes should be anchored in regional undertakings.

4. A Moratorium on Light Weapons

4.1. Design

A moratorium on light weapons has not been tried before. Neither has the recipients of arms been in the habit of seizing non-proliferation initiatives: nearly all initiatives to control and constrain the transfer of weapons have been taken by supplier states. The West African initiative is a novel one in both respects.

Another novel feature of this initiative is the invitation that the West Africans have extended to the members of the Wassenaar Arrangement of supplier states. The suppliers are asked to respect the provisions of the moratorium and to assist in its implementation.⁸ This has the virtue of locking suppliers and recipients into a joint effort to alleviate the problems.

It should be noted that the moratorium would define a ban on all import, export and manufacture of light weapons without any particular reference to illicit activities. Illicit arms would be addressed, specifically, by associated measures.

4.2. Origin

The moratorium originated from a succession of events and initiatives over the 1993–97 period.

Acting upon an initial request from the President of Mali, the United Nations Secretary-General established an advisory mission on the control and collection of small arms in the Sahara-Sahel region. The mission visited Mali (1994) as well as Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal (1995).

A major lesson from these missions was that curbing the dissemination of small arms within each country and throughout the region was an essential factor in establishing the minimal security prerequisites for future development efforts to be undertaken effectively.

Hence, an integrated and proportional approach to security and development ('security first') was elaborated and endorsed at a high-level consultation of the UN/UNDP and donor countries held in New York on 21 October 1996.⁹

In this spirit, a UNIDIR/UNDP conference on conflict prevention, disarmament and development in West Africa was convened in Bamako on 25–29 November 1996. Delegations from 12 West African countries sought common ground on options for future regional cooperation. The idea of a moratorium on imports, exports and manufacturing of light weapons drew particular interest throughout the conference. Delegates undertook to convey the suggestion to their respective governments for further consideration.

As participants in the Bamako Conference, both ECOWAS and ANAD took an active part in the discussions on the moratorium idea. Subsequently, the secretariat of the OAU was briefed on the proposal.

In February 1997, Friends of the Chair of the Wassenaar Arrangement were likewise informed of the moratorium proposal, and of the West African wish to conduct a dialogue on the matter.

Another consultation of West African countries held in Bamako in March 1997, attended, i.a., by a representative of the Chairman in Office of the Wassenaar Arrangement in an observer capacity, agreed that the moratorium might be of a three-year duration.

In a public statement of 10 December 1997, the Wassenaar Arrangement 'welcomed and encouraged the initiative of the West African countries in establishing a moratorium on import, export and manufacture of light weapons'.¹⁰

In its communiqué of 12 March 1998, the ECOWAS meeting of foreign ministers held in Abidjan instructed the ECOWAS secretariat to prepare a draft text for the declaration of the moratorium proposal with a view to its adoption and announcement at the upcoming summit of ECOWAS. If the preparations proceed in professional

fashion, and the necessary political consultations are conducted without delay, a genuine opportunity now exists for the countries of West Africa to make an innovative contribution to security and development in the region.

5. Modalities

Initially, the moratorium would be a declaratory measure of a three-year duration. Towards the end of the declared period, a consultative meeting may be called to consider an extension of the moratorium.

Measures should be taken to make it as effective as possible. Controls at harbours, airports and borders should be improved. The Wassenaar states may assist in this respect. Under West African conditions – with some very long borders that are seldom patrolled – a strictly controlled moratorium is beyond reach. Realistically, the ambition should be to make a significant change for the better. Under no circumstances should the best be allowed to stand in the way of the good.

If a moratorium country finds that it has a legitimate need for new weapons in the course of the moratorium period, it would have to give prior notification to the consultative mechanism to be set up by the moratorium countries. The notification should be submitted together with a justification for the planned acquisition. The other participating states may then request further information, or ask for a consultation on the matter. It is better to have a regulated procedure for exemptions, ensuring a degree of transparency, than to have no such regulation and leave it to the state in question to decide what to do in special circumstances.

Participation in the moratorium is voluntary and open to all African states. While it is highly desirable to start with a group of geographically contiguous countries the continuation could, in principle, involve any other African country, bordering on other members or not.

If a state wants to end its participation, it will inform the other participants immediately.

6. Associated Measures

The moratorium is a framework within which a number of measures should be taken to promote the objectives outlined above. The period when the moratorium is in force – the ‘period of grace’ – should be actively exploited, regionally and nationally, to mop up arms and curb illicit transactions.

So far, the application of incentive schemes to collect arms does not show any impressive record. The World Bank study of demobilization and disarmament in Africa noted that ‘weapons buy-back programmes have had limited medium-term impact in reducing the number of weapons circulating in countries which have (1) porous borders with countries with active weapons markets; (2) lack of capacity to enforce regulations on the open carrying and criminal use of weapons; and (3) a political, economic or security climate which enhances the security and economic value of owning and using a weapon’.¹¹ Quite often, this is the predicament.

This is not to say that incentive schemes cannot work. The context can be made more benign by pursuing combinations of approaches as indicated by the above quote from the World Bank report. The programmes themselves can, furthermore, be improved in the light of experiences and lessons that have been gained and drawn since the World Bank report was published. UNIDIR studies suggest that the following requirements are important for such programmes to be effective: (1) creating several well-protected weapons collection points; (2) an impartial 'no questions asked' policy; (3) competitive prices, although not too much above market value; and (4) the immediate destruction or secure storage of the weapons handed in.¹²

Often, compensation in kind should be offered to provide the right incentives and raise the likelihood that the buy-back programmes will work as intended. Money can be too convertible: if this is the only form of compensation, one weapon may simply be replaced by another. If the value of a weapon remains high for lack of an effective police force, lack of economic opportunity other than banditry, or because of dissatisfaction with the government or an opposing armed group, people may use money from a buy-back programme to purchase new weapons. At worst, the programme may then translate into enhanced arms trade.

In some specific contexts, the introduction of economic development projects and activities can encourage grassroots populations to give up their arms in exchange of employment for more sustainable livelihoods. This is the trend in Mali where the UNDP is supporting a series of transborder grassroots dialogues on security through inter-communal encounters.

Regarding the problem of illicit trafficking, the governments may undertake, unilaterally or jointly, a number of supplementary measures. They include, but are not limited, to the following:

- v organize, with the assistance of the UN and other interested states, an intensive subregional training programme for police forces and other uniformed services (customs officers, border patrol units, gendarmerie) to enhance their ability and skills to intercept and confiscate illicit transfers of light weapons. Donor agencies should provide the trainers, and the governments of the moratorium countries the trainees. The donors should cover all expenses during the training period.¹³

- v establish border-crossing 'hot lines' for fast and reliable communication with the authorities of all neighbouring states.

- v deploy, with the assistance of donor countries, modern technical means of border control. Simple planes and other relatively inexpensive technical means may enhance controls considerably.

- v introduce a strict licensing of weapons permits to individual citizens and establish a register of those individuals possessing such weapons.

- v develop an appropriate information and education programme for the civilian sectors of society to explain what is being done, what the objectives are, and how civil society may contribute to the endeavour.

As regards future acquisitions of weapons, the governments may wish to establish a regional arms register. The register would contain the relevant information on the procurement of the weapons needed for their uniformed forces, taking into account the existence of the global arms register of conventional arms maintained at the UN by the Secretary-General.

7. The Role of the UN

In the case of Mali, the UN Resident Coordinator (who is also the UN Resident Representative) was de facto authorized to coordinate what became a comprehensive strategy for peace. The case is unique. Resident Coordinators appointed by the Secretary-General but working within the UNDP structure, formally operate in the context of UNDP's basic agreement with the host country which, being mostly 25-30 years old, does not envisage any role in security affairs, not to mention in matters of armaments.

The explanation goes back to the UN involvement in Nicaragua, where small arms posed a significant problem. The UN Secretary-General became an advocate of the view that programmes of internal conflict prevention should include measures to control illicit flows of arms, and emphasized that in communications with African leaders. As a result, the President of Mali asked him for advice on how to tackle this problem in Mali and in West Africa more generally, upon which the advisory missions were dispatched. Since the host Government seized the initiative and asked the UN to involve itself in security as well as development issues, it could legitimately develop and coordinate a comprehensive programme that effectively facilitated the peace process in Mali. In order to be operational, this had to be the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator on the ground.

In addition to being a model case of integration of efforts at country level, Mali also became a pioneering example of cooperation between the UNDP and the disarmament branch of the UN. At the high-level consultation in New York in October 1996, which endorsed the principle that development aid might be used in support of the security first approach, Mali was the case in point.¹⁴ As described in a recently published book on the peace process in Mali, the UN 'oiled the machinery': while only a modest amount of money was used, the effect has been significant.¹⁵

An implementation mechanism has been designed to support the moratorium regime by addressing the related tasks of controlling and collecting, where possible, surplus and illicit arms. It will be the task of this institutional nucleus to facilitate the adoption of the moratorium and help expand its coverage. If this succeeds, another task – requiring more resources – will be needed to mobilize support for border controls and for the associated measures. In the beginning, priority might be given to cooperative measures such as joint training of uniformed services.

Enough money has come forward for the implementation mechanism to start its work at any time. The leadership of the mechanism might be seen in conjunction with the appointment of director of the UN regional disarmament centre in Lomé.¹⁶

By the time Mali and other West African countries declare the moratorium – as they will hopefully do this year – the United Nations should be prepared to call a

conference at an appropriately high level to give substance to the dialogue between the moratorium countries and the supplier/donor countries of the Wassenaar Arrangement. This conference could at the same time be a pledging conference in support of associated measures that should be taken while the moratorium is in force.

8. The Role of Donor Countries and NGOs

The implementation of the moratorium and its associated measures are critically dependent on donor support. Spearheaded by Norway, some donor governments are already funding the implementation mechanism. More will be needed for border controls and to finance the associated measures. This is where the dialogue with the Wassenaar countries can help out, especially in getting cooperative measures off the ground.¹⁷ National measures to mop up arms and build a secure environment for development may be supported by single donors or donor coalitions on a bilateral basis. Following the case of Mali, the Resident Coordinators should be put in a position to integrate efforts at country level. The implementation mechanism of the moratorium would facilitate coordination at the regional level.

Inspired by the anti-personnel land mines campaign, a great many NGOs are now turning their attention to the problems posed by small arms. Once again, the combination of NGOs and likeminded governments may score some significant successes. Convened by the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) and supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this conference is another example of this kind.

When trying to solve a complex, difficult problem, single measures by single agents seldom do. To succeed, different approaches and a variety of measures may have to be combined in a strategy supported by many likeminded actors. The moratorium has been designed with this in mind. Originating in Africa, where the problems are felt, supplier/donor countries are now joining in the effort – and so are the NGOs of NISAT.

As a framework of action, the moratorium is concrete enough to focus work on an unwieldy problem. Hopefully, it is promising enough to inspire regional arrangements also in other parts of the world which are severely affected by the proliferation of light weapons.

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1 The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not in any way commit the institutions with which they are affiliated.

2 See Brief 7 from the Bonn International Center for Conversion, and the annual editions of Jane's Infantry Weapons.

3 Cf. the communiqué from the UNIDIR/UNDP Conference in Bamako, November 1996, at which the Government of Mali first proposed the moratorium.

4 Development Assistance as a Means of Conflict Prevention, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 1998.

5 The term 'integrated' refers to the need to consider security and development issues in joint fashion. The term 'proportional' has no general definition. The meaning of it is that a part of the development aid should be used to create a secure environment for development: usually, it would be a modest part of the total aid flow, but enough to get development projects going.

6 Sverre Lodgaard, 'Managing Arms in Peace Processes', Policy Sciences, pp. 143–150, 1997, Kluwer Academic Publishers, the Netherlands.

7 In countries where state authority is beyond question, where law and order systems function very well and violent crime is at a low level – such as in Norway and Switzerland – weapons are widely distributed without creating much of a problem.

8 In a manner analogous to the structure of nuclear weapon-free zone arrangements. The members of a nuclear weapon-free zone undertake not to acquire nuclear arms or host the nuclear weapons of others, while the established nuclear weapon powers commit themselves to respect the status of the zone and not to assist any of the zonal states in acquiring a nuclear weapon capability.

9 In the scholarly literature on conflict prevention the importance of the security first approach has, in effect, been emphasized, even if it has not been so named. However, it was the advisory missions that brought it across to decision-makers, triggering a chain of steps to turn it into practice. In the course of that process, the approach has been further developed and operationalized.

10 The participating states of the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technology are: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

11 Demobilization and Reintegration of Military Personnel in Africa: The Evidence from Seven Country Case Studies, The World Bank, October 1993, para. 175.

12 These are mostly lessons drawn from post-conflict situations where arms have been collected in conjunction with demobilization and reintegration of combatants.

13 In Bosnia, there are 1,800 civilian police officers. In West Africa, 180 police trainers could do much to enhance the quality of local police units.

14 The Nordic UN Study stressed the need for integration of efforts at the country level. See The Nordic UN Reform Project 1996, Oslo: UD, 1997. Development Assistance as a Means of Conflict Prevention, *op. cit.*, stresses the need for integration at Headquarters as well.

Sometimes, international politics make it easier for single donors and coalitions of donors to seize the initiative than for the United Nations to do so. Then, integration and flexibility of efforts may be in high demand also at the donor end.

15 Robin-Edward Poulton and Ibrahim ag Youssouf, *A Peace of Timbuctu. Democratic Governance, Development and African Peacemaking*, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), Geneva, 1998.

16 The 1997 UN General Assembly decided to revitalize the regional centre and appoint a director. It would be natural to ask the new director to head the implementation mechanism as well, since implementation of the moratorium might be the most important disarmament task in this part of Africa anyhow.

17 This presupposes proper coordination at national level between the Wassenaar/donor country bureaucracies. Among the two contributions that are asked of these governments – to respect the provisions of the moratorium and to assist in its implementation – the first one is a bona fide matter for the export control agencies represented in the Wassenaar Arrangement while the second calls on support from the donor agencies.

Appendix

Some Common Names and Models of Small Arms

Technical Specifications

Category	Weapon	Undersized	Medium/Normal	Oversized	Oversized
1.	Pistol				
	Revolver	<.32 cal <6 mm	.38 to .40 cal 7 to 9 mm	>.41 > 10mm	Hollow point, teflon,liquid-filled
	Semi-automatic	<.32 cal <6mm	.38/.357, 7 to 9 mm	>.41 >10mm	Hollow point, teflon,liquid filled
2.	Shotgun				
	Single/bolt/pump	>20gage	16 to 12 gage	< 10 gage	Flachette
	Semi-automatic	>20gage	16 to 12 gage	< 10 gage	Flachette
3.	Sub-machine-gun				
		<.32 cal. <6 mm	.38 to .40 cal 7 to 9 mm	>.41 > 10 mm	Hollow point teflon,liquid-filled
4.	Rifle				
	Singe/bolt/pump	<5mm	5.1 to 8 mm	>9 mm	Dumdum,grenade
	Semi-automatic	<5 mm	5.1 to 8 mm	>9 mm	Dumdum,grenade
	Automatic	<5 mm	5.1 to 8 mm	>9 mm	Dumdum,grenade
	Special				Grenade
5.	Machine-gun				
	Light weight	<5 mm	5.54 to 8 mm	>9 mm	
	General purpose	<5 mm	5.54 to 8 mm	>9 mm	
	Heavy			10 to 16 mm	Grenade
	Auto cannons			>17 mm	Grenade
6.	Antitank,mortars, howitzers				
	Portable-1 man	<30 mm	30 to 40 mm	>41 mm	Flachette White
	Portable-crew	<60 mm	60 to 84 mm	>85 mm	phosphorus
	Automatic-crew	<30 mm	30 to 40 mm	>41 mm	Grenade
7.	Land mines	<200 g	200 g to 1.4 kg	>41 mm	Grenade
8.	Others		Flame throwers		

Category	Weapon	Undersized	Medium/Normal	Oversized
1.	Pistol Revolver Semi-automatic		Baretta/Glock/Tokarev	Eagle
2.	Shotgun Single/bolt/pump Semi-automatic		RS200/MOD12 SPAS/MOD1100	MAG10
3.	Sub-machine-gun		Uzi/StenMP5	
4.	Rifle Single/bolt/pump Semi-automatic Automatic Special		Sport/target/hunting M16/AK47/FN FAL M16/AK47/FN FAL Sniper	Sport/hunting Sniper
5.	Machine-gun Light weight General purpose Heavy Auto cannons		RPK/Bren/SAW M60/MG34/SG43	M2/Dsh K-38 M242/ZSU
6.	Antitank,mortars, howitzers Portable-1man Portable-crew Automatic-crew	Mortar	M79,M203 Mortar MK 19/AGS17	RPG,rifle grenade, recoilless rifle Mortar,howitzer
7.	Land mines PPMi-D	VS50 PMD6	POMZ/Type69/M18A1	MK7/M19/TM72
8.	Others		M202/LPO50	

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Moratoriums on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Conceptualization and Application to Central America

Edward J. Laurance

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, a series of mechanisms and institutions have been established through which the problems caused by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and major conventional weapons can be practically addressed. This has allowed the international community to turn its attention to an equally urgent matter, the hundreds of thousands of people who are being killed as a result of the proliferation, accumulation and unlawful use of small arms and light weapons.

The recent work of international organizations, national governments, NGOs and civil society has produced an emerging consensus that the internal conflicts now dominating the globe produce an unacceptable level of civilian casualties, disrupt economic, social and political development, and encourage violent solutions to conflict and the militarization of both civil society and governments. It is also clear that the problem is a global one requiring the attention of the international community.

This consensus has led to action. At the global level, the United Nations has gained considerable experience in dealing with light weapons as part of peace operations, conducted official inquiries regarding the illicit acquisition of these weapons, and provided assistance to states suffering from the indiscriminate use of these weapons. For example, in October 1993 the government of Mali requested the UN Secretary-General to assist in the collection of light weapons proliferating in that country. The requested assistance was provided in the form of an Advisory Mission in August 1994, which issued its report to the Secretary-General in November 1994. In February/March 1995 the same advisory mission visited Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. The result has been a relatively successful turn-in and collection of weapons, as part of the successful resolution of the conflict between Mali and the Tuareg minority, as well as a demonstration of how disarmament and human development are linked.

In September 1997 the UN General Assembly received report from an experts panel on the nature and causes of the excessive and destabilizing accumulations and transfer of these weapons, which concluded with a number of recommendations for action. The UN ECOSOC Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice conducted a fifty-country study on firearm regulation and conducted four regional hearings on a proposed set of principles which could lead to reduction in casualties from firearms.

The campaign to ban anti-personnel land mines resulted in the signing of a treaty by more than 120 countries and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the NGO International Campaign to Ban

Land Mines. This success has demonstrated that a weapons-specific focus can galvanize public and governmental support to alleviate human suffering.

At the regional level, in November 1997 the Organization of American States agreed to a Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking of Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials. In June 1997 the European Union agreed to an EU Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms. At the national level, many countries have implemented a wide variety of programs to address the negative effects of the availability and indiscriminate use of these weapons. These include programs to enhance border controls, improve registration and licensing procedures, improve security of weapons storage sites, and develop voluntary weapons collection and destruction programs.

NGOs have also been active, creating networks of scholars and activists, producing case studies of both effects and solutions, engaging in field work that has resulted in the illumination of negative effects and illicit arms acquisition, and hosting workshops that bring together governments, NGOs and civil society. More recently the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) was launched in December 1997. In January 98 a web site, the Preparatory Committee for a Campaign on Small Arms and Light Weapons (Prep Com) was launched for the purpose of bringing together a critical mass of NGOs on this issue.¹

In the aforementioned UN Small Arms Panel report, the experts specifically addressed the concept of a moratorium as one of the policy tools available to deal with the problems associated with these weapons. The panel recommended that '(i) The United Nations should encourage the adoption and implementation of regional or subregional moratoriums, where appropriate, on the transfer and manufacture of small arms and light weapons, as agreed upon by the States concerned'.² While this reference was made with the effort to create such a moratorium in West Africa in mind, no attempt was made to operationalize the concept. It is to this task that we now turn, testing its applicability to the region of Central America.

The Concept of a Moratorium

The dictionary definition for moratorium is 'a deferment or delay of any action'. Other ways to state this concept include suspension, reprieve, respite, halt, stay, postponement, cessation, abeyance, standstill and letup. In arms control history, the concept has been formally used in conjunction with suspending the testing of nuclear weapons. As for conventional weapons, there have been several attempts by supplier states to 'defer or delay' arms shipments to specific countries and regions but without formally using the concept of a moratorium, which has the distinct flavor of temporary action while something else takes place. Moratorium-like events that come to mind include: the restricting of supplies to the Middle East by the UK, France and the U.S. from 1950–55; COCOM; and the treaty ending the war in Vietnam, where the 'two South Vietnamese parties agreed not to accept the introduction of armaments, munitions, and war materiel into South Vietnam, except as required for periodic replacement on a piece-for-piece basis of items that were destroyed, damaged, worn out, or used up after the cease-fire'.³

Also relevant to this conceptual review are those few efforts taken by recipient states to restrict the flow of conventional arms into their region. There was a short-lived attempt in 1974 by eight Andean states, the Declaration of Ayacucho, which called for conditions for an effective

limitation of arms. It failed for the well-known reasons, that states could not agree on basic collective security questions and the Cold War protagonist suppliers were not about to stop exporting weapons for political purposes. The CFE treaty is an agreement among recipients that has been successful in lowering levels of armaments, but would not be seen as a delay or deferment. In sum, what history there is on recipient states voluntarily agreeing to halt or postpone arms acquisitions and production to their region is rare and related to larger conventional weapons. This history holds few lessons for the current international environment for several reasons. First, controlling larger conventional weapons is fraught with all of the well-known problems which have prevented any meaningful arms control action throughout history. Second, this class of weapon is no longer utilized in most of the internal conflicts raging throughout the world, as cross-border traditional wars have been replaced by internal conflicts. Third, it is small arms and light weapons which are actually killing and injuring the civilians, ninety percent of all casualties in today's conflict. This class of weapon presents a different set of problems for moratoriums, since they are distributed more widely through societies, readily available, easier to export illicitly, and do not lend themselves to transparency. These weapons are at the heart of every country's national security establishment, and cannot be dealt with by using the traditional tools of disarmament and arms control.

Given the lack of precedent for moratoriums in general, and the specific challenge of constructing such an arrangement with the very weapons needed for every country's security, it was encouraging that in November 1996 twelve West African countries launched the idea of putting such an instrument in place. This moratorium would be a declaratory measure of a specific duration, which could be extended, to cease the import, export and manufacture of light weapons.

Criteria for a Successful Moratorium

The feasibility or success of the West African or any other moratorium that is proposed will depend on a critical set of factors

Goals

A moratorium must have a goal that can be achieved as a result of the moratorium being put in place. As an example the stated goal in the West African case is to 'create a framework within which a secure environment for socio-economic development can be obtained'. This goal is common to other regions, and is analogous to the recent land mine campaign. The de-miners wanted a treaty that would stop the production, use and export of land mines, lest the de-mining and subsequent development efforts be useless in the face of more land mines being deployed. There may be more immediate goals, such as mopping up weapons after a peace process, creating incentives for the non-use and/or non-possession of such weapons, stopping conflicts, or prevent such conflicts from occurring in the first place.

Inherent in such goals is the causal link between implementing the moratorium and a reduction of the violence that has disrupted and prevented the desired development. This causal link must be realistic, i.e., there must be some consensus that the weapons are a big part of the problem. It may be enough to agree that a moratorium may not guarantee the achievement of a goal like that of the West African case, but without it nothing can proceed in the way of development. It is not

necessary that all states agreeing to implement the moratorium have identical goals. But at a minimum these goals must be seen as complementary.

Level of integration among moratorium states

The success of the moratorium is also dependent on how well integrated the states are on several dimensions. Geography is important. Are the states contiguous? Are there distinct boundaries between the 'region' of the moratorium and neighboring 'regions'? This will be important in implementing the mechanics of any moratorium. How similar are their governments, political and economic systems, and socio-economic situation? Are they of similar size or does one large country dominate the region? Do the states share a common history that would promote cooperation in general? This is particularly critical for the history of the armed forces in each state. Does cooperative behavior exist in non-security sectors?

Demand for small arms and light weapons

A moratorium will be more successful the more the states share a common set of demands for weapons. For example, it would be difficult for State A to sign on to a moratorium if it was the only one with a high level of conflict among groups within its borders. The same would be true for other demand factors such as the presence of either drug use, dealing or trafficking routes, or high levels of crime creating a demand for weapons to protect one's life and property. To the extent that root causes of violence such as poverty, repression and inequality are roughly equal among the moratorium states, the chances for success improve. States can also vary widely in terms of the presence of a gun culture. Here too some semblance of balance among states will make a moratorium more likely to succeed. It will be critical to assess the relative security of each of the members.

Quantity, quality, distribution, controls and use of small arms and light weapons

Critical to the success of a moratorium is the commonality among those factors directly related to the weapons themselves. One criterion for success will be that the moratorium does not hurt one state excessively more than the others. This will require an assessment of the rough military balance between them, and the ability of each state to maintain internal security with the weapons in their inventory. States, which have distributed arms during a civil war, will have more available for illicit acquisition once a moratorium is in effect. States more dependent than others for outside supply of operational items such as ammunition may be more resistant to the moratorium and its implementation than the state with plentiful stocks. Finally, the capacity for secure storage of these weapons, and the level of corruption among military and police forces which control them, will be important. It would be tragic if the import and export of weapons was halted, only to be recirculated in the region by corrupt officials.

Exceptions for legitimate defense needs

A successful moratorium will be one that takes into account the changing security needs of states, as well as the natural evolution of weapons stocks. In the West African case, if a participating state 'finds that it has a legitimate need for new weapons in the course of the moratorium period, it would have to give prior notification to the consultative mechanism'. Weapons wear out, stocks can be depleted through training, or a threat unknown at the inauguration of the moratorium can emerge. A moratorium must be able to survive these challenges.

Capacity to execute and implement the moratorium

The success of a moratorium will depend critically on a set of factors related to the states' capacity to implement the moratorium. The presence of operating institutions among the moratorium states will significantly enhance the likelihood of success, given positive indicators on the other dimensions mentioned above. Even without such institutions, political will and a set of situational factors predicting towards success may result in the creation of an institution that may well succeed in fostering implementation. In this case such an institution will need resources for the technology training and personnel required.

The Case of Central America

Overview of the small arms and light weapons situation

The Central America states of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama are awash with small arms and light weapons in the millions. A majority of these weapons are not under government control. The weapons are military-style weapons, such as assault rifles, hand grenades, rocket launchers and mortars, originally designed for use by state-controlled armed forces.

These weapons poured into the region from a variety of sources in the 1970s and 1980s, due mainly to the basic tensions produced by the Cold War. Major sources included:

- v United States (all governments in the region and the Contras)
- v Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries (Nicaragua, oppositionist forces such as the FSLN and FMLN)
- v Israel (Nicaragua, Guatemala)
- v Vietnam (U.S. weapons left over from the Vietnam War)
- v Democratic People's Republic of Korea (via Cuba)

v Cuba (major conduit for Soviet bloc weapons).

While some weapons still flow into this region from the United States, the major acquisition mode is one of diffusion and circulation within the region. Much of this trade is illicit. This illicit or black-market trade is enhanced by the globalization of the economy, making it easier to ship goods of any kind more easily.

The illicit circulation of these weapons is highly correlated to the drug trade in three ways.

v Colombia and other South American states are a major source of drugs for the U.S. market. Central America is a major thoroughfare for this traffic. It is estimated that 43% of the South American cocaine exported by air transits Central America. Guatemala has over 3,000 airstrips available for this purpose. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency estimates that at any given time 50 tons of cocaine is awaiting transport to Mexico by land, sea or air.⁴ Given that the drug trafficking network is illegal and under attack from legitimate governments, weapons are essential to the members of this network. Much of the armed conflict taking place in the Central American states is related to drug trafficking.

v The clandestine networks developed for the drug trade is now being used for weapons as well.

v The billions of dollars in drug money acquired in this region means that money is no object in acquiring the weapons needed to maintain the trade. In addition, this attracts illegal weapons dealers both in the region and internationally. The drug cartels have become major importers of light weapons.

The terrain of this region is characterized by naturally porous borders. For example, the border between Guatemala and Mexico has one stretch of 480 kilometers of jungle. There is practically no surveillance of the El Salvador–Guatemala and Honduras–El Salvador borders, mainly due to the difficult terrain. The many clandestine airstrips and small ports in the region add to the difficulty of monitoring and controlling illicit trade in drugs and weapons.

The demand for weapons by these new types of actors – street gangs, drug cartels, etc. – has seen an increase in attacks on state arsenals, armed forces and police, for the purpose of acquiring weapons. There are also lingering political conflicts in Nicaragua and Guatemala that also create an incentive to use this source of supply.

Countries in this region suffer from an underdeveloped justice system, including inadequate numbers of uncorrupt and efficient police and ineffective judicial systems. These countries in this region also suffer from serious economic problems. Three of them – Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua – are just emerging from periods of war and violence that wrecked havoc on their citizens.

The region is also characterized by the presence of a gun culture, or as a Mexican official put it, a ‘fondness for guns’. This culture predates and has been exacerbated by the recent upsurge in small arms and light weapons in this region.

Problems resulting from the excessive accumulation and availability of small arms and light weapons

v Criminal acts with military-style weapons. In Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and increasingly Costa Rica, the increased availability of military-style light weapons has made crime the number one social problem. Car hijacking, kidnapping, assaults, robberies and trafficking of contraband are commonplace. The increase in lethality that comes with military-style weapons has emboldened criminals, who often are better armed than police or military forces.

v Promotion of violent solutions to conflicts. The widespread abundance of weapons in this class results in violence often being the first option for conflict resolution, frustrating efforts to restore peace, lawfulness and stability in a non-violent manner. Disputes such as those over land, economic inequality and human rights are increasingly settled by use of force. In Guatemala the distribution of arms to the Civilian Patrols in Guatemala (20,000 weapons to 400,000 people) has resulted in a preference for solving problems by force, a process that the United Nations and the government of Guatemala is finding difficult to reverse. This has also been termed 'mental militarization', where violent responses to social problems are the norm.

v Arming of private citizens and development of private security groups. The above two problems have led to a 'cycle of violence' in which citizens protect themselves either with their own arms or hire one of an increasing number of private security organizations. In Guatemala over 4,500 neighborhood groups have emerged, as well as 33 authorized and 115 unauthorized private security groups.⁵ In 1992 Guatemala loosened its gun possession laws so that more citizens could protect themselves. The sheer number of such weapons in the hands of individuals complicates any solution based on disarmament by voluntary weapons collection.

v Emboldening the disaffected. A common characteristic of this region is economic deprivation and inequitable development. The availability of arms has allowed citizens disaffected and impatient for promised progress to use weapons for a variety of purposes, including crime, protection, or commercial purposes.

v Threat to democratic political development. Most states in this region are either trying to nurture a new democratic political system (El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua) or trying to prevent their system from declining into an authoritarian state. The cycle of violence and the growing and omnipresent gun culture have allowed and in some cases fostered the increased use of state violence and repression. This threatens to lead to either the development of or turn to violence by oppositionist forces, just when such forces have been disbanded (e.g., Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala).

v Economic development stalled or threatened. The increasing violence in this region has seen economic development projects either canceled or postponed. One reason is insecurity, in that assets supplied to recipient states are confiscated by criminal activities. Another factor is that crime and violence disrupt the infrastructure needed for such projects, e.g., roads and public transportation. In addition this lack of security and the need for the state to respond with security forces, means that fewer resources are available for development and increasingly states cannot meet the basic needs of its people.

v Increasing harm to civilians. All of the above consequences have impacted mostly on civilians, in two ways. First, the number of people killed and injured from armed violence has increased significantly in the past few years. In El Salvador the number is estimated at 20,000 since the peace was signed in 1992, a rate higher than during the war itself. In addition to the number of civilians affected, the lethality of the weapons insures that the injuries are more severe, creating huge strains on the health care systems of most countries in the region.

Options for Action

It is clear that the availability of small arms and light weapons in Central America has created serious obstacles as these countries attempt to advance their economic, social and political development. This is particularly tragic in this region since three states – Nicaragua in 1991, El Salvador in 1992, and Guatemala in 1996 – have successfully ended civil wars and put in place democratic political systems. With the end of the Cold War superpower competition ended and with it the end of any serious external threats to the region. The violence perpetrated with these weapons threatens to reverse this progress, and certainly prevents significant movement forward.

Action at the national level

Given their lack of resources, and the decline in international political interest since the end of the Cold War, states acting on their own have found it difficult to mount successful campaigns and policies to deal with the effects of these weapons. Despite a formal disarmament component in each of the three UN-brokered peace processes, weapons abound and remain very available. Both El Salvador and Nicaragua have developed voluntary weapons collection programs (goods for guns) but lack the funds to widen their scope and, more importantly, mount national campaigns which link these programs to economic and social development. For the first time in recent history Costa Rica has felt the impact of these weapons and has developed a national weapons collection program, which awaits governmental approval. The porous borders of this region, and years of free-flowing weapons traffic have created norms that make national solutions challenging.

The Organization of American States

All of the Central American countries are members of the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS has begun to address the problem of arms and conflict from two different perspectives. First, the Inter-American Drug Abuse and Control Commission of the OAS is developing model regulations for the control of the smuggling of weapons and explosives and its linkage to drug trafficking in the Inter-American region. A second OAS initiative is the signing in November 1997 of a Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking of Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, signed in November 1997. The convention requires each OAS state to establish a national firearms control system and a register of manufacturers, traders, importers and exporters of these commodities. It also calls for the establishment of a national body to interact with other states and an OAS advisory committee. It

also calls for the standardization of national laws and procedures within the OAS, and ensuring effective control of borders and ports.

While this treaty is very welcome, there are several reasons why it will have minimal effect on Central America in the short run. First, to a large extent Central America is a transit zone. If the effort to combat the drug problem is concentrated at the supply and demand ends of the chain, few resources will be applied to this region except to halt this traffic. Second, this treaty is all about illicit trafficking. It does not address the legal trade, which in many cases is responsible for some of the negative effects described above. For example, it will not address actions by states which exacerbate the problems, such as distributing arms to irresponsible private security organizations, or para-militaries with scores to settle. Most importantly, the OAS includes the United States. Any arms-related actions will invariably involve U.S. national interests, especially the domestic politics related to the gun control debate in the U.S. To the extent that the U.S. has an interest in arms exports to the region, this will also have an impact on how Central America deals with this problem through the OAS.

Demilitarization

With the end of the Cold War, the effort to demilitarize Central America became a possible option. Costa Rica has long been without an army, and the efforts to militarize their police force during the 1980s have been reversed. Panama has now disbanded its army as well. The elimination of armies in this region has been the goal of Oscar Arias, Nobel Peace Prize winner and former president of Costa Rica.⁶

The argument for developing civilian security institutions is based on the assumption that democratic states want security and civilian control over the military they create. Since security now exists for the most part in Central America, the only question is how to achieve civilian control. Some states are resisting change or reforming slowly (Guatemala and Honduras). Others have experienced peace processes (El Salvador and Nicaragua) which have led to military reductions, civilian control measures and collective security based on military cooperation. A third route to civilian control is the abolition of militaries and collective security based on civilian cooperation (Costa Rica, Panama). This last option can be accomplished by redefining security as human security, consolidating democracy, using institutions such as the Central American Security Commission or some new institution, providing for effective demobilization of soldiers, strengthening national and regional police, and new emphases in U.S. policy.⁷

Proponents of the demilitarization concept appreciate the resistance from professional militaries in this region, and the elites closely associated with them. It has long been the dominant political culture in this region that militaries have been the ultimate guarantor of security. Because crime and violence with military weapons have increased recently, the movement towards this option has not moved forward very quickly.

The moratorium option

The situation with regard to addressing the problems of the availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons appears to be as follows. There is a recognition that this situation is hampering

efforts to develop this region economically and politically. But no state by itself has the resources to deal with the problem, which in any case is regional in scope, if not global. The OAS effort is a promising framework but only deals with illicit trafficking and production and must take into account states not from the region, especially the United States. While the argument for demilitarization is persuasive, the rising level of armed violence, while not based on purely political conflicts, has prevented militaries from turning the security function over to civilians and has pushed the military to take on new functions related to human security. It appears that this region may be ripe for an interim measure related to lowering the availability of weapons through some sort of deferment or delay of weapons export, import, acquisition or production. With this in mind, a proposal for a moratorium is outlined and evaluated below.

v Nature of a moratorium. Given the traditional role of the military in this region, the moratorium should focus only on those weapons causing the threats to human security. This would be small arms and light weapons, not the tanks, artillery and aircraft that some of the militaries still retain either as a mark of sovereignty or for potential external threats. Little production of weapons exists in this region, although there are some assault rifle production facilities and several ammunition plants. While overall budgets have declined, militaries still acquire new weapons, even if for modernization. Some militaries are pushing for an enhanced role in human security and may be asking for new light weapons for this function. A moratorium would require them to make do with current inventories. One complication in this region is that the United States is engaged in a major drug interdiction effort, which involves exporting weapons to militaries involved in this effort. Any moratorium would also build on the provisions of the OAS treaty already in place.

v Goals of a moratorium. As with West Africa, the overarching goal would be creating an environment for socio-economic development. While the histories of these states vary somewhat, the fact that three of them have experienced an end to civil wars provides a commonality that is promising, i.e., there is little disagreement on the need for socio-economic development. There is also an emerging consensus that the accomplishment of this goal would be enhanced through a reduction in the availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Working against this commonality is that each state may choose a different route to socio-economic development. This is especially true of Nicaragua, where the debate centering on the negative aspects of 'neo-liberalism' continues. Any moratorium, especially associated measures such as weapons collection, must take these differences into account. The states would also agree on the overall goal of getting weapons out of the hands of criminal gangs and drug cartels. It is true that states would be free to purchase major conventional weapons, thereby using scarce resources needed for development. However, a strong commitment to development, backed by increased demands from civil society, would make such acquisitions less likely.

v Level of integration among moratorium states. The geography of the region lends itself to the success of a moratorium. In the south there is a natural division, with Colombia experiencing major internal war and not a likely candidate for participation in a regional moratorium. This is not to say that arms exports across this boundary are not a problem. The same can be said for the northern boundary of the region. Mexico is not part of Central America, although the conflict in Chiapas on the Guatemalan and Belize border is fueled somewhat by arms from Central America. Working against the success of any regional effort are the porous borders and the numerous airstrips and small ports that can handle large quantities of small arms and light weapons and are all but invisible given current resources.

The similarity of these countries with regard to size, history and political system (emerging democracies) in the region also contributes to a level of integration conducive to a successful moratorium effort. While the militaries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras are more reluctant than others to reduce their role in society, they all agree that traditional national security concerns (external threats) are minimal at this point. They also share a common interest in dealing with the current instability associated with the availability and circulation of small arms and light weapons. Since the Contadora and Esquipulas processes began in the late 1980s, the states of Central America now cooperate with each other on a variety of issues at unprecedented levels.

v Demand for small arms and light weapons. The demand for small arms and light weapons among the militia and police forces of these states is fairly equal and low. Unfortunately most all of the states have to deal with drug trafficking and its associated requirement for weapons. Also, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala have undergone downsizing as a result of the peace processes, with many very serviceable weapons and associated ammunition put in storage. All states are equally hard pressed for resources to deal with roughly equal human security problems. As for comparative gun cultures, some unevenness occurs on this dimension, although even this is changing as the right to carry a military weapon is being offset by the magnitude of the growing violence in the region.

v Quantity, quality, distribution, control and use of weapons. Any moratorium put into effect in Central America is unlikely to hurt one state more than any other. Stocks are plentiful for identified threats, the modernity and quality is roughly equal, and larger weapons that carry some prestige value are not included in the moratorium. While some militaries may occasionally speak of imbalances in the region, these are rare occurrences. On the contrary, militaries in this region have recognized that a basic level of security exists, and have been pushing for new missions related to human security as a route to continued existence and involvement. There is significant cooperation among countries on military matters. A 'soccer war' in the current environment is highly unlikely. States in this region do vary on the important dimension of corruption and unlawful behavior in their police and military forces. This will be a problem in countries like Nicaragua and Guatemala, where citizens will be reluctant to participate in any associated measures such as weapons collection which will result in a monopoly of force resting with those who would repress or abuse their human rights. This reinforces the point that any moratorium must be closely linked with socio-economic development, lest the result be citizens worse off than before the moratorium.

A factor that works against the success of a moratorium is the fact that there is little production and import of small arms and light weapons in the region, mainly due to the extensive supplies from the Cold War period still circulating in the region or in storage. In other words, it may be too easy for states to comply with a moratorium. Any proposal for a moratorium should be preceded by a declaration (not necessarily public) as to stocks, to get some idea as to how equal the burden (and ease of compliance) will be.

v Exceptions for legitimate defense needs. The improved nature of military-to-military relations in the recent period should insure that states could sign on to a moratorium with assurances that their legitimate modernization or unpredicted security needs could be handled by a consultative mechanism.

v Capacity to execute and implement a moratorium. Unlike the previous era dominated by outside powers, in recent years the states of this region have worked hard to develop region-

specific institutions. Some of these are directly related to the weapons problem, like the Central American Security Commission (CASC). Long before the OAS treaty was developed, in 1992 the CASC developed a Draft Regional Agreement for Mutual Legal Assistance With Respect to Illegal Trafficking in Weapons.

In 1995 the governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama signed the framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America. This treaty has sections on the Rule of Law, Security of Individuals and Their Property, and Regional Security. It also establishes a Security Commission, which contains a Central American Security Information and Communication Mechanism. It calls for a 'regime of periodic reports and a system for registering weapons and the transfer of weapons,' as well as information on foreign military advisers and budgets.

As for the criminal aspect of weapons, these same governments signed the Central American Treaty on the Recovery and Return of Stolen, Appropriated or Illicitly Retained Vehicles. This treaty signals regional cooperation that could be turned toward weapons in a moratorium effort. This is further evidence that a high level of institutional development resides in the region.

Overall Assessment of a Central American Moratorium Option

As an illustration of how one might bring together the above analysis, the following chart depicts a very rough and preliminary rating for the likelihood of success on each of the dimensions. (The ratings for other regions are left to the reader.) The Central American region is strongest on institutional capacity, and more than meets the minimum requirements with regard to goals, level of integration, demand and the ability of the states to agree on exceptions. There is less support on the dimensions of the quantity and quality of weapons in the region. The large numbers of weapons circulating or stored in the region do not provide a natural incentive for these states to use a moratorium per se as the instrument by which they will address the agreed upon problems associated with the availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, something must be done with regard to the drug problem, where some states have agreements to cooperate with the U.S., cooperation that may include the transfer of arms.

This paper has made an argument in favor of some sort of policy initiative that can galvanize Central American states to begin to deal with the problems associated with small arms and light weapons. A moratorium meets some of the requirements of such a policy, in that it is directly related to the weapons themselves and is of a duration designed to spur specific action described in the goals of the moratorium. Given the weapons environment in the region, it would also be easy enough for states to comply for a year or two with minimal burdens. It would not satisfy those advocating a demilitarized Central America but it would give all parties experience that might lead to a reassessment of that option.

Central West Central Caribbean America Africa Africa States

Shared Goals ++

Level of Integration ++

Demand ++

Weapons Environment -

Exceptions ++

Institutional Capacity +++

A moratorium would be the appropriate instrument if it were coupled with a regional effort to simultaneously: 1) create new norms regarding the possession and use by civilians of military-style weapons; 2) conduct an all-out well-funded effort to mop up the weapons left over from the wars of the 1980s; and 3) insure that the legitimate owners of these weapons, the military and police forces, use them with due respect for human rights and in accordance with international humanitarian law.

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1 The accelerating number of activities at the national, regional and global levels, including the NISAT, which address the problems associated with small arms and light weapons, are listed and described on the Prep Com web site. The address of the web site is <http://www.prep.com.org>.

2 Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. Report # A/52/298/ from the Secretary-General to the UN General Assembly (New York: United Nations; 27 August 1997), p. 23.

3 Barton, John H. and Lawrence D. Weller (Eds.), *International Arms Control: Issues and Agreements* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp. 284–285.

4 Cristopher Louise, *Light Weapons Proliferation in Central America: A Preliminary Report on the Militarisation of Civil Society in El Salvador, Guatemala and Chiapas*. Prepared for the British American Security Information Council's Project on Light Weapons. July 1996.

5 Ibid.

6 The major work on the demilitarization option is by Adam Isacson, *Altered states: Security and Demilitarization in Central America* (1997). A Joint Project of the Center for International Policy (Washington) and the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress (Costa Rica). Much of the following assessment is based on this work

7 Ibid., Chapter 7: 'What Can Be Done?'

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Regional Arrangements to Constrain the Flow of Arms into Central Africa

Olu Adeniji

Background

According to the subdivision of Africa by the Organisation of African Unity, the Central African subregion consists of 11 countries, namely, Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe. The mere enumeration of these countries, which include many in the Great Lakes region, conjures one inescapable fact about the subregion. It is no doubt the most turbulent in the continent. In the last five years alone, five of the countries have witnessed violent conflicts. The bloodiest was the genocide in Rwanda, which in 1994 alone claimed between half a million and one million lives. Besides this, however, conflicts that have also led to large numbers of dead and mass flow of refugees and displaced persons have occurred in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Congo. While the conflict in the Central African Republic has been relatively modest, it has nevertheless led to severe disruptions, calling for a regional peacekeeping force which is being considered for transformation into a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Mention ought also to be made of the festering and long-lasting conflict in Angola, which seems to have defied a final settlement and is still capable of erupting into violence.

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

The post-cold war explosion of United Nations peacekeeping operations has been well reflected by the number of such operations in the Central African subregion. There have been four operations; in Angola, Burundi, Chad and Rwanda. A fifth is being contemplated for the Central African Republic. Besides, the joint United Nations and OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes was very active in the attempted mediator processes in Zaire when the Alliance of the Democratic Forces of Congo - Zaire launched its attack to dislodge the Mobutu regime, as well as in the Congo Republic during the armed conflict between the government of President Lissouba and the militias of Dennis Nguesso.

Causes of Conflicts

The causes of conflicts in the subregion as in other parts of the continent are many and need to be briefly examined, especially as Central Africa has witnessed some of the most extreme of the age-long antagonisms that have been responsible for post-independence conflicts in Africa. The postcolonial era has demonstrated the fragility of states, which were artificially created by the imperial powers. The resulting multi-ethnic states, which sometimes comprised ethnic groups with long precolonial rivalries, became vulnerable. The nature of the postcolonial pattern of governance further worsened the situation. The generalised prebendalist approach to politics whereby political power is seen as an access to the country's resources for personal enrichment

provoked the zero-sum political game.¹ Since group well-being is seen to depend on access to political power by one of their own, to be in opposition is seen a fortiori as exclusion from the benefit of national resources. In the non-transparent and non-democratic environment of African politics, frustration with the impossibility of changing the government through the electoral process often led to armed insurgency as the only means to dislodge the ruling group. Even in the post-cold war era of democratisation, the holding of elections has not automatically ushered into most African countries an era of transparency, full respect for human rights and for rights of minorities.

Central Africa perhaps more than other subregions also witnessed the injection of the ideological competition to promote proxy local wars. Starting with the crisis in the Congo in the early 1960s, the ideological inflammation of crises in the subregion was particularly severe in the 1970s and 1980s when in addition to its own local problems, it was also used to play out the battle for and against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Part of the legacy of that period is the continued circulation of large quantities of arms that had been supplied to the region then. Light weapons and small arms, as has been aptly pointed out, have a long 'shelf life' since by their uncomplicated nature they require little maintenance.²

Neighbourly Interventions

Another significant fall out from the cold war era is the legacy of reciprocal interference in each other's internal affairs by states in the subregion. While the extreme case of aggression against a neighbouring state was apartheid South Africa's incursions into Angola, Zaire under President Mobutu was known to be a close collaborator with successive American governments in the delivery of arms to Savimbi and his UNITA movement against the legitimate government of the MPLA of Angola. In the post-cold war era, President Mobutu collaborated with the French in support of one faction in the Rwandese crisis, and Zairean territory was used by Rwandese insurgents to launch attacks on that country after the take-over by the Rwandese Patriotic Front in 1994. It is also widely known that the Congo Republic under President Patrick Lissouba permitted UNITA to use the town of Pointe Noire as a supply base. Thus it was no surprise that about 1,000 Angolan troops joined the Cobra militia of Sassou Nguesso in its final assault on the forces of the then legitimate government of President Lissouba, which were ultimately routed. It was also no surprise that Rwandese troops were part and parcel of the forces led by Laurent Kabila that overran the forces of the government of President Mobutu.

These cross-border interventions have had a profound effect on another major factor of conflict generation in the subregion, namely the flow of arms. While it is a truism that arms by themselves do not necessarily cause conflicts, it is also a fact that their ready availability contribute to the intensity and duration of conflicts. Indeed, such ready availability, especially in quantities that can be guaranteed to insurgents by the government of a neighbouring state, often escalates what should be peaceful negotiations into armed conflicts.³ In describing internal conflicts in which small arms and light weapons are used, Evan Luard had made the same point that often the seriousness of such wars was hugely intensified by external interventions. In a few cases, he noted, external influence is mainly responsible for there being a war at all.⁴

The situation of antagonism between neighbouring states in Central Africa creates an ideal environment for the free flow of arms. The lack of co-operation by the security outfits and border authorities facilitates the illicit movement of arms. When added to the lack of adequate national controls on imports due to the poor training of border and customs officials as well as widespread corruption among them, it should be no surprise that there has been such free flow of

arms in the subregion. Though the small arms and light weapons, which are the instruments of death and destruction, originate from outside the subregion, their intra-subregional flow is quite significant. This is because of the circuitous routes deliberately charted by illicit arms dealers who take advantage of the large and porous borders as well as complicity of governments in funnelling arms into neighbouring states. Some of the arms dealers contrive to own citizenship in an African country and thus conduct part of their business from offices in Zaire, South Africa or Angola.⁵ It should be noted, moreover, that the original sources of supply have become vastly diversified since the end of the cold war. The main suppliers during the cold war era had been the major powers, particularly the superpowers, to their client states and sub-state actors. The end of the cold war, however, added a new dimension. The weapons that became surplus to the needs of the alliances were henceforth available for sale even by the smaller members of the alliances. As a result, the arms bazaar has acquired many sources of supply, fuelling the unrestrained acquisition by some governments for the suppression of their own people or for supporting other causes in neighbouring states, and also facilitating the acquisition of weapons by non-state entities.

The management of weapons in the post-conflict environment is already posing a great challenge to leaders in the subregion who are anxious to control the likely cycle of personal, national and subregional insecurity. Small arms and light weapons have already begun to show in the subregion the corrosive effect on civil society by the creation of the vicious circle between acute sense of personal insecurity and higher demand for this category of arms.⁶ They pose potent danger to the daily lives of people in a manner unimaginable by those who lived in the epicentre of the heydays of the superpower arms race. Besides their use for the high ideals which often motivate those who lead the various struggles in the subregion, small arms and light weapons are also the instruments used extensively by criminals and armed gangs to perpetuate their atrocities and thus create fears and uncertainties.

Economic and Social Consequences of Arms Flow into the Subregion

The economic and social consequences of the accumulation of arms have been well documented, particularly in the expert study commissioned by the United Nations. While the focus of the study was the arms race of the superpowers and the two military alliances, the study nevertheless also touched on the effect on the developing countries of the cold war-induced regional arms races. In the Central African subregion the large inflow of small arms and light weapons has had profound effects which go beyond the immediate impact of the death and destruction caused by conflicts. The constant condition of instability in the most affected countries has been a major cause of their inability to build national structures of governance for the promotion of peace and security which are in turn necessary preconditions for sustainable development. According to the World Bank, armed conflict is responsible for the poverty of nearly half the population of Africa, at least 250 million people.⁷ These conflicts are responsible for the overwhelming number of refugees in Central Africa. They are also responsible for brutalising the children and very young people who are often not just the victims of wars, but also active participants through their recruitment into the fighting forces. It is obvious that if countries in Central Africa are to have any chance of realising sustainable economic and social development, they must first tackle the proliferation of arms, because so long as the weapons are in circulation, the potential for conflicts erupting or resuming will remain.

Subregional Economic Integration

Besides the impact at the national level, it is also noticeable that subregional co-operation is least developed in Central Africa. Since the creation of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) very little progress has been made in the promotion of regional economic integration. Indeed, ECCAS is hardly mentioned in the context of subregional economic groupings in Africa like ECOWAS and SADC. Without the formal structures of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the South African Development Community (SADC), which provide the background for subregional security mechanisms, Central Africa has had to resort to the creation of a United Nations-sponsored ad hoc structure.

Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

In the absence of a mechanism to deal with subregional security issues, states in the Central African subregion requested the United Nations Secretary-General to set up a Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. Following General Assembly resolution A/res/46/37B of 6 Dec.1991, the Secretary-General set up the Standing Advisory Committee on 28 May 1992. Its aim is to enable the states to develop confidence-building measures, disarmament, and development in the subregion. Consisting of all the 11 states in the subregion, the Standing Advisory Committee has engaged in the development of measures in the field of preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-building. It has also arranged the training of personnel of its member states in peacekeeping activities to promote more active participation in peace operations.⁸

Non-Aggression Pact

One significant project of the Standing Committee was its preparation in 1993 of a Non-Aggression Pact. It was signed at the first summit of the Heads of State and Government in Yaoundé in July 1996, by nine states. Angola and Rwanda have still not signed. In the pact, member states undertook to refrain in their mutual relations from the threat or use of force or aggression, and to settle their differences by peaceful means. Each party undertook to refrain from committing, encouraging, or supporting acts of hostility or aggression against other parties, and to ensure that acts of hostility or aggression are not committed from its territory by resident or non-resident aliens against other states parties. The pact is yet to come into force, not having been ratified by the required seven state parties.

Opportunity for Fresh Good-Neighbourly Co-operation

Regrettable as the most recent series of conflicts (as indeed the preceding ones) are, the consequential changes of the governments of Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congo Republic as well as the ongoing internal reconciliation moves in the Central African Republic with the assistance of the International Mission to monitor the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) have created a better background in which subregional states can tackle common security problems with a higher degree of transparency and good faith. For the time being, the bitter distrust between Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and the Congo Republic, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the initial post-Mobutu distrust between the Congo Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are being replaced by more open and friendly relations between the governments of these countries. This development can lead to serious commitment to the implementation of the Non-Aggression Pact and thus give fresh impulse to the commencement of a credible programme for enhancing subregional security.

Central African Subregional Programme of Action

At the Yaoundé summit of July 1996, the Heads of States of Central Africa, in their final declaration expressed concern at the increased proliferation of weapons, a situation which they characterised as a source of insecurity and a threat to the stability of states in the subregion. They declared their determination to arrest that development by establishing a disarmament programme with the assistance of the United Nations and the international community.

Confidence-Building Measures

A disarmament programme for Central Africa should be conceived as part of a comprehensive plan for the promotion of peace and security in the subregion, built on the consolidation of the era of friendliness which recent changes of governments of some of the countries in the subregion have ushered in. An indispensable starting point is the implementation by all countries and in good faith of the Non-Aggression Pact. It is necessary, therefore, that both Angola and Rwanda sign the pact, and that it be expeditiously ratified by all subregional states so that it can enter into force. Faithful adherence to its provisions, particularly those relating to the prohibition of acts of aggression or hostility from each other's territory, will assure willingness to implement agreements on arms control and disarmament when these are adopted.

A second indispensable collateral measure is progress in the installation in each country in the subregion of the system of good governance. This entails the promotion of democratic structures, of transparency, openness, and inclusiveness. It is necessary to stress the attribute of inclusiveness in the African democratisation process because of the danger of the winner-takes-all approach of western democracy when applied in the as yet unconsolidated multi-ethnic states of Africa. Good governance also entails full respect for human rights and guarantee of equal opportunity to all citizens. These steps will attack the causes of weapons proliferation through what Chris Smith refers to as the 'big' solutions and the interlocking aspects of security.⁹ Such confidence-building measures between governments and their citizens will promote peace and participatory development, thus enhancing the prospects for stability. An additional collateral measure is the creation of a sub-regional security organ linked to a revamped ECCAS. The operations of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa should provide a basis for such a regionally based and owned mechanism which can complement the envisaged politically enhanced ECOWAS organ and the SADC organ for Politics, Defence and Security, as the catalysts for the effectiveness of the OAU Mechanism for Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts.

Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme

An important step in controlling weapons in the subregion is serious pursuit of demobilisation and reintegration programmes, which should be an essential element of every peace settlement. Where such programmes have succeeded, the country has reaped substantial peace dividend. A World Bank study showed that demobilisation and reintegration saved for Uganda more than 87 million dollars.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the experiences with other demobilisation and reintegration programmes have revealed problems such as inadequate and untimely funding, lack of prior planning and failure to see the whole process through. To correct these constraints on successful execution of the programmes, timely and adequate support of the international community and the international financial institutions is absolutely essential. This should be seen as the external

component of measures towards the 'big' solutions to address the factors that provoke conflicts and make light weapons proliferation endemic.

A necessary complementary measure to prevent the reintroduction of fresh weapons is the enhancement of national capacities for effective and efficient border and customs control. Suggestions have been made for the use of a proportion of development assistance to build such capacities of police and customs/border officials and to provide support for judicial and legal systems.¹¹ Definitely, the assistance of bilateral and multilateral donors will be crucial for success. At the subregional level, states must agree on measures to avert the uncontrolled cross-border flow of arms through close co-operation among border and customs authorities, constant exchange of information, especially on suspected movements of arms, and subregionally organised joint courses.

Subregional Arms Register

In order to enhance transparency and avert arms build-up which may be destined to foment conflicts in neighbouring states, the subregion should agree to create an Arms Register which will indicate current inventory of officially held weapons, as well as future importation. Such a register may eventually form part of, but not need wait for the creation of, an OAU Arms Register. All states that are known to be sources of arms flow into the subregion should be requested to subscribe to the register and to report on their arms export to the subregion as well as any information on illicit exports destined for the area. An essential element of the register should be the inclusion of reporting of the export and import of ammunitions. Though small arms and light weapons have long shelf life, many of them are dependent on constant supply of ammunitions, which do not have indefinite life span. Control of the inflow of ammunitions therefore will affect the use of these weapons.

Enquiry into the Sources of Illicit Arms Flow

In light of the uncertainties surrounding the sources of the large inflow of illicit arms into the subregion, it will be useful to commission a study on the subject with a view to taking informed and appropriate subregional measures as well as pressing for appropriate international measures. An initiative on such a study can be taken at the United Nations General Assembly, making use of UNIDIR to conduct the study.

Role of the United Nations

With the increasing reluctance of the United Nations' Security Council's permanent members to authorise any more peacekeeping operations in Africa, it is incumbent on them to enhance the capacity of the Organisation in assisting regional and subregional bodies to undertake preventive, peacekeeping and peace-building measures. Thus the countries of the Central Africa subregion as well as other subregions should be able to count on the support of the United Nations in their efforts to enhance peace and security in their area. The Organisation should pursue more urgently the possibility of establishing legally binding norms on the transfer of conventional weapons including, in particular, small arms and light weapons.

1 Emeka Nwokedi, African Security: Issues and Problems in the 1990s, Peacekeeping as Security Strategy in Africa. Eds. Vogt and Aminu, p. 29.

2 William Benson, 'The European Arms Trade with the Horn of Africa and Central Africa', Safeworld, February 1998, p.3.

3 Report of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms and Light Weapons. UN Doc. No. A/52/298.

4 Evan Luard, The Blunted Sword: The Erosion of Military Power in Modern World Politics, IS Taurus 1988.

5 'Burundi; Stoking the Fires', Human Rights Watch, December 1997. Quoted in William Benson, Safeworld, February 1998.

6 Report of the Panel of Intergovernmental Experts on Small Arms and Light Weapons. UN Doc. A/52/298.

7 World Bank News, 18 July 1996.

8 United Nations Concern for Peace and Security in Central Africa. UN Doc. No. E 981X2.

9 C. Smith. Mentioned in Christopher Louise, The Social Impacts of Light Weapons Availability and Proliferation. UN Research Institute for Social Development, March 1995, p.20.

10 World Bank, Africa Analysis, 17 June 1996, quoted in William Benson, Safeworld, op.cit., p.46.

11 William Benson, Safeworld, op. cit., p.11.

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The Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development in West Africa (PCASED)

I Background

1. In November 1996, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized in collaboration with the Government of Mali an international conference entitled: "Conflict Prevention, Disarmament and Development in West Africa". The Conference adopted, inter alia, the Mali proposal calling for interested African States to declare a moratorium on "import, export, and manufacture of light weapons", and recommended that sensitization activities with concerned States in the region and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) be carried out with a view to deepening the understanding of and support for the proposal. The Conference also recommended that a dialogue consolidate the future moratorium regime with the arms manufacturing and supplier States under the Wassenaar Arrangement.
2. In fulfilment of those recommendations, the OAU Secretariat was briefed on the proposal for the moratorium which it viewed not just as a reinforcing element but also as an important precursor and test case for the OAU Early Warning System under planning. Furthermore, members of the Secretariat of the Conference held discussions with Friends of the Chair of the Wassenaar Arrangement in Vienna to inform them on the moratorium proposal and the overall disarmament initiatives in West Africa, with a view to preparing the Wassenaar States to play a supporting role in the future implementation of the moratorium proposal. The Friends of the Chair commended West African States for this bold and novel approach to arms control in their region and pledged to bring these developments to the attention of the Secretariat of the Arrangement which was being established at that time.
3. In February 1997, in Tripoli, Libya, the Delegation of Mali to the OAU Council of Ministers with the technical support of the United Nations, organized briefing sessions on the moratorium proposal, in the sidelines of the OAU's ministerial meeting, with a number of Delegations including, in particular, the following: Algeria, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone. The significance of those briefings, in which the OAU's Secretary-General participated, was to place the moratorium proposal at a higher political level, to sustain the disarmament and conflict prevention momentum created by the Bamako Conference, and to invite interested Governments to a ministerial consultation in Bamako on 26 March 1997. The objective of that consultation, which took place as scheduled, was to examine the political and technical aspects of the moratorium.
4. Representatives of the following governments took part in the ministerial consultation: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. The following participated as observers: representatives of the UN system, representatives of the OAU, the Secretary-General of the ANAD (Accord de Non-Agression et d'Assistance en Matière de Defense), a representative of the Chair of the Wassenaar Group, representatives of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), and the Director of the Norwegian Institute of

International Affairs. Keynote addresses were delivered by the Malian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Vice-President of the Canadian International Development Agency (on behalf of the Minister for International Cooperation), and the Special Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Chairman of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Small Arms.

5. The Consultation adopted an outline document of the moratorium (see Annex I) and recommended, inter alia, two areas of action: 1) the pursuit of sensitization and information missions to increase the understanding of the technical and political conditions for the declaration of the moratorium, and, 2) the establishment of a mechanism called: Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED).

6. Moreover, the Malian Presidential Delegation to the OAU Summit in Harare in June 1997, with the technical support of the United Nations, pursued sensitization of some presidential delegations. Such contacts permitted a deepening of the understanding of the proposed moratorium at the highest political level in a number of African countries beyond West Africa. But it should be noted that sensitization is still under way at all levels in view of the delicate and sensitive nature of the moratorium proposal.

7. Missions of sensitization to secure international support for PCASED have been organized and some are still being planned in a number of donor countries and institutions outside Africa, including the European Union with a view to augmenting political support and funding for the setting up and operation of PCASED. So far, responses in the countries visited by members of the secretariat of the Conference and senior officials of the Government of Mali have been very encouraging, demonstrating increasing support for security requirements to be fully integrated into development cooperation policies of donor countries in the context of peace-building and conflict prevention in developing countries. In this connection, the establishment of PCASED is also a translation into concrete action of one of the key proposals made at the High-level Consultation on Post-conflict Peace-building in West Africa organized in October 1996 with the financial assistance of the Government of the Netherlands under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General and chaired jointly by the Administrator of UNDP and the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. That Consultation which brought together the sixteen Member States of ECOWAS and more than twenty representatives of major donor Governments and Institutions in West Africa, expressed the need for a mechanism to coordinate Member States' policies and programmes that cut across developmental and political problems.

II

Mandate and Activities of PCASED

8. PCASED will be an initial five-year technical programme established and operated by UNDP to backstop the moratorium regime and related practical development and security-related activities, including assistance, where possible, in mopping up surplus weapons in interested countries that had been affected by conflict. It would become fully operational as soon as one or more Governments would have declared the moratorium. However, a technical secretariat would be established in advance to assist interested Governments to fully understand the technical and political aspects of the proposal and thus facilitate a political decision for the declaration of the moratorium.

9. The Programme would assist in implementing the relevant recommendations of the United Nation's Secretary-General's Advisory Mission on the Proliferation of Light Weapons in the Sahel-Sahara subregion as well as backstop, as appropriate, the implementation of the moratorium, including the coordination and operation of the various activities which will take place during the three-year life span of the moratorium and beyond. Such activities would include assistance in:

- v coordinating the efforts of Member States in matters of security, peace and disarmament;
- v providing technical assistance for the implementation and harmonization of Member States' policies in disarmament and security matters;
- v supporting the efforts of the Member States in the setting up and revitalization of the national commissions in charge of the fight against the proliferation of light weapons;
- v promoting the establishment and functioning of a database on the flow of light weapons in the region;
- v providing technical support for efforts to sensitize new Member States to declare the moratorium;
- v supporting the efforts of the Member States in view of updating and harmonizing their national legislation relating to the bearing, the use and the production of light weapons;
- v supporting efforts for the establishment and functioning of a subregional register on light weapons;
- v providing technical support to Member States for border controls in connection with light weapons;
- v organizing training programmes for law and order forces in order to improve efficiency and provide them with modern techniques and skills in their field.

10. The present document outlines the structure and cost of the Programme with the aim of galvanizing support for its establishment.

III Structure

11. The Programme would be composed of the following units: backstopping of the moratorium; maintenance of the database, the arms register and research; conference service and training and advisory programmes; the secretariat and publication unit, and administration.

A. Backstopping unit for the moratorium

12. This unit shall liaise with Member States on questions relating to the moratorium. It shall provide technical and secretarial assistance to sensitization and information missions and activities with a view to increasing and improving participation in the moratorium. It shall also provide legal and political advice on such issues as may be required to enhance Member States' cooperation and confidence-building measures in the region. It shall prepare the conference of ministers for the evaluation of the moratorium after the three-year period as agreed upon by the ministerial consultation of 26 March 1997.

13. The principal function of this unit shall be to expedite matters relating to the moratorium and formulate policy proposals on effective ways and means of also addressing the illicit flow of arms in the region.

B. Unit for the maintenance of the database, the arms register and research

14. A database shall be created to collect and store information on the flow of small arms in the region and document, electronically, the type and number of crimes involving the use of this category of weapons. The unit shall be charged with the responsibility of operating an arms register on licit weapons similar to the one maintained by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, but enlarged to include items such as small arms and force levels as agreed upon by the Member States during the ministerial consultation of 26 March 1997.

15. Member States shall be requested to forward to the unit on a regular annual basis, information on their holdings and on purchases, which are not covered by the moratorium. It should be made clear that under the moratorium regime, dispensation for arms import can be granted, on request, to a Member State that faces serious security difficulties. More information on this provision is contained in Annex I to this document.

16. The monitoring of the flow of small arms through the database can be an effective early warning system since an increased flow of arms from one area to another often help to detect where tension and violence is building up. On the other hand, an arm register, which takes account of the security and defence realities of the countries concerned, can significantly contribute to promoting confidence and trust in the neighbourhood.

17. Statistics and other defence and security data are not always easily available in Africa, largely because of lack of research institutions and the long-standing 'secrecy' that has surrounded even basic defence and security issues. The far-reaching political discussions on the moratorium proposal and the auspicious democratic opening of many States in the region now contribute to the vulgarization of these issues. PCASED would seize the opportunity of its comparative advantage of being an emanation of the political will of the interested Governments to sustain the vulgarization of the issues through the establishment of a sound research base within this unit. In this connection, the unit shall cooperate on a technical basis with similar and well-known institutions within and outside Africa such as the Institute Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI), the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), etc. It shall undertake periodic publications of research results. The research capacity shall be enhanced by the establishment and maintenance of a network with individual researchers and relevant institutions.

C. Conference services and training and advisory programmes unit

18. This unit shall service conferences on specific issues pertaining to small arms, and organize training programmes for law and order forces as part of capacity-building measures to enhance the effectiveness of the police and other civil forces that are involved in security maintenance and border control.

19. The unit shall also provide advisory services for the updating and harmonization of national legislation on the bearing of small arms. Technical advice on weapons buy-back, and the study of other methods of arms collection programmes, and disposal of surplus weapons particularly in concerned countries that had been affected by armed conflict, as was the case in Mali in March 1996, shall form part of the responsibility of the unit.

D. The secretariat and publication unit

20. The Secretariat shall coordinate the work of the units and shall publish an annual bulletin on the work of PCASED for the information of Member States and the public.

E. Administration

21. The Administration Unit shall ensure the day-to-day administrative, personnel and budgetary functioning of the Programme.

22. The Programme would maintain close contacts with the national commissions for the control and collection of small arms which already exist in a number of countries in the region following the recommendation of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Mission mentioned above. It would provide advisory and, when possible, technical support to those commissions and serve as clearing-house for the sharing of various national experiences and programmes in Africa.

IV Staffing

23. PCASED shall be headed by a senior official as Director. The units above shall be headed by officers at an appropriate level in accordance with United Nations staffing practices. Support staff for secretarial and clerical functions shall be recruited. Consultants shall be recruited depending on the volume of work. Internship for students would be encouraged, as appropriate.

V Supplies and Equipment

24. Equipment shall include: 6 computers, 3 fax machines, telephone sets, 2 photocopiers, 2 cars, office desks and chairs, and regular supply material. Arrangements shall be made to obtain, at no cost to PCASED, office space from the host Government.

VI

Duration and Location of PCASED

25. PCASED will be an initial five-year technical programme sponsored by UNDP, the DPA and UNIDIR. Its initial life span will comprise the three years of the moratorium and an additional two years to consolidate the post-moratorium regime. It shall be located in a Member State of the moratorium.

VII

Reinforcing the Operational Capacity of PCASED: The Advisory Group

26. A number of resource persons with personal or institutional interest in the disarmament and development initiatives in West Africa have played a key role in both informal and official discussions that have led to sustaining the political will of Governments to pursue the implementation of the moratorium proposal which, in political terms, truly constitutes a ground-breaking evolution in recent arms control proposals in Africa. They have also contributed to the governmental consultations in designing the technical framework for the moratorium regime as well as assisting in mobilizing necessary resources for the implementation of PCASED.

27. To maximize the effectiveness of PCASED, an advisory group constituted of about ten (10) such resource persons shall be set up. The purpose of the Advisory Group shall be to provide technical and political advice to PCASED on such issues as may be deemed necessary by the Director. The Group would offer comments and observations on the programme of work of PCASED. Persons serving in the Group shall be drawn from within and outside Africa in their individual capacity. The Group may meet at least at the end of each activities year to help in the assessment of that year's activities and offer suggestions on the coming one.

VIII

Processes and Methodology of Installation

28. It is obvious that the necessary funds, which will ensure the optimum operation of PCASED, will not be gotten at one stroke. In this regard, installation, including staffing and programming will be progressive, beginning in January 1998 when the Secretariat and the Administrative Units will be put in place to ensure maximum sensitization of interested governments in the region on the technical and political aspects of the moratorium, and to arrange the logistics involved in the structural setting up and equipment of the entire mechanism. It is expected that all the units would become fully operational during the second half of 1998.

29. With regard to programmes and activities, a small workshop of interested government representatives and other experts will be organized in March 1998 to draw up and define the short-term and long-term priority programme of action on the basis of the elements contained in Chapter II above.

IX Languages of PCASED

30. English and French shall be the main working languages of PCASED.

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Programme de Coordination et d'Assistance pour la Sécurité et le Développement (PCASED)

I Historique

1. En novembre 1996, l'Institut des Nations Unies pour la Recherche et le Désarmement (UNIDIR), le Département des Affaires Politiques (DPA) des Nations Unies et le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD) ont organisé en collaboration avec le Gouvernement du Mali une conférence internationale intitulée «La Prévention des Conflits, le Désarmement et le Développement en Afrique de l'Ouest». La conférence a adopté la proposition malienne appelant les Etats africains intéressés à déclarer un moratoire sur l'exportation, l'importation et la production d'armes légères. La conférence a recommandé des actions de sensibilisation des Etats de la sous-région et l'OUA dans le but d'élargir la compréhension de la proposition. La conférence a également recommandé que le régime futur du moratoire soit consolidé par un dialogue avec les Etats producteurs et fournisseurs d'armes appartenant aux Arrangements de Wassenaar.
2. A la suite de ces recommandations, le Secrétariat de l'OUA a été informé sur la proposition du moratoire que l'OUA considère non pas uniquement comme un élément pour le renforcement mais également comme un important précurseur du système d'alerte de l'OUA en préparation. Par la suite, des membres du secrétariat de la conférence ont tenu des discussions avec les amis du Président des Arrangements de Wassenaar à Vienne dans le but de les informer sur la proposition du moratoire et les initiatives de désarmement en Afrique de l'Ouest, afin de préparer cette institution à soutenir la mise en place future du moratoire. Les amis du Président félicitèrent les Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest pour cette audacieuse et nouvelle approche pour le contrôle des armements dans la sous-région et s'engagèrent à attirer l'attention du secrétariat de cette institution alors en cours d'établissement sur cette évolution.
3. En février 1997, à Tripoli, en Libye, la délégation du Mali au Conseil des Ministres des Etats Membres de l'OUA a organisé des sessions d'information sur la proposition du moratoire en marge de la rencontre ministérielle de l'OUA avec un certain nombre de délégations, en particulier les suivantes: l'Algérie, le Burundi, le Burkina Faso, la Côte d'Ivoire, la Guinée, la Guinée Bissau, le Liberia, la Mauritanie, le Niger, le Rwanda, le Sénégal, la Sierra-Leone et le Tchad. L'objectif de ces entretiens auxquels le Secrétaire Général de l'OUA a participé était de placer la proposition du moratoire à un niveau politique élevé afin de soutenir la dynamique du désarmement et la prévention des conflits conçue à Bamako, et inviter par la même occasion les gouvernements intéressés à une consultation ministérielle sur le sujet à Bamako le 26 mars 1997. L'objectif de cette consultation qui a eu lieu comme prévue, était d'examiner les aspects politiques et techniques du moratoire.
4. Les représentants des gouvernements suivants ont pris part à la consultation ministérielle: l'Algérie, le Burkina Faso, la Guinée, le Liberia, le Mali, la Mauritanie et le Sénégal. Les participants suivants étaient observateurs: les représentants du système des Nations Unies, les représentants de l'OUA, le Secrétaire Général de l'ANAD (Accord de Non-Agression et d'Assistance en Matière de Défense), un représentant du Président des Arrangements de Wassenaar, les représentants de l'Agence Américaine pour le Contrôle des Armes et le

Désarmement (ACDA), le Directeur de l'Institut Norvégien des Affaires Internationales (NUPI). Des discours programmes ont été prononcés par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères du Mali, le Vice-Président de l'Agence Canadienne pour le Développement International (au nom du Ministre de la Coopération Internationale) et le Conseiller Spécial du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères du Japon, Président du Groupe des Experts gouvernementaux des Nations Unies sur les petites armes.

5. La consultation a adopté un document liminaire du moratoire et a recommandé, entre autres, deux domaines d'action: a) La poursuite de la sensibilisation et de la mission d'information en vue de faciliter la compréhension des conditions techniques et politiques pour la déclaration du moratoire; b) L'établissement d'un mécanisme dénommé: Programme de coordination et d'assistance pour la sécurité et le développement (PCASED).

6. Par ailleurs, la Délégation Présidentielle du Mali au sommet de l'OUA à Hararé en juin 1997, avec l'appui technique des Nations Unies, a poursuivi la sensibilisation au niveau de certaines délégations présidentielles. Ces contacts ont permis l'évolution de la compréhension de la proposition du moratoire au niveau politique le plus élevé dans un bon nombre de pays africains au-delà de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. Mais force est de signaler que pour une question aussi délicate que sensible comme le moratoire, la sensibilisation est toujours en cours à tous les niveaux.

7. Des missions de sensibilisation pour assurer l'appui de la communauté internationale au PCASED ont été organisées et d'autres sont encore prévues dans un certain nombre de pays donateurs et institutions y compris l'Union Européenne, en vue d'accroître l'appui politique et financier nécessaire à la mise en place et au bon déroulement du PCASED. Les réponses dans les pays visités par les membres du Secrétariat de la Conférence et des hauts fonctionnaires du Gouvernement malien ont été très encourageantes, démontrant ainsi un soutien croissant pour l'intégration effective des préoccupations sécuritaires dans les politiques de coopération en matière de développement dans les pays donateurs. Ceci constitue une évolution significative dans le cadre de la construction de la paix et la prévention des conflits dans les pays en voie de développement. A ce propos, l'établissement du PCASED représente également la concrétisation d'une des recommandations principales faites en octobre 1996, à New York lors de la consultation de Haut Niveau sur la construction de la paix après les conflits en Afrique de l'Ouest, organisée avec l'assistance financière du Gouvernement des Pays-Bas sous les auspices du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies et coprésidée par l'Administrateur du PNUD et le Secrétaire Général Adjoint des Nations Unies aux affaires politiques. Cette consultation qui a rassemblé les 16 pays membres de la CEDEAO et plus de 20 représentants des principaux gouvernements et institutions donateurs, a exprimé le besoin d'établir un mécanisme de coordination des programmes de développement et des problèmes politiques.

II

Mandat du PCASED

8. Le PCASED sera un programme technique d'une durée initiale de 5 ans, opéré par les Nations Unies à travers le PNUD, ayant comme objectif de soutenir et de faciliter le régime du moratoire, les pratiques liées au développement et les activités liées à la sécurité y compris, autant que donner ce qu'on peut d'assistance nécessaire pour le ramassage du surplus d'armes dans les pays qui ont été dévastés par les conflits armés. Il sera pleinement opérationnel aussitôt qu'un ou plusieurs gouvernements aura déclaré le moratoire. Cependant, un secrétariat technique sera mis

en place en avance pour assister les gouvernements intéressés à comprendre largement les aspects techniques et politiques de la proposition et facilitant ainsi la décision politique pour la déclaration du moratoire.

9. Le programme permettra de rendre effectives les recommandations pertinentes de la mission consultative du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies sur la proliférations des armes légères dans la région sahélo-saharienne aussi bien que d'assurer un suivi régulier du moratoire, y compris la coordination des différentes activités qui auront lieu pendant les 3 premières années du moratoire et au-delà. De telles activités visent à:

v coordonner les efforts des Etats Membres en matière de sécurité et de désarmement;

v fournir une assistance technique à la mise en œuvre et à l'harmonisation des politiques des Etats Membres en matière de désarmement et de sécurité;

v appuyer les efforts des Etats Membres dans l'installation et la revitalisation des commissions nationales chargées de la lutte contre la prolifération des petites armes;

v favoriser l'installation et le fonctionnement d'une banque de données et d'information, sur les mouvements d'armes dans la sous-région;

v fournir un appui technique aux efforts de sensibilisation des Etats Membres en vue de l'adhésion de nouveaux Etats à la déclaration sur le moratoire;

v appuyer les efforts des Etats Membres en vue de l'harmonisation de leurs législations nationales en matière de port, d'utilisation et de fabrication des armes légères;

v appuyer la mise en place et le fonctionnement d'un registre sous-régional sur les armes légères;

v assister les Etats Membres dans leurs actions de contrôle des frontières.

D'une façon générale, la structure assurera la collecte et la diffusion des informations relatives aux questions d'insécurité et de désarmement et apportera l'assistance nécessaire aux Etats Membres dans la réalisation de programmes participant à la lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères.

10. Ce présent document décrit la structure et le coût du Programme avec le but de mobiliser des ressources pour sa mise en place.

III La Structure

11. Le Programme sera composé des unités de contrôle et de supervision du moratoire; l'unité d'entretien de la banque des données du registre des armes; l'unité de formation, la recherche de

suivi des programmes et d'organisation des conférences; le secrétariat et le service de publication; l'administration.

A) L'unité de contrôle et de supervision du moratoire

12. Cette unité sera en liaison avec les Etats Membres sur les questions se référant au moratoire. Elle mènera d'une manière appropriée qui sera définie d'un commun accord avec les Etats Membres les activités de contrôle, de supervision et d'inspection en vue d'assurer la mise en place effective du moratoire. Elle fournira également aux Etats Membres des conseils sur le plan politique et juridique en tant que de besoin dans le but de renforcer la coopération et les mesures de confiance dans la région. Elle organisera la conférence des Ministres pour l'évaluation du moratoire après trois années d'effectivité et ce en conformité avec la décision de la consultation ministérielle du 26 mars 1997.

13. La principale fonction de cette unité sera d'expédier les affaires courantes du moratoire et formuler des propositions sur les voies et moyens nécessaires en vue de contrôler le flux d'armes illicites dans la région.

B) L'unité d'entretien de la banque des données du registre des armes et la recherche

14. Une banque des données sera créée pour collecter et mémoriser des informations sur le flux d'armes légères dans la région et maintenir une documentation électronique sur le type et le nombre de crimes imputables à l'usage de cette catégorie d'armes. L'unité aura la responsabilité d'établir un registre des armes similaire à celui détenu par le Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies, mais élargi à d'autres éléments tels que les petites armes et le nombre des forces armées des Etats Membres intéressés comme convenu à la consultation ministérielle du 26 mars 1997.

15. Il sera demandé aux Etats Membres du moratoire de fournir à l'unité un rapport annuel régulier contenant des informations sur les armes qu'ils possèdent et les commandes qui ne seront pas couvert par le moratoire. Il devrait être clair que sous le régime du moratoire une dispense pour l'importation d'armes peut être délivrée à la demande d'un Etat Membre faisant face à de sérieuses difficultés de sécurité. Pour plus d'informations sur cette disposition, voir l'annexe I.

16. Le contrôle du flux d'armes légères à travers la banque de données peut être un système d'alerte efficace en ce sens qu'un important transfert de flux d'armes d'une zone à une autre peut aider à détecter où la tension et la violence se préparent. D'un autre côté le registre des armes qui prendra en compte les réalités de la défense et de sécurité des pays concernés peut d'une façon significative contribuer à promouvoir la confiance et la foi au bon voisinage.

17. Les statistiques et autres données sur la défense et la sécurité ne sont pas toujours facilement disponibles en Afrique à cause du manque d'institutions de recherche en la matière et le caractère secret qui a entouré depuis toujours les questions de base relatives à la défense et à la sécurité. Les discussions politiques de grande portée sur la proposition de moratoire et l'heureuse ouverture démocratique de plusieurs Etats dans la région contribuent maintenant à la

vulgarisation de ces questions. Le PCASED saisira l'opportunité de son avantage comparatif en tant qu'une émanation de la volonté politique des gouvernements intéressés à faire perdurer la vulgarisation de ces questions à travers l'établissement d'une base de recherche à l'intérieur de cette unité. A ce propos, l'unité coopérera sur le plan technique avec des institutions similaires et reconnues à l'intérieur et en dehors de l'Afrique telles que l'Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI), l'Agence Américaine de Contrôle des Armes et du Désarmement (ACDA), l'Institut International sur la Recherche de la Paix à Stockholm etc. Elle effectuera des publications périodiques des résultats de recherche. La capacité de recherche sera renforcée par l'établissement et l'entretien d'un réseau d'échange avec les chercheurs individuels et les institutions appropriées.

C) L'unité de formation, de suivi des programmes et d'organisation des conférences

18. Cette unité organisera des conférences sur les questions spécifiques et pertinentes en rapport avec les petites armes et élaborera des programmes de formation pour les forces de sécurité dans le but d'établir des mesures capables de renforcer les services de la police et d'autres forces civiles chargées de la sécurité intérieure et du contrôle des frontières.

19. L'unité devra aussi fournir: une assistance pour la mise à jour et l'harmonisation des législations nationales sur le port des petites armes; un conseil technique au programme de rachat des armes; la collecte et la destruction des petites armes comme survenu au Mali en mars 1996, devraient être une part de la responsabilité de l'unité.

D) L'unité de secrétariat et le service de publication

20. Le Secrétariat coordonnera le travail des unités et devra publier un bulletin annuel sur le travail du PCADES pour l'information des Etats Membres et du Public.

E) Administration

21. L'unité d'administration devra assurer les tâches journalières de l'administration du personnel et le budget du programme.

22. Le programme devra maintenir des contacts étroits avec les commissions nationales pour le contrôle et la collecte des petites armes, ces commissions existent pratiquement dans un grand nombre de pays de la sous-région suivant les recommandations de la mission consultative du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies comme mentionné précédemment. Il fournira des conseils et si possible un soutien technique à ces commissions et servira également de lieu d'échange des expériences et programmes nationaux.

Le Personnel

23. Le PCASED sera dirigé par un fonctionnaire de haut niveau en qualité de Directeur. Les unités ci-dessus seront dirigées par les fonctionnaires d'un niveau approprié conformément aux pratiques des Nations Unies, des assistants pour le secrétariat et le bureau devront être recrutés. Des consultants devront également être recrutés en fonction du volume de travail. Des stages pour étudiants au sein du PCASED seront encouragés.

V

Fournitures et Equipement

24. L'équipement devra comprendre: 6 ordinateurs, 3 fax, 2 photocopieuses, 2 voitures, des tables de travail, des chaises, un lot de téléphone, tout autre matériel nécessaire. Des arrangements devront être faits pour que le siège du PCASED soit pris en charge par le gouvernement d'accueil.

VI

Durée du PCASED

25. Le PCASED sera un programme technique d'une durée initiale de cinq ans sponsorisé par le PNUD, le DPA et l'UNIDIR. Sa durée initiale comprendra les trois premières années du moratoire et deux ans supplémentaires pour consolider le régime post moratoire. Il devra être implanté dans un Etat Membre du moratoire.

VII

Renforcement de la Capacité Operationnelle du PCASED: Le Conseil Consultatif

26. Un nombre de personnes ressources avec des intérêts personnels ou institutionnels sur le désarmement et les institutions de développement en Afrique de l'Ouest ont joué un rôle clé dans les discussions informelles et officielles qui ont permis de soutenir la volonté politique des gouvernements à poursuivre leurs efforts pour la mise en place de la proposition du moratoire qui, en terme politique, constitue véritablement un tournant décisif dans les propositions de contrôle d'armes en Afrique. Ils ont également contribué aux consultations gouvernementales sur le moratoire aussi bien que l'assistance dans la mobilisation des ressources nécessaires pour la mise en place du PCASED.

27. En vue de maximiser l'efficacité du PCASED, un groupe de conseillers constitué de près de 10 personnes ressources devra être mis en place. L'objectif du groupe de conseillers sera de fournir un conseil politique et technique au PCASED sur des questions que le Directeur jugera nécessaires. Le groupe fera des commentaires et observations sur le programme de travail du PCASED. Les personnes faisant partie du groupe seront choisies à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'Afrique sur la base de leur capacité individuelle. Le groupe peut se rencontrer à la fin de

chaque année d'activité en vue d'aider à l'évaluation des activités de l'année et faire des suggestions sur l'année à venir.

VIII

Processus et Méthodologie d'Installation

28. C'est évident que les fonds nécessaires qui permettront aux activités du PCASED d'atteindre son fonctionnement optimum ne peuvent être obtenus en une seule fois. A cet effet l'installation, y compris le personnel et la programmation des activités, sera progressive. Elle commencera en janvier 1998 lorsque le Secrétariat et l'Unité Administrative seront mis en place en vue d'assurer au maximum la sensibilisation des gouvernements intéressés dans la région sur les aspects techniques et politiques du moratoire et d'arranger la logistique liée à l'établissement des structures et l'acquisition de l'équipement nécessaire au programme. Il est attendu que toutes les unités seront pleinement fonctionnelles pendant la seconde moitié de 1998.

29. Eu égard aux programmes et activités, un atelier réduit des représentants des gouvernements intéressés et autres experts sera organisé en mars 1998 pour définir les priorités à court et long terme du programme d'action sur la base des éléments contenus dans le chapitre II ci-dessus.

IX

Langues du PCASED

30. L'Anglais et le Français seront les langues de travail du PCASED.

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Acronyms

ACDA Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

ANAD Accord de Non-Agression et d'Assistance en Matière de Defense

CEDEAO Communauté Économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest

CFA Communauté financière africaine

CNCCAI Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites

DPA Department of Political Affairs

ECCAS Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

IFRI Institut Français des Relations Internationales

MISAB International Mission to Monitor the Bangui Agreements

MPLA Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

NISAT Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers

NUPI Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

OAS Organisation of American States

OAU Organisation of African Unity

ONG Organisation Non-Gouvernemental

ONU Organisation des Nations Unies

OUA Organisation de l'Unité Africaine

PCASED Programme for Coordination and Assistance on Security and Development

PNUD Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement

SADC South African Development Community

SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

START Strategic Arms Reduction Talks

TNP Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires

UEMOA Union des Exposants de Machines et d'Outillage Agricoles

UN United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

UNIDIR United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UNITA União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola