NATO’s Nuclear Declarations: Will the NPT be honoured?
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Three unfulfilled promises

The first is the obvious promise, through the NPT’s Article VI, to disarm. If the wording of Article VI is a bit ambiguous, the unanimous decisions and declarations in the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, made by all states parties to the NPT, clarify once and for all what it means: an unequivocal commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The World Court added further clarity when it said in 1996 that the promise to disarm is a legal obligation that requires not only the pursuit of disarmament, but its achievement.

But then we come to paragraph 46 of NATO’s Strategic Concept (NATO 1999). It argues that, given “the diversity of risks with which the Alliance could be faced... the Alliance’s conventional forces alone cannot ensure credible deterrence.” So, the threat of nuclear attack is required to render “the risks of aggression against the Alliance incalculable and unacceptable.” And thus it concludes that nuclear weapons remain “essential to preserve peace.” So, in its formal declaration, NATO insists that, rather than pursuing and achieving disarmament, it “will maintain for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces based in Europe.” If the promise is abolition, the commitment is indefinite retention.

A second promise is found in the agreement, reached during the NPT review process, that all states parties to the NPT will seek “a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination” (RevCon 2000).

But paragraph 62 of the NATO Strategic Concept says the purpose of nuclear weapons is broad: to “prevent coercion and any kind of war.” And to accomplish that purpose, NATO nuclear forces are given the “essential role” of “ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies’ response to military aggression.” In other words, rather than a diminishing role, NATO continues to prescribe an expansive role for nuclear weapons, including their potential use in response to non-nuclear threats and, by implication, first use. European-based nuclear weapons are given the further role of directly linking Europe’s defences to the strategic nuclear forces of Alliance members, which are said to be “the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies” (para 62).

Furthermore, as a result of post-Cold War expansion, NATO has extended its nuclear umbrella.

Thus, while the promise is to diminish the role of nuclear weapons, the current NATO commitment is to expansive roles and expanded geographic coverage of extended deterrence. For NATO to come into full conformity with the commitments made by its individual members, the new Strategic Concept will have to scale back dramatically on the role assigned to nuclear weapons; a no-first-use commitment would be a move in that direction.

The third promise already made by NATO states by virtue of signing on to NPT Articles I and II is not

NATO’s nuclear declarations

Ernie Regehr

NATO’s current nuclear declarations are at serious odds with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and with the reinvigorated global attention to the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons. That makes the current review of the NATO Strategic Concept a major opportunity to change course and to cast NATO members as advocates rather than obstacles to disarmament.

The changes – both symbolic and practical – sought to NATO’s declaratory policies and the posture and deployments that follow from them do not require NATO’s members to do anything that individual NATO states have not already promised to do. In particular, there are three unequivocal promises that all states have made, but which the current NATO Strategic Concept does not honour.
to transfer nuclear weapons from nuclear weapon states to non-nuclear weapon states. In fact, the Treaty prohibits such transfers, requiring that nuclear weapon states not supply nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapon states, and that non-nuclear weapon states not receive nuclear weapons.  

In European NATO, US nuclear weapons have been transferred to non-nuclear weapon states (currently they are on the territories of Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey). Paragraph 63 of the current Strategic Concept insists, in effect, that NATO is special and doesn’t need to abide by Articles I and II. There is justification for such transfers (despite the NPT’s clear prohibition) within NATO, because alliance security requires credible deterrence, which in turn requires that European non-nuclear weapon state (NNWS) members of the Alliance “be involved in collective defence planning in nuclear roles” and that nuclear forces be maintained on European territory. Furthermore, those weapons on European soil are also said to be necessary to maintain “an essential political and military link between the European and the North American members of the Alliance.” Thus the current Strategic Concept of NATO promises that the Alliance will continue to ignore Articles I and II (this arrangement actually goes back to the origins of the Treaty) and that NATO will instead “maintain adequate nuclear forces in Europe” in NNWS (para 63).

**Repercussions of NATO non-compliance**

Through the current Strategic Concept NATO says that these three promises will not be honoured in the foreseeable future. The promise to disarm is met with a commitment to indefinite retention. The promise to reduce the role of nuclear weapons is met with a commitment to the continuing threat to be the first to use nuclear weapons, even in response to non-nuclear threats. The promise not to transfer nuclear weapons is met with the continuing deployment of US nuclear weapons on the territories of non-nuclear weapon states.

The most immediate political repercussion of NATO’s essentially “non-compliant” nuclear posture can be expected to be found in nonproliferation dynamics, rather than in disarmament. After all, if it is legitimate for Canada and other NATO NNWS (all of which reside in the most stable neighbourhoods of the world and are backed by the overwhelming conventional military superiority of NATO) to claim that they are so vulnerable that their security requires an ongoing nuclear deterrent (against “any” threat), then it is really hard to think of any states anywhere that could not make a much more credible case for nuclear deterrence. Think especially of Iran and the Arab states in the Middle East, which really do live in rather unstable and threatening environments. By what logic can Canada both insist that nuclear weapons are essential to its security and appeal to Pakistan, India, and Israel to forgo nuclear deterrence and join the NPT as NNWS?

If we are going to insist that all states be subject to the same standards with regard to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, then NATO has some critically important changes to make. If, on the other hand, we are prepared to make the argument that not all states need to be bound by the same nonproliferation and disarmament standards, then we will also have to be prepared to see the nonproliferation regime unwind.

**NOTES**

1. The details of the review process, as well as a full discussion of the nuclear elements of NATO’s strategy, are available in Ploughshares Briefing 10/1, February 2010, “NATO’s Strategic Concept, the NPT, and Global Zero.” http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/Briefings/bfr101.pdf.

2. Article I: “Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons...”

   Article II: “Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons...”

**REFERENCES**


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The LRA and the ICC

Bad facts make bad international criminal jurisprudence

John Siebert

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was created “to investigate, prosecute and punish those who commit war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity” – many of whom would otherwise escape punishment in their home countries (DFAIT 2007). Through the process of prosecuting such individuals, the ICC also intends to deter others from committing such acts, end impunity on the international stage for perpetrators, and deliver justice to the survivors.

It must be disheartening, therefore, for the ICC and its supporters to face criticisms such as those from a leading spokesperson for northern Ugandans (Okello 2007, p. 1), who have been the primary targets of atrocities committed by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) from 1986 through 2006:

Ever since the International Criminal Court seized itself of the situation in northern Uganda, many within the international and local communities have been complicit in shifting attention away from the true scale of what has been done to people and the range of actors involved, focusing instead on the infinitely more manageable task of prosecuting a handful of individuals from only one of the many parties to the conflict – and in the process ensuring the institutional interests of a fledgling global governance mechanism, the ICC.

The ICC stands accused by Okello and others of making matters worse in Uganda, even while pursuing its high-minded goals.

The ICC indictments of LRA leaders

In 2003 the Government of Uganda asked the ICC to investigate the northern Uganda insurgent group called the Lord’s Resistance Army. The ICC prosecutor opened an investigation in July 2004. On July 8 and September 27, 2005 arrest warrants were issued by the ICC for LRA leaders Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot Odhiambo, Dominic Ongwen, and Raska Lukwiya on 33 separate counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, enlisting of children, and sexual enslavement. The warrants were sealed until redacted versions were publicly released on October 13, 2005 (ICG 2007).

Subsequently Lukwiya was reportedly killed in a clash with the Ugandan military on August 12, 2006. Otti was reportedly killed in October 2007 by the LRA itself for disloyalty; although he has not been heard from again, his death has not to my knowledge been independently verified.

The Juba Peace Talks between the Government of Uganda and the LRA began on July 14, 2006, hosted by the Vice-President of the Government of Southern Sudan, Riek Machar. The talks continued in fits and starts until April 10, 2008, when the first of three announced ceremonies to sign a final peace agreement was frustrated by Kony’s nonappearance. The last of these no-shows was on November 14, 2008. It was reported through a number of channels that the LRA leadership was reluctant to sign the Final Peace Agreement (FPA) because of the outstanding ICC indictments, despite the outlining of negotiated alternative justice processes in the FPA. Any hopes for signing the agreements reached to date were effectively squashed with the advent on December 14, 2008 of Operation Lightening Thunder, a large-scale military operation headed by Uganda to kill or capture the LRA who had taken residence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The LRA were dispersed to continue committing atrocities against civilians in the DRC, Southern Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR).

Amidst these events between 2003 and 2008, a contentious debate emerged about whether the demands of international criminal justice as represented in the ICC indictments outweigh the imperatives of negotiating an enduring peace between the LRA and the Ugandan Government.

By any standard the leadership and foot soldiers of the LRA, originating in northern Uganda in the 1980s, are prima facie guilty of appalling human rights abuses against civilian non-combatants, often children, in their own and in several neighbouring countries. The scope and gravity of LRA abductions, maiming, rapes, torture, and murders meet the common understanding of war crimes and crimes against humanity. It was to prosecute such crimes that the ICC came into being in 2002.

The numbers from Uganda, all estimates, tell part of the story: 100,000 people killed, between 38,000 and 66,000 children abducted and enrolled as fighters or sexual slaves (SWAY 2008), 2 million of a total Ugandan population of 25

A contentious debate has emerged about whether the demands of international criminal justice as represented in the ICC indictments outweigh the imperatives of negotiating an enduring peace between the LRA and the Ugandan Government.
Perpetrator or victim?

The conundrum grows with the application of criminal culpability to these men. An illuminating story in *The Globe and Mail* (Nolen & Baines 2008) claimed that Dominic Ongwen had been abducted as a 10-year-old child in 1990, brutalized, and trained as an LRA fighter. He rose to the third- or fourth-highest rank in the LRA, which explains the ICC choice to indict him. According to international humanitarian law he was a child soldier until he turned 18, and therefore subject to rehabilitation rather than prosecution. But he was older than 18 when the ICC began to investigate people in 2002.

Nolen and Baines observed: “As the law stands, if they carry out the same crimes after their 18th birthdays that they did the day before, they are no longer victims, but criminals.” *The Globe and Mail* story speculates that Ongwen ultimately turned down the option of voluntarily leaving the LRA and turning himself in. Except for the ICC indictments his decision might have been different because a national Uganda amnesty law was in place that Ongwen could have taken advantage of if the ICC had not intervened.

Then there is the case of Kony himself – the undisputed and ruthless leader of the LRA, which is often described in cult-like terms with Kony its animating centre. As Hovil and Quinn (2005, p. 37) write, “Worse, still, is the possibility that Kony might be released, for instance, on a plea of insanity, as has been suggested.” Speculation about his sanity has cast doubts about his criminal culpability. If Kony gave himself up or was captured, it could turn out that he would be diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic or with some other recognized psychiatric condition.

Uganda and the world would be considered fortunate were Kony and the others in custody by capture or voluntary surrender. The LRA has incredible resilience and the ICC has no police or military outside of national security forces to do its bidding. As Atkinson (2009, p. 19) concludes, “The prospect of Kony and the remaining top LRA commanders who have outstanding ICC arrest warrants against them submitting to either the ICC or a Ugandan national judicial prosecution ‘satisfying international standards’ – as is widely called for – seems almost impossible to imagine.” John Prendergast (2007, p. 5), writing for ENOUGH – the project to end genocide and crimes against humanity – offers this solution: “It remains highly doubtful that Kony will trust [Ugandan President] Museveni enough to submit to a trial in Uganda, and third country asylum in a country that is not a signatory to the Rome Statute [establishing the ICC] may be the most realistic option.”

That or Kony’s death. But by whom and by what means would that be accomplished? And, if successfully carried out, would it necessarily accomplish the definitive end of the LRA? We cannot know the answer in advance.

It seems the ICC has little choice but to carry through on its evidential findings against the LRA and continue to seek prosecution. Philippe Kirsch, President and Judge of the ICC from 2002 until 2009, stated: “We’re not dealing with shoplifting. The court is dealing with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, all of extreme gravity. Once a crime of that nature comes to the court, we can’t simply decide we are going to ignore it and it is inconvenient” (May 2008). Perhaps this seasoned jurist needs to qualify the application of the universal principles of justice articulated in the Rome Statute in the face of dire circumstances. Beyond pronouncing on guilt or innocence, it is often the task of a justice system to adjudicate between competing rights, the lesser of evils, or the broader demands of justice beyond individual culpability in particular circumstances.

Justice Kirsch and the supporters of the ICC, in the circumstances of the LRA and Uganda, may want to consider the possibility that the ICC, without the means to secure the capture of the indicted men, may have made an appalling situation worse. Atkinson (2009, p. 10) responds indirectly to Kirsch’s standing on legal principle: “Indeed, for many of the people of northern Uganda, and Acholi in particular, there has been
no black-and-white, no good choice from among the often gruesome violence of the LRA, the often equally extensive and brutal violence of government troops, or the typically slower, quieter, but at least equally destructive structural violence of the [IDP] camps.”

Currently there is neither justice nor peace. Kony is believed to be in isolation in the Central African Republic. LRA soldiers, operating in groups as small as five, continue to abduct, kill, and maim in the unpatrolled remote border communities between the DRC, Southern Sudan, and the CAR. Calls are again being made for negotiations with the LRA to finally end its insurgency.

REFERENCES


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Seize the day

**Civil society recommendations to the Canadian Government to advance nuclear disarmament**

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Cesar Jaramillo

On January 25-26, experts including academics, civil society representatives, and government officials convened in Ottawa for a conference entitled “Practical Steps to Zero Nuclear Weapons.” The event was sponsored by a coalition of Canadian civil society organizations, including Project Ploughshares, and sought to address current challenges and opportunities facing nuclear disarmament. The primary outcome was a set of practical recommendations intended to encourage the Canadian government to assume a proactive role in efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons and to seize the moment of renewed momentum for nuclear abolition.

**A window of opportunity**

Virtually all conference panelists referred to the present opportunity that the international community has to make substantial progress in eliminating nuclear weapons. The president of Les Artistes pour la Paix, Pierre Jasmin, said: “The key to a nuclear-weapons-free world is to start negotiations [on a Nuclear Weapons Convention] now while political conditions are right.” The urgent call to take concrete steps now was sounded repeatedly.

Critical issues and processes discussed at the conference included:

**The NPT Review Conference**

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the cornerstone of the global regime to control nuclear weapons, will be reviewed at the United Nations in May 2010. The RevCon, which takes place every five years, is a unique opportunity to address the deficiencies of the nuclear regime and restore the NPT’s credibility as an effective mechanism to curb proliferation and confirm implementation of the nuclear weapon states’ commitment to disarm.
Conference speaker Dr. C.S. Eliot Kang, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, said that the challenges facing the NPT – such as non-compliance by some states, the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran, and North Korea’s unilateral withdrawal from the Treaty – have led many to believe that the NPT is close to collapsing. And, although Kang acknowledged that the US and other nuclear weapon states parties to the Treaty bear a special responsibility, he stated clearly that the US will maintain a ‘safe’ nuclear arsenal for as long as these weapons exist anywhere in the world. In addition, a senior UN official said that several substantive disagreements at the last Preparatory Committee will likely resurface during the upcoming RevCon.

Among the key issues for the RevCon highlighted by event participants were:

- The ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
- Negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty;
- Such institutional deficits of the NPT as the lack of a permanent secretariat and staff;
- A preparatory process for a Nuclear Weapons Convention; and
- Universalizing the NPT to bring in states such as India, Pakistan, and Israel.

Civil society engagement
Panelists stressed the importance of the role that civil society can and should play in nuclear disarmament. The conference itself was a testament to this. A key concern of conference speakers was that the current Canadian government has ended the longstanding practice of including civil society representation in the official Canadian delegation to the NPT Review Conference. A formal request has been made to restore this practice.

NATO’s Strategic Concept review
The current review of NATO’s Strategic Concept featured prominently in conference discussions. A NATO official present at the conference explained that, from NATO’s perspective, the purpose of nuclear retention is political rather than military. He stated that, although NATO’s nuclear doctrine is important, a “crowded plate” of strategic issues is competing for space during the current review process.

The Obama moment
Participants noted that President Obama has ushered in an era of cautious optimism, perhaps best epitomized by his 2009 speech in Prague in which he affirmed the commitment of the United States to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and called on the international community to take practical steps toward this end. Following the Prague speech, Obama personally presided over a historic session of the UN Security Council. Resulting UNSC Resolution 1887 affirms the necessity of taking concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament and reiterates the importance of upholding the tenets of the NPT.

The US Nuclear Posture Review, currently under way, has also generated significant expectations among disarmament advocates and observers, as it will define the role of nuclear weapons and delineate US nuclear strategy. While it has not yet been released, there is hope that it will reflect the vision articulated in Obama’s Prague speech and will afford a diminishing role to nuclear deterrence as part of overall US military strategy.

Canada’s role
Canada’s unique position to take a leadership role in the efforts to abolish nuclear weapons was highlighted repeatedly. As a middle power, a member of NATO, an active player in the global nuclear energy industry, a state party to the NPT, and a member of the G8, Canada is positioned to influence the process of nuclear disarmament. However, as stated in the brief prepared for the conference, “there has always been a strong element of ambivalence in Canadian disarmament policy.” Calling for a more unambiguous and resolute stance by the Canadian government, University of Western Ontario professor Erika Simpson observed, “This ambivalence should end now that U.S. President Barack Obama has come out so strongly for active work leading to a nuclear weapons-free world.”

In addition, conference participants pointed to Canada’s remarkable opportunity to place the issue of nuclear disarmament on the agenda at this year’s G8 and G20 meetings. One of the customary prerogatives of the host nation has been establishing key elements of the agenda. However, a representative from Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada could not disclose whether nuclear disarmament would feature prominently on this year’s agenda.

Ernie Regehr (left) of Project Ploughshares addressed specific concerns about NATO’s Strategic Concept, including its current commitment to retaining nuclear weapons; the conflicting obligations of states that are both members of NATO and Non-Nuclear Weapon States Parties to the NPT; and the notion of extended deterrence, used to justify the possession of nuclear weapons to protect other Alliance members.

Conference recommendations
The role that Canada could play in the realm of nuclear disarmament was the primary consideration for the sponsors of the Ottawa conference. According to Ernie Regehr,
As a middle power, a member of NATO, an active player in the global nuclear energy industry, a state party to the NPT, and a member of the G8, Canada is positioned to influence the process of nuclear disarmament.

“It is urgent that Prime Minister Harper and Foreign Minister Cannon publicly address nuclear disarmament and reaffirm Canada’s commitment to a world without nuclear weapons.” Thus, the formal conference recommendations were aimed at the Canadian government:

i) It is urgent that the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister find early and prominent opportunities, including the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and Canada’s chairmanship of the G8 and G20 meetings in Canada, to publicly address nuclear disarmament and reaffirm Canada's commitment to a world without nuclear weapons.

ii) Canada should encourage a new NATO Strategic Concept that a) welcomes and affirms the groundswell of calls for a world without nuclear weapons; b) confirms NATO’s commitment to the objectives of the NPT and declares that the intent of Article VI is a world free of nuclear weapons; and c) commits NATO to security and arms control policies that conform to Articles I and II of the NPT and that are designed to achieve the nuclear disarmament promised in Article VI.

iii) The Canadian Government should support new initiatives within Europe and publicly indicate its support for the removal of all remaining non-strategic nuclear weapons from European soil, in support of longstanding international calls that all nuclear weapons be returned to the territories of the states that own them.

iv) Canada should support the development of an improved strategic relationship with Russia including initiatives such as upgrading the NATO-Russia Council; promoting continuing strategic dialogue between the US and Russia in support of a new nuclear disarmament treaty; and follow-on measures that engage other states with nuclear weapons, including China.

v) Canada should work to forge a consensus within NATO: that the policies of nuclear weapon states, and of NATO, should reflect the global norm, which has existed since 1945, against the use of nuclear weapons.

vi) Canada should compliment the United States and Russia for negotiations toward a START replacement treaty and insist on commitments at the NPT Review Conference to further US and Russian reductions and to multilateral reductions leading to elimination.

vii) As a NATO ally, Canada should encourage the Alliance to take advantage of the present climate of global support for nuclear disarmament to phase out any role for nuclear weapons in its security policies.

viii) Canada should press for the NPT Review Conference to commit to preparatory work on a Nuclear Weapons Convention, or framework of instruments, for sustainable, verifiable, and enforceable global elimination of nuclear weapons.

ix) The government should restore the practice of an inclusive approach to NGOs by naming representatives of civil society to the Canadian delegation to the 2010 NPT Review Conference in May 2010.

x) At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Canada should demonstrate its commitment to seize the new hope-filled opportunity, not only to envision a world of peace and security without nuclear weapons, but to generate concrete actions to make it a reality.

NOTES

1. The other sponsoring organizations were fellow members of the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (CNANW): Canadian Pugwash Group, Physicians for Global Survival, and the World Federalist Movement – Canada.

2. For a more detailed discussion on NATO’s Strategic Concept Review and nuclear weapons, see Ernie Regehr, “NATO’s nuclear declarations,” on p. 3.


4. Taken from the Briefing Paper (see #3 above), pp. 15-16, with some modification.

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Evolving approaches to armed violence reduction in the Caribbean

Maribel Gonzales

Armed violence is the intentional use of physical force, threatened or actual, with arms, against oneself, another person, group, community or State that results in loss, injury, death and/or psychosocial harm to an individual or individuals and that can undermine a community’s, country’s or region’s security and development achievements and prospects. (UNGA 2009)

More than 740,000 people die each year as a result of armed violence; 490,000 violent deaths per year occur in non-conflict settings; 60 per cent of homicides are committed with guns. These grim figures from the report, Global Burden of Armed Violence (Geneva Declaration Secretariat 2008, pp. 2, 3, 5), underscore the changing nature of violence, its prevalence in non-conflict settings, and the role of guns in fuelling the violence. Beyond the stark statistics, there is strong evidence (Geneva Declaration Secretariat 2008) that armed violence undermines development and threatens the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. The 2006 Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, now endorsed by over 100 countries, demonstrates the growing consensus to address armed violence as a development imperative.

Armed violence takes many forms, occurs in a wide range of contexts, and affects men, women, girls, and boys differently, but the risk factors and effects of armed violence are often similar. Young men between the ages of 15 and 30 make up the majority of perpetrators and victims of armed violence. Women, girls, and boys bear a disproportionate burden of the indirect and longer-term impacts of armed violence. Beneath the violence there is a complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and political factors, including social norms, relationships, and behaviours linked to masculinity; income and gender inequalities; marginalization or exclusion of certain groups; weak governance by the state; organized crime; and trafficking of firearms and drugs.

At one time armed violence reduction focussed on control and deterrence of violence by reducing inappropriate access to instruments of violence through such measures as weapons collections and gun control legislation. Fighting crime and violence was more reactive, relying heavily on the police (e.g., “crackdown on gangs”) and the judicial system (e.g., tougher sentences for perpetrators).

As the complexities of armed violence and its links with development, peace, and security are better understood, the concept and strategies to address armed violence are evolving to place a greater emphasis on prevention and reducing vulnerabilities to decrease the likelihood of violence in the first place. Efforts to curb small arms use go beyond controlling the supply to addressing the factors that fuel the demand for arms. Small arms control is a component of a broader, longer-term and multi-dimensional approach that addresses a range of risk factors associated with the onset of armed violence. As Norway’s Secretary of State Gry Larsen (2009) states:

Armed violence is not a thing that can be banned – such as cluster munitions or anti-personnel mines. Armed violence is the result of intertwined social, economical cultural and political factors – that only can be addressed by pursuing many tracks at the same time, in a coherent and strategic manner.

Caribbean cases

The Caribbean’s homicide rate of 18.1 in 2004 (the most recent year in which comprehensive data is available) is more than double the world average of 7.6 per 100,000 inhabitants (UNODC 2004). In Jamaica, which has the highest homicide rate among countries in the region, the death rate from violence is higher than that in many wars. While the standard international definition of a war or high-intensity conflict includes a fatality rate of over 1,000 per year, in Jamaica, 1,574 people were murdered in 2007 (UNDP-Jamaica 2008a).

Table 1 presents examples of ongoing projects in the region that address armed violence. These projects, all funded by multilateral agencies, illustrate the elements involved in armed violence reduction. (No conclusions are made here about the effectiveness of these projects.)

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) started violence prevention work in 1996. Its primary justification to become the first development bank to fund stand-alone violence
prevention projects came from its research on the economic costs of different types of violence. Typically the IDB uses a public health approach. It identifies the dominant risk factors associated with violent activity and then designs specific interventions to minimize those (Buvinić et al 2005).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has strongly advocated for the need to see armed violence as a development issue. It has a program for small arms control and armed violence prevention and has assisted countries (including Jamaica) in developing comprehensive armed violence prevention programs.

In contrast, the World Bank does not fund stand-alone violence prevention projects. Instead, violence and crime prevention components are integrated in its urban renewal projects. The rationale is to exploit the synergies between infrastructure upgrading and community-based prevention activities. Development through improved access to basic services reduces the risk and effects of armed violence.

Some observations about the projects shown in Table 1:

1. This work takes time to produce results. Although the UNDP’s program Jamaica Violence Prevention, Peace and Sustainable Development (VPPSD) is shown as a three-year project, there were prior initiatives, starting with a civic dialogue on governance in 2002, which contributed to the approval of a National Security Policy in 2007.

2. Projects use a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches because violence has many causes. Top-down approaches (citizen security, environmental design, criminal justice) are those that are primarily driven by the state or implementing agency. Bottom-up approaches (social capital, conflict transformation) are community-driven development strategies to engage citizens in targeted communities and strengthen or rebuild social capital.

### Table 1: Armed violence projects in the Caribbean

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<th>UNDP</th>
<th>World Bank</th>
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<td>Project</td>
<td>Trinidad &amp; Tobago Citizen Security Programme (CSP)</td>
<td>Jamaica Violence Prevention Peace &amp; Sustainable Development (VPPSD)</td>
<td>Jamaica Inner City Basic Services for the Poor (ICBSP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost in USD</td>
<td>$35-million ($24.5-million loan)</td>
<td>$2.27-million in grants</td>
<td>$32.8-million ($29.3-million loan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approach(es) used</td>
<td>Citizen security, public health, environmental design, social capital, criminal justice.</td>
<td>Comprehensive violence prevention focused on capacity development. Citizen security, social capital, conflict transformation.</td>
<td>Municipal urban renewal, environmental design, conflict transformation, social capital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Reduce crime and violence in 22 high-crime pilot communities through preventive interventions addressing the most proximal and modifiable risk factors.</td>
<td>Increase capacity of government and targeted communities to attain a more peaceful, secure, and just society.</td>
<td>Improve quality of life in 12 inner-city areas and poor urban informal settlements. Reduce high levels of homicide and youth violence; reduce associated risk factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope of interventions</td>
<td>• Community safety: community action officers, rapid impact proposals for AVR, community peace promoters, youth development, domestic violence, media and public education campaigns. • Institutional Strengthening Police Services: Police station construction upgrades, information technology training and computer equipment, victim services training. • Institutional strengthening Ministry of National Security: improvements in crime and violence information systems, training.</td>
<td>• Community safety: community consultations meetings, community safety plans, peace and justice centres, life skills coaching and youth employment, safe schools. • Institutional strengthening of civil society: implementation capacity support, networking, and mobilization. • Policy and program development: standardizing data collection and analysis; draft national policies on small arms control, community safety, restorative justice, improvement of the Firearms Act. • Institutional strengthening Ministries of Justice and National Security, Social Development Commission, Jamaica Constabulary Force, Jamaica Defence Force, National Firearms Licensing Authority to better control the legal firearms trade.</td>
<td>• Public safety enhancement: community liaison officers, diagnostics, training and technical assistance on short-term mitigation and conflict resolution and medium-term social prevention interventions. • Improved basic urban infrastructure: water, sanitation, roads, electricity, community centres, recreational facilities. • Financial services: microenterprise, home improvements, land regularization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: IDB, UNDP Jamaica, and the World Bank.
3. Front-end community sensitization and mobilization work is relied on to provide diagnostic and baseline information and to engage and empower residents of targeted communities. The VPPSD “Monday Night Forums” and Community Town Hall meetings are consultative mechanisms that determine programming priorities.

4. Data drives project formulation and elaboration. Therefore, research that produces good data is critical. Integrated crime and violence information is being developed in the Trinidad and Tobago Citizen Security Programme (CSP). Cleaning and standardizing the collection of crime and violence data is a priority.

   Data is particularly important in developing community-level interventions in the targeted communities. Community-based staff is crucial in the collecting of information and in discussing the results with residents. The Jamaica Inner City Basic Services for the Poor (ICBSP) has Community Liaison Officers who conduct diagnostic and baseline surveys. Community Action Officers in the CSP use a five-step community safety assessment in each of the pilot communities to provide a detailed safety profile of crime and violence issues and of risk and protective factors, and to build effective partnerships. Project preparation work and information from IDB’s previous projects have indicated that the most proximal and modifiable risk factors for the CSP are firearms, juvenile delinquency and anti-social behaviour, child abuse, and domestic violence. Mapping and the use of geographic information systems (GIS) to plot incidents of violence are powerful tools that community mobilizers can use to engage the community. In the VPPSD, when community members see the “killing field” superimposed on their streets and homes, they see more clearly the need to reduce violence. Asset mapping of community resources was done as part of project preparation for the CSP.

5. Multi-sectoral interventions involve many actors, including some who have not traditionally worked together. For example, 10 organizations – four government, one academic, and five nongovernmental organizations – are involved in the VPPSD project.

6. Institutional strengthening of both government and nongovernmental organizations involved in the projects includes upgrading diagnostic, policy, monitoring, and evaluation capacities.

7. Implementing armed violence reduction projects can be expensive. The costs involved underscore the need to monitor and systematically analyze the interventions and their impact to determine what works and what does not.

   Ultimately, the costs of armed violence reduction programs must be weighed against the costs of the violence itself. These costs are increasingly measurable and invariably high. An example is the direct impact on health systems of people killed or wounded by gun fire. In addition, there are the immeasurable costs to surviving family members and communities who lose their loved ones in senseless violence.

**NOTES**

1. The details about the projects are drawn from UNDP-Jamaica 2008b, World Bank Project Database, and IDB 2008.

2. Definitions of approaches are taken from Moser and McIlwaine (2006), p. 103.

**REFERENCES**


Maribel Gonzales is a Program Associate with Project Ploughshares.
**The Doomsday Clock moves back one minute**

*It is now 6 minutes to midnight*

On January 14, 2010, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (BAS) adjusted their Doomsday Clock from 11:55 to 11:54. According to the Board of BAS, “It is 6 minutes to midnight. We are poised to bend the arc of history toward a world free of nuclear weapons. For the first time since atomic bombs were dropped in 1945, leaders of nuclear weapons states are cooperating to vastly reduce their arsenals and secure all nuclear bomb-making material. And for the first time ever, industrialized and developing countries alike are pledging to limit climate-changing gas emissions that could render our planet nearly uninhabitable. These unprecedented steps are signs of a growing political will to tackle the two gravest threats to civilization – the terror of nuclear weapons and runaway climate change.”

The Doomsday Clock is designed to indicate the level of the global threat from nuclear weapons, climate change, and new developments in the life sciences and nanotechnology. More information about the Doomsday Clock can be found at [http://www.turnbacktheclock.org](http://www.turnbacktheclock.org).

The clock was last adjusted in January 2007. For discussion of this previous change, see “The Doomsday Clock moves two minutes closer to midnight,” by Ernie Regehr in the Spring 2007 *Ploughshares Monitor* ([http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/monitor/monno07f.pdf](http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/monitor/monno07f.pdf)).

*The clock image is reprinted with the permission of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.*

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**Update on the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

In the Winter 2009 *Ploughshares Monitor*, it was reported that 24 countries had ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions. For the Convention to come into effect, ratification by 30 state signatories was necessary. On February 16, the 30th state ratified the Convention, triggering its entry into force on August 1, 2010. The next milestone will be the First Meeting of States Parties, which is scheduled to be held in November 2010 in Lao PDR.

A statement attributable to the spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General says:

The Secretary-General welcomes this major advance on the global disarmament agenda, and notes that the Convention’s entry into force just two years after its adoption demonstrates the world’s collective revulsion at the impact of these terrible weapons.

Cluster munitions are unreliable and inaccurate. During conflict and long after it has ended, they maim and kill scores of civilians, including many children. They impair post-conflict recovery by making roads and land inaccessible to farmers and aid workers.

The United Nations is firmly committed to ending the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions and mitigating the suffering they cause. The Secretary-General calls on all States to become a party to the Convention without delay.

**New ratifications:**

- 25. New Zealand (22 Dec 2009)
- 26. Belgium (22 Dec 2009)
- 27. Montenegro (25 Jan 2010)
- 29. Burkina Faso (16 Feb 2010)
- 30. Moldova (16 Feb 2010)

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**Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATT</td>
<td>Arms Trade Treaty</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
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<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Citizen Security Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPA</td>
<td>Final Peace Agreement</td>
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<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographic information systems</td>
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<td>GoSS</td>
<td>Government of Southern Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICBS</td>
<td>Inner City Basic Services for the Poor</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>ICTJ</td>
<td>International Center for Transitional Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>Inter-American Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally displaced persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPACS</td>
<td>Implementation Agency for Crime and Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNWS</td>
<td>Non-nuclear weapon state</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Point of Contact on small arms</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPT</td>
<td>Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<tr>
<td>RevCon</td>
<td>Review Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIARG</td>
<td>Sudan Inter-Agency Reference Group</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN-LiREC</td>
<td>UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>UNMIS</td>
<td>UN Mission in Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>VPPSD</td>
<td>Violence Prevention, Peace and Sustainable Development</td>
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</table>
Tackling trouble in paradise: Regional action on small arms in the Caribbean

Kenneth Epps

With partners in Trinidad and Tobago, Project Ploughshares hosted a two-day workshop near Port of Spain in January that brought together state officials and civil society representatives to advance a regional response to the mounting threats and damage of illicit firearms in the Caribbean.

The problem of small arms in the Caribbean

Although the massive devastation in Haiti from the recent earthquake was in everyone’s thoughts, participants assembled to tackle a phenomenon that is also shattering lives in the region: the widespread misuse of small arms and light weapons. Officials from 14 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states and associates, many of them senior police officers, joined representatives of Caribbean civil society organizations to find common cause in the “Regional Workshop to Advance Caribbean Action on Small Arms,” held January 20–21 at the Institute of International Relations on the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies in Trinidad. Through joint sponsorship of the event, the workshop provided the first occasion for Project Ploughshares to collaborate with the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), the Caribbean regional point of contact on issues related to small arms and light weapons.

Early workshop presentations detailed the impact of illicit firearms on the region. In her statement during the opening session, the Executive Director of IMPACS, Lynne Anne Williams, noted:

The evidence is overwhelmingly clear, illegal weapons are contributing to a growing state of lawlessness and fear in our society, undermining our quality of life in these times of economic scarcity, and tarnishing the Region’s image in such a way that it may even affect our future prospects for development.... No country in the region has escaped the effects of this crippling reality in which youth are disproportionately represented both as victims and the perpetrators.

This message was reinforced by research presented by two speakers from the University of the West Indies. Drawing on situational analysis of gun-related crime in the Caribbean conducted on behalf of the Caribbean Coalition for Development & Reduction of Armed Violence, Anmita Montoute spoke of the challenges of crime prevention and resolution. In St. Lucia, for example, low success rates in solving gun crimes pose an ongoing challenge. Deborah McFee emphasized the need for gender analysis to reveal the complexities of crime in the region. It is insufficient to construct an understanding of criminality around the young urban male, who is statistically the most active. A closer examination of the role of women in crime and violence is also necessary.

Developing regional solutions

New and innovative programs intended to address gun violence are emerging in the region. Montoute described St. Lucia’s Community Action Program for Safety, which seeks to integrate crime prevention with social programs. Following his presentation of data on the alarming rise in firearms violence in CARICOM countries (see Figure 1), Francis Forbes, Director of IMPACS Liaison Office, outlined programs that the Caribbean Community has established in response. In addition to encouraging the appointment of national points of contact on small arms issues across its membership, CARICOM has instituted political and institutional initiatives to counter small arms proliferation and criminal use. These include ballistic information and firearms tracing systems designed to assist regional police in the identification and tracking of weapons used for crime. The recently established Regional Integrated Ballistic Information Network, for example, is intended to target “crime guns” from ballistic data, to be shared not only among CARICOM law enforcement services but also with the states that are the sources of the guns.

Even so, the region faces major challenges to fully implementing a strategy to address the illicit use of guns. In his presentation, Bill Godnick of the UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) outlined the UN small arms-related processes that are available to CARICOM states and noted the relatively low level of regional participation in each. Since low implementation of multilateral commitments by Caribbean states is due, at least in part, to limited resources, Godnick highlighted available UN-LiREC assistance, including legal assistance, training courses for security officials, and programs for the destruction of confiscated and surplus firearms stockpiles. Similarly, Alison August Treppel of the Department of Public Security at the Organization of American States (OAS) described OAS assistance programs to build law enforcement capacity by, inter alia, training judges and public prosecutors and strengthening border controls. The OAS can provide each member state with a
laser marking machine to mark firearms, as required by the OAS firearms convention and other international agreements.

To facilitate OAS assistance, Treppel stressed the importance of the appointment by each CARICOM state of a National Point of Contact on small arms (NPC). Serena Joseph-Harris, Director of the Strategic Services Agency and National Contact Point for Trinidad and Tobago, provided a compelling elucidation of the role and significance of the NPC. In Trinidad and Tobago the NPC has linked the obligations that flow from international small arms instruments to requirements in national laws, regulations, and procedures in 11 key areas – from manufacture and import of firearms through stockpiling, export, and disposal. In areas where there are problems or blocks at the national level, the NPC takes on the task of prompting the appropriate remedies.

The two-day workshop provided time for working groups to explore six thematic areas related to small arms proliferation and misuse. The working group which discussed regulation of the possession of firearms, for example, returned to the plenary session with detailed recommendations for future regional cooperation and programming. These included a call for common regional licensing standards, based on best practices in the region, in areas such as competency (for example, the level of safety awareness or marksmanship of an applicant), vetting procedures (for example, the nature of background checks on licensees), and the duration of licences. The group also recommended that national licensing authorities replace the usual current system of gun licensing by Commissioners of Police. Similarly, the working group on cooperation with civil society called for the identification of specific activities, such as the tracing of weapons, where government security services (mostly police) could collaborate with civil society groups. The group also recommended more support for civil society attention to the social issues that create the demand for guns. Other working groups on firearms marking and tracing, export and import, small arms storage, and private security forces returned to report parallel recommendations.

In all the working group reports there were calls for greater regional collaboration and uniform regional standards. By providing specific recommendations for joint planning and activities by states and civil society groups, the workshop served to advance a collaborative, Caribbean approach to the firearms trafficking and misuse that plague the region. Indeed, workshop participants laid the foundation for an effective “regional plan of action” on small arms and light weapons to serve the interests of all CARICOM member states. It is apparent that the next steps will be to detail and prioritize such a plan and, with international cooperation and assistance facilitated through the UN Programme of Action on small arms, to work to implement it.

**Figure 1: Total homicides for the period 2005-2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>Number of Homicides (2005-2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bahamas</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>6208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>1693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9733</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From IMPACS presentation, January 20, 2010. The figure does not include Haiti, the remaining CARICOM member state. A 2007 World Bank report revealed that the per capita murder rate in the Caribbean is the highest among the world’s regions.

By providing specific recommendations for joint planning and activities by states and civil society groups, the workshop served to advance a collaborative, Caribbean approach to the firearms trafficking and misuse that plague the region.
The constant bickering between north and south political leaders and parties on election modalities, freedom of the press, and related details certainly points to potential crises. But it also points to the restoration of politics, Sudanese-style, without the resort to violence.

As Sudan moves toward elections in April 2010 and the January 2011 referendum on Southern Sudan succession, instability from the escalation of cattle raiding deaths among pastoralists and attacks by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in the south have increased concerns about a return to civil war.

Growing violence in the south

On January 19, 2010 the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) reported that “an estimated 2,500 people have died and 359,000 have been displaced since January 2009 as a result of intertribal conflict and LRA-related violence” (UNSC 2010). This exceeded the number of violent deaths in the Darfur region of Sudan in the same time period.
Ms. Ameerah Haq, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, reported that between mid-December 2008 and September 2009, LRA attacks displaced 68,000 Sudanese and forced 18,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic into Sudan. At least 200 people were killed and 130 abducted by the LRA in that period (Sudan Tribune 2009).

The January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended a decades-long civil war between the Government of Sudan, based in the north in Khartoum, and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), now based in Juba in the south, made provision for a six-year transitional phase. Two key CPA-mandated processes — nationwide elections and the referendum — are now in view and seen as potential triggers for a return to violent confrontation between the north and south.

A joint statement of Sudanese churches (Sudan Council of Churches 2009) further identified specific attacks on civilians and government installations as “a coordinated campaign by the enemies of peace to destabilize the South in the run up to the elections and the referendum.”

A January 2010 report (Mailer & Poole, p. 2) by 10 major international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Sudan warned that “Sudan is at a crossroads and the next 12 months could determine the future of Africa’s largest nation.... [T]he peace agreement is extremely fragile and violence is again increasing. The humanitarian situation, already one of the worst in the world, is deteriorating.”

The International Crisis Group (2009, p. 1) puts it more bluntly: “Sudan is sliding towards violent breakup.” It proposes that a series of steps be taken, including new north-south negotiations assisted by the international community, to determine how these inevitably separating states will relate to each other after the referendum in 2011.

It’s understandable that alarm bells are ringing. A return to full-scale north-south war conjures up recollections of the devastation of the last phase of civil war between 1983 and 2005, when an estimated two million people were killed and four million displaced out of a population of about 30 million. Sudan also borders on nine states, all of which will suffer if Sudan returns to wide-scale military confrontation.

In a recent statement the US State Department noted: “Sudan is at an important crossroads that can either lead to steady improvements in the lives of the Sudanese people or degenerate into even more violent conflict and state failure.” As well as being tragic for Sudanese, a return to war could lead to “new safe-havens for international terrorists, significantly threatening U.S. interests.”

Canadians are watching as well. A “think piece” (North-South Institute 2009) written for the Canadian NGO umbrella group, Sudan Inter-Agency Reference Group (SIARG), outlined the factors contributing to Southern Sudan’s fragility, starting with the profound lack of human capacity and infrastructure that can be traced to the prolonged civil war (p. 3). The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) continues to face the challenge of transforming its leadership from an insurgent military force to an accountable governing party. Progress is being made, but “the period from 2008 to 2013 is a critical juncture where large and sustained aid, security, and diplomatic investment can give Sudanese the most enabling conditions ‘to move permanently off the violent conflict escalator’” (p. 7).

If Southern Sudan becomes increasingly unstable, it risks implosion and anarchy, making it more vulnerable to aggression from the north. The current warnings are accompanied by admonitions to the international community to increase its support for security and development in Southern Sudan and to maintain international diplomatic and other forms of pressure on Khartoum to respect democratic processes and refrain from resorting to war to frustrate the self-determination of Southern Sudan.

**Hope for a political solution**

Even in light of the obvious problems facing Southern Sudan, there is scope for optimism. If expectations about literal implementation of the CPA’s many provisions are dramatically lowered, several things become apparent.

In the first place, the CPA was neither comprehensive nor a peace agreement. It was an elaborate ceasefire document providing processes and milestones over an interim period for restoring politics to negotiate conflicts in a land habituated to war. If war is politics by other means, as the saying goes, then to escape war is to return to politics by means of politics. The constant bickering we are now reading about between north and south political leaders and parties on election modalities, freedom of the press, and related details certainly points to potential crises. But it also points to the restoration of politics, Sudanese-style. Politics is now being conducted in Sudan between north and south without the use of guns, even though the threat of use has not disappeared.

Cattle raiding and LRA attacks are extremely serious to those directly affected, and cry out for determined action from the GoSS and UNMIS to provide improved local security. However, neither of these sources of violence has been proven to be politically directed. In other words, these forms of violent conflict are generally localized and can be understood without resort to explanations that involve manipulation by the north to destabilize the south, or exploitation of local violence by political elites in Juba for their advancement.

For a week in September 2008 Kenneth Epps and I were in Tonj East County in Warrap State in Southern Sudan to participate in research on the impact of World Vision peacebuilding and development programming on levels of violence.' We interviewed people who had been directly affected by cattle raiding violence, including warriors involved in raids and retaliatory actions. They explained the conflict dynamics in terms of traditional rivalries and family conflicts escalated by the pervasive civilian access to automatic weapons. With various types of development assistance and negotiations along traditional lines, it was possible for peace to be restored.

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As horrific as the continuing LRA violence is in Southern Sudan, the DRC, and CAR, it too is unlikely to be decisive in pushing the north and south to war. I take a cue for this conclusion from a personal encounter in September 2006 with the current President of the GoSS, Salva Kiir. I was part of a small nongovernment delegation making a courtesy call on what had to be a difficult morning. Around Juba the night before 35 civilians were killed in five separate, coordinated incidents. Speculation on the identity of the perpetrators centred on LRA soldiers, then participating in peace talks hosted in Juba, or agents of Khartoum. The government and military leaders of Southern Sudan, on this occasion and on many others since, demonstrated their unwillingness to be provoked into a military response that could escalate and upset the CPA apple cart.

The final and more important factor that leads me to believe that north-south war has effectively receded from Sudan’s horizon is the military buildup of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army since 2005. Salva Kiir has been quoted as saying: “We don’t want war.... I will not be the one to take this country back to war, but if war was to be imposed on us we can all feel assured that we are capable of defending ourselves” (Ashworth 2009, p. 20). With the assistance of Kenya, the US, and others, Southern Sudan’s elite fighting forces have been significantly upgraded with helicopter gunships, Antonov planes, tanks, and heavy artillery that will give Khartoum significant pause before contemplating even limited military incursions into oil-rich or disputed areas in the south. The cost of this military buildup by the GoSS has been significant (about 40 per cent of the GoSS annual budget is estimated to be devoted to “security”) and regrettable, in that financial resources have been diverted from building infrastructure and promoting economic development.

This more optimistic take on the prospects for Sudan to survive the upcoming elections and referendum without a return to north-south war hinges on the calculation that Sudan has turned a corner. Violence is no longer the usual response to conflict. By virtue of the CPA the north has also been dragged closer toward democratic practice, even if it is safe to bet that the elections will not pass the threshold of “free and fair.” To maintain this political track to sustainable peace the international community can assist but not determine the outcome – through carrots of support and sticks of pressure directed to all parties in Sudan.

NOTES
2. Ashworth (2009, pp. 21-22) speculates on the nature of the military engagement between the north and south should war come: “Both sides are preparing for war. In the two previous civil wars, the south was unprepared, and its liberation armies began from very small ad hoc forces. This time the south will begin with a large standing army and with arms and materiel which it could never have dreamed of before…. SPLA troops... will be fighting on their home ground to defend their own nation. Their morale will be high.”

REFERENCES
Reintegration and reconciliation in Afghanistan

In what order and at what price?

Ernie Regehr

The guns of the US-led military surge were blazing with renewed zeal in Afghanistan’s Helmand Province in February. But off the battlefield, much of the talk and not a few questions focused on the merits of reintegration and reconciliation. Would the escalated fighting be an effective route to the diplomacy that is essential to finally ending the war – that, in the words of Prime Minister Harper, will never be won? Could effective reintegration precede such reconciliation diplomacy and a ceasefire? Will reconciliation mean losing the gains made in human rights and civil liberties?

A new reintegration plan

In the current parlance of the Afghanistan conflict, reintegration is the wartime effort to persuade rank-and-file insurgents to quit fighting and lay down their arms in exchange for personal safety, immunity, and employment. Reconciliation is diplomacy that seeks to engage insurgency leaders in pursuit of a political settlement that will end the fighting (Mojumdar 2010). And, of course, many are hoping that the former can help to create favourable conditions for the latter.

The escalated fighting and the new reintegration plan are both pursued as war-fighting tactics – not so much to win the war as to set the insurgency back on its heels. A stalled insurgency, the reasoning goes, would create more favourable conditions for weaning fighters away from the insurgency and for inducing their leaders to seek negotiations with the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners.

The reintegration of former combatants into society is an essential, and effective, post-conflict measure to stabilize a ceasefire and to consolidate peace, but as a wartime tactic to undermine a still vigorous insurgency it has no persuasive precedent. Extensive post-Cold War experience in demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration programs (DDR) offers few examples of wartime reintegration. There are examples of wartime reintegration of former child soldiers, but mainly in humanitarian efforts to rescue children, not as tactics to weaken adversaries.

Reintegration was, nevertheless, a key theme of the January 2010 London Conference on Afghanistan. There was acknowledgement that such efforts have failed to date, but one of the chief outcomes of the conference was an agreement to try again and try harder. Dramatically increased funding was promised. The conference thus welcomed “the plans of the Government of Afghanistan to offer an honorable place in society to those willing to renounce violence, participate in the free and open society and respect the principles that are enshrined in the Afghan constitution, cut ties with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, and pursue their political goals peacefully.” The international community also established a Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund to finance the program (Afghanistan: The London Conference 2010, para 13).

Conversations in Kabul in the week preceding the conference did not elicit a lot of support for the view that rank-and-file insurgents are essentially mercenaries – fighting to earn a livelihood for their families, without really believing in the cause, and amenable to switching sides if the price is right. Instead, the prevailing view, from people anxious to see the insurgency end, included academics and civil society representatives, was that while fighters are in many cases tiring of the fight, neither their own convictions nor the social pressures in their communities incline them toward switching sides and joining those still largely regarded as their “enemy.” It is a common testimony of Afghans that few of those now in the insurgency will be at ease on the sidelines of the war, turning away from the enormous personal and communal sacrifices already made to live as wards of the very government and international forces that their own community views with undiminished suspicion.

The implication is that Afghanistan will ultimately have to follow the prevailing post-Cold War model for DDR in which reintegration follows reconciliation – that is, it follows a political process through which political leaders recognized by the insurgents, even if these are more local than national leaders, agree to integrate with the prevailing order. Only then will rank-and-file fighters in significant numbers lay down their arms. By design and by prevailing practice, DDR takes place after a ceasefire, not as a means of getting to a ceasefire.

That raises the question of the current status or prospects for political reconciliation efforts that could yield a ceasefire.

Prospects for reconciliation

The hope that intensified warfare will hasten the insurgents’ move to a negotiating table has to contend with the sobering reality that more than
Afghanistan will ultimately have to follow the prevailing post-Cold War model for DDR in which reintegration follows reconciliation.

eight years of war, including continuing civilian deaths at the hands of international forces, have not only failed to set the insurgents back on their heels, but have witnessed the growth and spread of the insurgency to the point where the journalist, author, and expert on Afghan and Pakistani affairs, Ahmed Rashid (2010), reports that “the Afghan Taliban are now a countrywide movement.”

The word “reconciliation” appears only once in the 3,600-word communiqué issued at the end of the London Conference, and it appears not as a topic of the London discussions but in the context of acknowledging another conference – the summit meeting held by Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey in Istanbul, which declared support for “Afghan-led peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts.”

While President Hamid Karzai’s speech (2010) to the London conference made prominent reference to reconciliation, including his plan to create a “National Council for Peace, Reconciliation and Reintegration,” the conference communiqué welcomed only a “national Peace and Reintegration Programme” (Para 13).

This conspicuous failure to promote reconciliation reflects a larger reluctance in the international community to fully embrace a diplomatic track for ending the conflict, although the Obama Administration has in general signaled its support for political accommodation. But many of those who are open to reconciliation in principle worry both about timing and about the human rights implications.

The timing argument easily becomes an argument against negotiations in principle, opposing talks with either an ascendant or a retreating Taliban. On the one hand, there is no point in talking to an ascendant Taliban because it will be disinclined to compromise; on the other hand, there is no need to seek compromise with a retreating Taliban.

The reluctance to negotiate that is linked to human rights concerns is more clearly rooted in questions of basic justice. Canadian Chris Alexander, the very effective former Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan and former deputy special representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan, acknowledged in a recent public lecture in Waterloo, Ontario that the Bonn Agreement of 2001 was not a genuine peace agreement because the party that shortly before had controlled 95 per cent of the country (the Taliban) was not at the table. At the same time he explicitly rejected any negotiations leading to power-sharing. The Taliban record of extraordinary human rights abuses while in office, as well as their terrorist tactics since being driven out of office, disqualified them as partners in a new peace agreement.

That position is amplified by the noted Australian expert on Afghanistan, William Maley (2009), who said that, not only does talk of negotiating with the Taliban “send shivers down the spines of significant elements in the Afghan population, starting with Afghan women and members of ethnic and sectarian minorities,” but a deal with the Taliban would have additional catastrophic effects. It would take the air out of Afghanistan’s slow transition to modernity, it would lead to the rearming of anti-Taliban groups, and it would lead to sanctuary for Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan.

Similar reservations are also heard from Afghan professionals and urbanites in Kabul, genuinely fearful that the gains they have made in basic rights and liberties since 2001 would be entirely lost or drastically eroded in any political settlement that would give the Taliban and other insurgent groups a share of the power and an opportunity to reestablish elements of the draconian rule that characterized their regime of the 1990s.

Juan Cole of the Global American Institute reports on a survey that indicates that non-Pashtun communities are most wary of reconciliation with the Taliban, citing, among others, Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazarah concerns that negotiations could lead to the restoration of the harsh conditions of Taliban rule. For example, while supporting reconciliation efforts in principle, the Hazarah-dominated Afghanistan People’s Islamic Unity Party issued a statement after the London Conference saying that “any type of reconciliation effort must fully respect Afghanistan’s Constitution and values such as democracy, freedom of expression, human rights, women’s rights, and Afghanistan’s multi-ethnic structure, political, religious, and cultural diversity.”

Presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah called for a national dialogue about reconciliation with the Taliban. “People want to know,” he said, “if they are going back to the Islamization of the Taliban government that was ousted in 2001” (Cole 2010).

The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) has recently also warned against reconciliation at the expense of accountability, citing Afghanistan’s “National Reconciliation, General Amnesty and National Stability Law.” The ICTJ (2010) says that the law offers “an amnesty for all involved in the Afghan conflict, regardless of whether they merely took up arms or were responsible for war crimes or crimes against humanity. Amnesties are frequently part of peace negotiations, but international law forbids amnesties for serious war crimes.”

Sari Kouvo, the head of ICTJ’s Afghanistan program, is quoted as saying that, “while reconciliation is needed to end the
conflicts in Afghanistan, it should not be promoted by further entrenching a culture of impunity.”

Facing hard realities

It is clear that reconciliation, supported by effective reintegration programs, points the way out of the Afghanistan war, but two hard realities must be faced. First, reintegration must be recalculated as a product or follow-on to a political settlement; reintegration is unlikely to be the means to a political settlement. Second, for a durable political settlement in Afghanistan to preserve and gradually expand the rights and freedoms of Afghans, the process leading to it will have to be comprehensive, including Afghans from all walks of life and communities, and guided by human rights law and basic principles of transitional justice.

An Amnesty International (2001) statement made just one month after the US-led attack applies equally well today:

There is as yet no indication of how long the military action will continue, but there are already discussions about the political future for Afghanistan after the conflict. It is essential that an agenda for human rights and social justice for all Afghans is developed on the basis of broad consultation and participation by the widest possible cross section of Afghan society. Solutions cannot be imposed from the outside and must be decided by the Afghan people. The UN has a substantive part to play in facilitating this process.

Amnesty’s call for “broad consultation and participation” is echoed in Abdullah Abdullah’s current call for a “national dialogue.” In the final stages of negotiations to end any protracted war, when the focus turns to exit strategies, negotiators are invariably tempted to cut deals, even if that means trading away commitments to inclusiveness and basic principles of justice. It is a temptation they can’t resist on their own – they need the guidance of a fully engaged and consulted population. That in turn means the international community now needs to become fully fixated on developing the mechanisms for engagement and consultation that will draw in all segments of Afghan society and earn the cooperation of Afghanistan’s neighbours – in other words, a mechanism to meaningfully consult those whose future is on the line.

NOTES

1. “We are not going to ever defeat the insurgency,” Stephen Harper told CNN’s Fareed Zakaria in an interview that aired March 1, 2009. “Afghanistan has probably had – my reading of Afghanistan history – it’s probably had an insurgency forever, of some kind” (CNN.com 2009).

2. The meeting, the “Istanbul Regional Summit on Friendship and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia,” pledged support for “Afghan-led peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts,” and, notably, to work actively for “ending support wherever it occurs on each other’s territory for illegally-armed groups, parallel structures and illegal financing directed towards destabilizing Afghanistan or individual neighbors” (Afghanistan: The London Conference 2010, Para 28).

3. “Washington’s new approach combines a readiness to negotiate and compromise (even with significant elements of the Taliban leadership) in order to end the war with a belief that it needs to do so from a position of clear military strength. Operation Moshtarak is the first major step in this military-diplomatic process” (Rogers 2010).

REFERENCES


Ernie Regehr, O.C., is Senior Policy Advisor with Project Ploughshares.

Join the Interfaith Leaders’ G8/G20 Campaign

On June 25-26 the leaders of the G8 nations will meet in Huntsville and on June 26-27 the G20 leaders will meet in Toronto. Religious leaders from around the world will meet on June 21-23 in Winnipeg to formulate their call to the G8 and G20 summits to address poverty, care for our planet, and invest in peace.

In preparation for these major events, local faith communities in Canada are asked to join together in hosting an interfaith dinner with their federal Member of Parliament as a guest. A link to detailed information on how to stage such an event can be found on the home page of the Interfaith Summit: http://faithchallengeg8.com/home_en.html.

Individuals also are encouraged to sign a petition that can be accessed on the Summit’s home page. The petition urges “our government representatives to set aside short-term agendas and work together for a future that allows all citizens of this planet to thrive.”

This meeting will bring together governments and civil society
• to affirm recognition of armed violence as a crosscutting impediment to achieving the MDGs; and
• to agree on concrete steps to reduce armed violence, improve measurement and monitoring of armed violence, and support the rights of armed violence victims.

The Oslo Conference will build support for armed violence reduction going into the review summit of the MDGs that will be held in September 2010 at the United Nations in New York.

Project Ploughshares is part of an informal civil society planning group for the Oslo Conference. The civil society participation is being headed by the London-based non-governmental organization Action on Armed Violence. At the Oslo Conference, civil society organizations will have an opportunity for direct participation and input across the fields of development, disarmament, public health, transparency and human rights, and survivors’ advocacy and assistance.

The High-Level Conference will be preceded by a Civil Society Forum that will introduce some of the key themes of the conference and provide an opportunity for civil society participants from different backgrounds to share their experiences.

The call

Civil society organisations are calling on states participating in the Oslo Summit on Armed Violence and the Millennium Development Goals to:
• **Act to end armed violence.**
  This should include working in partnership with civil society to strengthen short- and long-term prevention programming, and provide improved development assistance to affected communities and survivors based on expressed needs. States must demonstrate the efforts they are taking to reduce armed violence and show that these efforts are effective.
• **Face the facts of armed violence.**
  States must commit to monitoring and reporting the incidence and impact of armed violence; develop quantifiable goals for its reduction; and employ transparent, publicly verifiable indicators for measuring the success of their efforts. This is a fundamental responsibility and is also in keeping with the quantifiable commitments states have already made under the framework of the MDGs.
• **Assist the victims of armed violence.**

States must acknowledge their obligations to assist victims of armed violence in meeting their needs and enjoying their rights – including those injured or traumatized and their affected families and communities.

• **Coordinate national and global action.**
  Nationally and internationally, states and their partners, including international donors, must recognize that focused and specific development planning and increased international assistance and coordination are needed to reduce armed violence and thereby increase the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs.

• **Support global instruments that reinforce armed violence reduction.**
  States must act on their commitments and strengthen support for existing and emerging global norms and instruments related to armed violence reduction, including disarmament and arms control agreements and the MDGs themselves.

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Conrad Grebel University College

Banning Cluster Munitions: Government Policy and Practice documents the creation of the international treaty banning cluster munitions. It looks at the engagement of governments in the Oslo Process, a diplomatic initiative started by Norway in November 2006 to create a legally binding instrument outlawing cluster munitions and establishing a framework for dealing with contaminated areas and meeting the needs of victims of cluster munitions. The report also considers government practice with respect to the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of cluster munitions.

Banning Cluster Munitions contains entries on 150 countries, including signatories to the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, stockpiling countries, and affected states. It looks at the role played by civil society, particularly the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), in helping to secure international support for the convention. It considers how the treaty was achieved using a diplomatic model pioneered over a decade ago in the creation of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, which prohibits antipersonnel mines and requires their clearance and assistance to victims.

In Building Peace After War, Mats Berdal addresses questions that come out of the current widespread practice of intervention by outside actors in countries that have seen an end to conflict. The book analyzes the nature of the modern peacebuilding environment, in particular the historical and psychological conditions that shape it, and addresses the key tasks faced by outside forces in the early and critical "post-conflict" phase of an intervention. In doing so, it raises questions about the role of military force in support of peacebuilding, and the importance attached to the perception that the intervention is legitimate.

Berdal also looks critically at the ways in which governments and international organizations, particularly the UN, have responded to these challenges. He highlights the pivotal role of politics in planning peacebuilding operations, and offers some sober reflections on the future prospects for post-conflict intervention.

Mats Berdal is Professor of Security and Development at King’s College London.


This report is the unanimous product of an independent global panel of 15 commissioners from as many countries. It is divided into four parts: Seizing the Moment, Assessing Nuclear Threats and Risks, Formulating Policy Responses, and From Policy to Action: A Comprehensive Agenda. It also includes an appendix of commission recommendations.

Among the 76 recommendations:
- The setting of a medium-term "minimization point" target – to be reached by 2025 – of a world total of less than 2,000 nuclear warheads.
- Recommended outcomes for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including a 20-point statement on disarmament, measures against proliferation, and an approach to moving forward the issue of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East.
- Early movement by the nuclear-armed states on refining their nuclear doctrine to limit the role of nuclear weapons and give unequivocal assurances that they will not be used against non-nuclear weapons states.
- Strong support for the continued delegitimization of nuclear weapons, and the ultimate achievement of a completely nuclear weapon free world.

The Commission was launched as a joint initiative of the Australian and Japanese governments in July 2008.


This 11th Annual Report was released in November 2009, in advance of the Second Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty. As well as presenting new information collected in 2008 and 2009, it provides a special ten-year review of major developments over the past decade relating to anti-personnel landmine use, production, stockpiling, trade, humanitarian mine clearance, casualties, risk education, victim assistance, and support for mine action.

Landmine Monitor, the research and monitoring program of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, is coordinated by an Editorial Board drawn from five organizations: Mines Action Canada (a coalition of Canadian NGOs, including Project Ploughshares), Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Landmine Action, and Norwegian People’s Aid.

In the 11th Annual Report 2009, the Landmine Monitor provides an update of current developments relating to new and ongoing mine and antipersonnel Armament, including recent incidents of landmine use and related fatalities and injuries, progress toward meeting landmine-free targets, and ongoing steps toward national implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The report calls for renewed efforts to reduce the ongoing threat posed by landmines to civilians, as landmine use and contamination remain a constant danger to millions of people around the world, particularly in areas that have been recently affected by armed conflict.

The report also highlights the importance of addressing the aftereffects of landmines, such as victim assistance and mine clearance, which are critical for the safety and security of communities and for post-conflict reconstruction.

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Countdown to Zero outlines current threats posed by a growing number of nuclear-armed states and weighs the prospects for global disarmament, soliciting insights from a gallery of world leaders and policy experts, including Jimmy Carter, Mikhail Gorbachev, Tony Blair, Valerie Plame Wilson, Joe Cinnione, Zbigniew Brzezinski, FW de Klerk, and Perez Musharraf.

The film presents current realities. It describes the vulnerability of nuclear arsenals to theft. And, as director Lucy Walker notes in a review article by Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times, “Iran, Pakistan and North Korea have gotten much noisier, the alarm clock has been ringing.”

Turan notes that the film ends on a note of hope. Walker adds, “There will be a moment when the Berlin Wall fell and suddenly intractable problems get solved. I wanted to encourage the public to raise their voice. A breakthrough is closer than we think.”

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Resources

Countdown to Zero, Documentary film, directed by Lucy Walker, released January 2010, 90 minutes.


According to this new report by Bill Robinson, “Canadian military spending is now higher than it has been in more than 60 years – higher than it was during the Cold War or indeed at any time since the end of the Second World War.” National defence spending for 2009-2010 is $21.185-billion. In comparison, the Department of the Environment “was allocated only $1.064 billion.” Robinson concludes, “Canada could make a much greater contribution to global security and humanitarian action by shifting resources to non-military security efforts and to peacekeeping operations.”

Bill Robinson is a defence analyst and senior advisor of the Rideau Institute. From 1986 to 2001, he was on the staff of Project Ploughshares.
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