

#### IV. Build and Enhance United Nations Capacity to Address Problem

Since the problems are global in nature, a parallel effort must be made to build and enhance international organizations to better contribute to solving the problem. The UN Small Arms Panel made several recommendations to improve UN peace operations. First, guidelines need to be established to assist negotiators on peace settlements regarding small arms and light weapons, to include plans for the collection of weapons and their disposal and destruction. Second, assistance should be provided to peacekeeping missions in implementing weapons elements of mandates. Third, there should be a disarmament component established in all peacekeeping operations undertaken by the United Nations.

A comparison with the how the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) deals with the anti-personnel landmines (APM) points up the need for more attention to small arms and light weapons by the UN bureaucracy. DHA has a home page on the Internet, and arguably serves as the focal point for most of the action on dealing with APMs, for NGOs as well as national governments and IGOs. They also are very active in publicizing the negative effects of this weapon. A similar UN organizational home is needed for small arms and light weapons. Perhaps this could be the first priority of the new Department for Disarmament and Arms Regulation (DDAR) at the UN.

The global consensus that has emerged surrounding the linkage between excessive arms accumulations and the outbreak and exacerbation of conflict should provide the political will for the Member States to task the UN to at last take on an enhanced role in the variety of weapons-focused responses that have been outlined in this report. In the reform plan document *Renewing the United Nations*, it is stated that "nations everywhere have come to recognize their stake in the success of multilateral negotiations and the monitoring of weapons developments. As a consequence, the United Nations has taken centre stage in the worldwide effort to limit both weapons and conflict." This report also identifies "the flow of conventional weapons and small arms into the hands of civilians..as a new danger."<sup>10</sup> The reforms proposed include a new Department for Disarmament and Arms Regulation (UNDDAR) with an Under Secretary General. While the UNDDAR will continue to perform its traditional roles as the support agency for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) process and the Register of Conventional Arms, it is in the area of small arms and light weapons that this organization can be proactive and contribute more substantively. Specifically, it should establish an effective monitoring capability to identify and inform the international community of those situations in which weapons-focused solutions will be most effective. Also, since the collection and destruction of surplus arms is becoming more prevalent, the UNDDAR could take the lead in coordinating the expertise needed to conduct such operations, especially those cases which occur separate from official peace operations.

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<sup>10</sup> . *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform*. (New York: The United Nations, 14 July 1997). Document # A/51/950, pp. 40-41.