

environment for normal peaceful interaction. In addition, there is an increasing body of research suggesting that successful DDRPs help to prevent new conflicts from erupting.⁴

The interrelated nature of the topic was clearly recognized in resolution 51/45 N of 10 December 1996, entitled *Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures*, a resolution co-sponsored by delegations from different regions and adopted by consensus. In it the General Assembly stressed the particular importance of "the collection, control and disposal of arms, especially small arms and light weapons, coupled with restraint over the production, procurement and transfer of such arms, the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, demining and conversion," for the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in areas that have suffered from conflict.

But Member States' recognition of the inherently close relationship between disarmament and demobilization has an even longer pedigree. The Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (UNSSOD I, 1978) observed that: "Genuine and lasting peace can only be created through the effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and the speedy and substantial reduction of arms and armed forces, by international agreement and mutual example, leading ultimately to general and complete disarmament under effective international control [*italics added*]."⁵ Member States have always considered the reduction of *armed forces* -- which by its nature entails demobilization -- to be a disarmament issue.

3. The Need for a Balanced and Practical Approach to Arms Control and Disarmament

Timely consideration of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is consistent with the longstanding practice of seeking balance in the multilateral disarmament (agenda) and will result in arms control and disarmament recommendations with immediate and direct practical relevance.

? what does this mean?

The Final Document of UNSSOD I listed the priorities in disarmament negotiations as being nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and reduction of armed forces. It then noted that "[n]othing should preclude States from conducting negotiations on all priority items concurrently."⁶ This statement has led in practice to concerted efforts within the multilateral disarmament fora to identify both nuclear and non-nuclear issues in respect of which progress might be facilitated.

⁴ Note, for example, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) project on Disarmament, Development and Conflict Prevention in West Africa (1996 -).

⁵ *Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly* (First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament), A/S-10/2, Introduction, para. 13 (1978).

⁶ *Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly* (First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament), A/S-10/2, paras. 45-46.