

Resources are available through the Canadian Peacebuilding Initiative and the Peacebuilding Fund.

Ultimately, radical opponents of a potential small arms initiative are not expected to be significantly influential. Such fringe elements have been marginalised in the past regarding other arms control and disarmament initiatives at no or little cost to the effort.

Elements of an initiative that would be difficult to oppose include an emphasis on the protection of innocent civilians from criminal elements in society and the inhumanity of child soldiers.

### III. CANADA'S CONTRIBUTION: POLICY OPTIONS

#### A. Elements of a Canadian Initiative

A Canadian initiative should emphasise and promote Canadian values and foreign policy interests.

To be effective and well-received, the objective and process of a Canadian initiative should be specific, limited, practical, and do-able. Decisions must be made on whether the focus is on the use and abuse of small arms or on minimising the consequences of the flow of such arms. What exactly is to be achieved should also be clear: Is the end-product a treaty? A legally-binding convention?

A Canadian initiative should emphasise either a law-enforcement approach or an arms control and disarmament perspective. How the issue is framed in the first place will determine the approach to be followed.

At the same time, a Canadian initiative should try to be multifaceted in order to cover as many aspects as possible. This should not be pursued, however, at the expense of cohesion or effectiveness. Limited yet effective steps are preferred over large-scale plans that risk unmanageability and failure.

A Canadian initiative must be developed with caution so as to avoid focusing too much on philosophical problems at the expense of instrumental and technical sides of the issue.

Both the supply and demand aspects of the issue need to be addressed in order to be effective. Furthermore, it should not be framed as a "proliferation" matter which unwittingly targets suppliers and countries, but instead as concern with the "movement" of small arms, whether across borders or from military to civilian hands.

A Canadian initiative must engage the mainstream public in its endeavour, by seeking either its support or its active participation. One area that could be pursued in this regard is the deployment of Canadian peacekeepers to post-conflict situations that remain unstable given the proliferation of small arms among armed organised groups, thereby endangering Canadian soldiers.

A Canadian initiative should build on other on-going initiatives and successes at the international, regional and intra-state levels. It should work in concert with these other initiatives to ensure complementarity, not competition or repetition. Coalitions between IGOs and NGOs, including across traditional groups and the donor community, should be encouraged.

A Canadian initiative must demonstrate cohesiveness and co-ordination among Canadian governmental departments with clear responsibilities assigned accordingly.

Domestic opposition to a small arms initiative is expected although not at significant levels. Domestic opponents to gun control are not influential beyond a local level and have only limited impact in rural