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In Search of Coherence: A Framework for the EU's Humanitarian and SALW/ERW Policies

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SUMMARY

The European Union has been a major force in providing means to address the worst effects of small arms and light weapons (SALW), explosive remnants of war (ERW) and humanitarian crises. Its interventions, however, have lacked the sort of integrated and inter-related approaches that would maximize the EU's contributions to SALW, ERW and humanitarian needs. There are structural and institutional as well as conceptual reasons that support this statement. While acknowledging these, this paper also suggests that there are ways that greater coherence can nevertheless be achieved, and that what might be regarded as constraints can actually be used in ways that will generate greater substantive coherence.

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A FRAMEWORK FOR THE EU'S HUMANITARIAN AND SALW/ERW POLICIES

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INTRODUCTION

The European Union—its Parliament, the Commission, the Humanitarian Aid Department and the member states—have been a major force in providing means to address the worst effects of small arms and light weapons (SALW), explosive remnants of war (ERW) and humanitarian crises.[1] Its interventions, however, have lacked the sort of integrated and inter-related approaches that would maximize the EU's contributions to SALW, ERW and humanitarian needs. There are structural and institutional as well as conceptual reasons that support this statement. While acknowledging these, this paper also suggests that there are ways that greater coherence can nevertheless be achieved, and that what might be regarded as constraints can actually be used in ways that will generate greater substantive coherence.

This paper is divided into four sections. Section one, The Humanitarian and SALW/ERW Interface, explores how instruments of violence and humanitarian crises and action inter-relate. This is territory that has been well explored, and, hence, the section is principally intended to establish the parameters of the main issues as presently discussed by the broader disarmament and humanitarian communities. That discussion concerns among other things the SALW supply and demand perspectives, and the ways of moving from a focus solely upon instrumentality to one more impact centred—both in the short as well as long term.

Implicit in that discussion are relatively consistent assumptions about the motives of the perpetrators of violence, the geo-political contexts in which they operate and the types of weapons they have available. In establishing the parameters that circumscribe SALW/ERW and humanitarian concerns, it is clear that the focus of analysis is becoming more inter-disciplinary and broader in its socio-economic and socio-anthropological perspectives.

And yet, it is interesting to consider the extent to which even these broader perspectives relate to trends that could well change concepts of small arms and light weapons' lethality and the nature of human vulnerability. With this in mind, section two, Speculating on the Future of Violence and its Humanitarian Consequences, reviews some of these assumptions in order to pose the possibility that—even with greater coherence—present policies might not be sufficient to meet trends that seem to be emerging.

These first two sections are the backdrop for the paper's main concerns, namely, the present and future approaches of the European Union to the issues of instruments of violence and humanitarian concerns. Section three, the EU's Approach to SALW/ERW and Humanitarian Action, provides a summary of what most specialists know already. Its contribution, though, is to put these facts in the context of the implementing structures of the European Commission and the Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) to determine to what extent there is adequate policy, programme and project coherence when it comes to the SALW/ERW–humanitarian interface.

Section four, Enhancing the EU's Humanitarian, SALW/ERW Role, concludes the study. It offers a set of recommendations that are designed to be practical and fit within the parameters discussed with various officials in Brussels and in the field.

THE HUMANITARIAN AND SALW/ERW INTERFACE

SALW and ERW create, perpetuate and deepen humanitarian crises and the environment that spawns them in the immediate and longer term. They have both indirect as well as direct impacts upon humanitarian issues, though the former are more difficult to assess.[2]

IN THE IMMEDIATE TERM

SALW/ERW and humanitarian issues intersect in various ways.[3] Conflict over the past decade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo created hundreds of thousands of internally displaced peoples and refugees, led directly to the deaths of millions of civilians caught up in the conflict and resulted in the destruction of livelihoods necessitating massive amounts of humanitarian assistance. Access to and use of SALW helped to fuel the conflict, and to generate and perpetuate one of the grimmest humanitarian crises to have occurred since the Rwandan genocide. ERW blocked return routes for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, and hindered the passage of UN peacekeepers as well as relief workers.

In a recent survey of eleven refugee situations, covering 73 camps in eight African and two Asian countries, at least 60% of those 11 were negatively affected by firearms. There were reported instances of civilian populations being controlled by armed groups within camps, and there, too, were incidents of armed groups crossing borders to harass and exploit refugees in countries of asylum. Violence in some instances was sufficient on occasion to lead to the withdrawal of humanitarian workers, and power relationships in some of the 73 camps—reinforced by small arms—led to grave sexual and gender-based abuses.[4]

The direct and indirect consequences of SALW are many. It is all too evident that gun wounds, for example, cause considerable trauma not only for the wounded but also for those who are witness to such events and to those who have to care for the wounded. In the words of one observer, "A single shot that lasts a second can unsettle a community for days."[5] That single shot can also have considerable impact on the prospect for community recovery and economic growth—in urban as well as rural areas—since the fear of violence is a disincentive for investment and even modest risk-taking.

Justice and overall confidence in the structure of governance are victims of unconstrained instruments of violence. Rule of law, the value of formal authority and a sense of predictable community are all put into question as uncontrolled small arms become commonplace.

In a similar vein, the effects of ERW on threatened populations can be seen in the limbless children of post-conflict situations, from South-East Asia through West Africa. The direct burdens on families and medical services in these situations are deep and lingering. Their indirect consequences—similar to those of SALW—are reflected in disrupted economies, displacement and low community morale. As one NGO official mentioned to this author in Monrovia, Liberia, "There are parts of this country where no one knows where the next unexploded ordinance might be, who's going to pick up the innocent-looking piece of metal that turns out to be a bomb that blows off your leg."[6]

Table 1. Direct and indirect consequences of SALW/ERW[7]

Direct		Indirect	
SALW	**ERW**	**SALW**	**ERW**
Instruments of violence, causing health related effects, e.g. wounding	*Explosive remnants of war*, increasing probability of injury and death, particularly among highly vulnerable groups, e.g. children	*Instruments of violence*, creating atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity	*Explosive remnants of war*, undermine efforts to promote good governance and effective control
Causing trauma within groups and among individuals	Causing trauma within groups and among individuals	Contributing to disincentives for local investment	Perpetuating atmosphere of violence, and consequent psychology of fear
Forcing the outflow of peoples as IDPs or refugees	Inhibiting return of refugees and IDPs to home areas	Increasing medical burdens of health institutions	Threatening investment prospects
Leading to gross violations of human rights within refugee and IDP camp situations, e.g. sexual violence, looting	Increasing hazards of return due to positioning of ERW in home areas or environs	Increasing support burdens for those who care for victims of violence, and commensurate loss of earning capacities	
Leading to intimidation, assaults and injuries of IDPs and refugees	Increasing pressures on medical resources and intensifying burdens for those supporting victims	Undermining efforts to build governance and justice institutions	
Supporting the destruction or theft of resources needed for livelihoods in urban as well as rural areas	Providing munitions, etc., for renewed violence and conflict	Undermining state protection of borders	
Disrupting flow of relief assistance to affected populations			
Preventing access of humanitarian workers to affected populations			
Leading to intimidation, injury and death of humanitarian workers			

Even in situations where a semblance of peace is restored, ERW can perpetuate an atmosphere of violence and prove to be psychologically debilitating for the individual and for communities.

Humanitarianism and SALW/ERW also intersect when it comes to the provision of assistance. Humanitarian principles have little relevance when in situations of failed states, e.g. In Somalia, food deliveries are dependent in no small part upon the ability of one private contractor

to assert his authority over the other by force of arms. In a related vein, the ability of local warlords, for example in Sierra Leone in 1999 and 2000, to determine who receives and does not receive assistance is reinforced by the warlord's ability to project force through the use of weapons.

Humanitarian workers have tried in various ways to negotiate with the perpetuators of such violence in order to gain access to those in need. In some instances communications between the belligerent and aid worker have resulted in access to the affected because the former seeks greater legitimacy and recognition for their cause. In other instances, so-called "spoilers" can only be convinced through some sort of reward or economic benefit.[8] In other instances, the use of force to overcome armed opposition to humanitarian delivery is seen as necessary.[9] And yet, if negotiation or threat does not succeed, the sad but inevitable consequence is that aid workers are withdrawn and the provision of assistance cannot be continued.

The threat that SALW/ERW poses for humanitarian workers is further demonstration of the perverse nexus between humanitarian action and lethal means of violence. The relative security for humanitarian workers has steadily eroded since the end of the 1980s, as "the humanitarians" increasingly are perceived as political and physical targets in a growing number of inter- and intra-state conflicts, and ethnic and resource conflicts.

Such examples—clearly well known to those involved in humanitarian and SALW/ERW work—suggest direct correlations. Access to weapons can support the violence which can generate humanitarian crises and which can also undermine attempts to mitigate such crises. In part this seemingly direct correlation also explains the temptation by many in the humanitarian as well as SALW communities to see that control of SALW in particular is the best way to address this effect.

The focus of the control perspective is to limit *supply*—to control the flow and distribution of arms. Weapons buy-back programmes, weapons destruction, control of inter-state sales and shipments etc. are the most evident manifestations of this approach. The control perspective has related dimensions, including efforts to engage and empower local communities, even in temporary situations such as refugee and IDP camps. Hence, proposals for dealing with supply also includes preparedness and early warning systems (including, for example, ways to distinguish armed elements from bona fide refugees), technical assessment missions, rapid staff deployment, law enforcement mechanisms and the use of international civilian and police monitors as well as national, regional or international military forces.

Efforts to deal with gun violence as an issue of instrumentality have had limited success. This perceived failure has resulted in recommendations to focus more on the human impact rather than the instruments of violence. Using international humanitarian law and what has been viewed as "more operational and demand-driven field activities", the proponents of this approach see that the obligations of international law and practice must be ultimately targeted at protecting human beings. Yet, even this orientation is in effect designed to isolate means and methodologies, as well as perpetrators of violence, from the dynamics of broader society.

To the extent that solutions are framed in terms of isolating the threats, sources and means of perceived violence from potentially affected communities, the issue is about control, or, supply. Yet, the record in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Nepal, Somalia and a host of other countries that have had to contend with the humanitarian and SALW/ERW nexus has not been satisfactory. In light of such findings, it is increasingly evident that the supply

orientation must also relate to demand. There is a growing trend to view both issues—humanitarianism and SALW/ERW—in such broader, demand-focused contexts.

IN BROADER CONTEXTS

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently added "an ecological perspective" to the issue of violence. Focused on health impact, WHO stated that no single factor, including the prevalence of guns, could explain why some people or groups are at higher risk of interpersonal violence than others.[10] It suggested that to understand violence, one has to appreciate the complex dynamics of multiple factors occurring on at least four levels: the individual, the relationship, the community and the societal. Though the implications of the model are still debated, its importance for this discussion is that it introduces a demand-perspective to the inter-relationship between humanitarian action and SALW/ERW.

The issue of violence, in other words, cannot be isolated to the instruments of violence, but has to be seen in the context of the perceptions and motivations of victims and perpetrators alike and of the environment in which violence occurs. There are, for example, many examples where small arms in particular are part of a society's culture, though do not lead to large-scale abuse of human rights or threaten social stability. Demand in that sense is not necessarily about the availability of weapons, and spans myriad factors including social and legal inequalities, lack of economic opportunity for youth, institutional corruption, inadequate or failed post-conflict reconstruction programmes and lack of educational opportunities. While few deny the importance of addressing the supply side of the SALW/ERW problematic, a growing number also see that durable solutions to these issues will only result from action on the demand side.

This is an argument that has its parallels in the world of humanitarianism. Humanitarian response is not designed to address the root causes of large-scale human vulnerability. It is designed generally speaking to ensure through means of life-saving assistance the survival of disaster- and emergency-affected persons. Yet, the factors that create humanitarian crises can only be addressed through more durable, more contextually sensitive approaches. And as with gun violence, addressing the overt manifestations of vulnerability does not deal with its causes, although it might provide temporary solutions.

From this broader context, the causes of violence and of humanitarian crises also intersect. It is clear that the social-psychological effect of an environment of violence undermines the sort of confidence required for rebuilding infrastructures and the basis for livelihoods. As recently noted by two highly experienced analysts, perceptions of insecurity can undermine prospects for development,[11] and it is development that will mitigate the threat of humanitarian crises.

Ironically, perceptions of insecurity and humanitarian crises can both be the result of well-intentioned but disjointed approaches to peace-building. In Liberia at the beginning of December 2003, peacekeepers promoted a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme for ex-combatants. There were two problems that emerged. The first was that the initial disarmament programme—designed by the UN's peacekeeping mission with little consultation with the wider development and humanitarian communities—designed a programme for 5,000. When 15,000 ex-combatants showed up to turn in their arms, the peacekeepers did not have the resources to deal with the 300% increase, and a short but very intense humanitarian crisis ensued—due to lack of basic provisions and a hostile environment that made relief deliveries difficult.[12]

A second dimension of the Liberian crisis—one which is symptomatic of a perennial DDR problem—is that disarmament and demobilization activities are normally well funded, but the reintegration component is so often dramatically under-resourced.[13] This means that ex-combatants have no alternative employment or educational opportunities, and that the culture of violence generates conditions for humanitarian crises such as forced migration and social and economic disintegration.

Rather than supply alone, more and more analysts pay increased attention to the demand side of SALW, or, those factors that make SALW a valued commodity. This demand approach underpinned the United Nations Development Programme/International Organization for Migration "comprehensive assistance package" programme—linking weapons reduction with education and job schemes—provided in Congo-Brazzaville in 2000. A similar model was also adopted in Afghanistan under the New Beginnings Programme "which aims to demobilize over 100,000 ex-combatants and to reintegrate them into civilian life by offering them jobs and educational opportunities. A particularly innovative example is a scheme offering individuals training and jobs in de-mining agencies." Yet, rather than seeing such initiatives as a new form of positive intervention, one should regard them as part and parcel of an overall approach—a checklist for dealing with DDR and rehabilitation in virtually all post-conflict situations.

The fact that the *demand* side of the violence-humanitarian spectre is increasingly part of practitioners' methodology is an important trend. And yet from a very practical policy perspective, one will have to be sure that the assumptions that underlie the practitioner's approach to addressing the causes and dynamics of demand reflect important changes that are increasingly evident in the context of geo-political structures, perceptions of loyalty and legitimacy and the nature of implements of violence.

SPECULATING ON THE FUTURE OF VIOLENCE AND ITS HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES

According to one observer, all issues challenging the humanitarian community today—from financing to security to coordination—ultimately boil down to the coherence dilemma, e.g. to what extent should humanitarian actors align their programming or otherwise acquiesce with political entities on the longer-term goals of peace-building?[14] This dilemma has several dimensions. In a world in which humanitarian crises have increasingly been the result of communal, ethnic and local economic-based violence, can humanitarian actors separate themselves from the more abiding search for peace to preserve their principled approach? On a more immediate level, can humanitarian actors provide assistance to the crisis-affected without the protection of peacekeepers in situations of violence? Alternatively, is the only way to protect humanitarian principles to negotiate "with men with guns"?

Few had anticipated these sorts of issues or turn of events. In the mid-1980s, humanitarian workers seemed immune from the violence that surrounded them in Ethiopia and the Sudan. A decade later they were targets. While it would have been difficult to forecast the evolving fortunes of relief workers and the environments in which they operated, there were at the same time little efforts made to relate humanitarian policies to trends that others were beginning to sense.

This unwillingness to speculate about the future is one of the policy-making hazards of many organizations in the public as well as private sectors. As one recent study about "shaping the future" concluded,

> Not surprisingly those who make decisions tend to stay focused on the next fiscal quarter, the next year, the next election. Feeling unsure of their compass, they hug the familiar shore. This understandable response to an uncertain future means, however, that the nation's and the world's long-term threats often get ignored altogether or are even made worse by short-sighted decisions.[15]

It is a reality that was reflected in the UN's Secretary-General recent admission that "our record of success in mediating and implementing peace agreements is sadly blemished…".[16] One of several reasons for this failure was the UN's lack of capacity to "think strategically" and in the longer term.

In the context of the interface between humanitarian action and instruments of violence, it is very evident that the solutions that are being proffered now all too often do not take into account factors that affect the very assumptions upon which solutions are based. Three examples are worth considering for illustrative purposes: [i] fundamental geo-political transitions; [ii] new dimensions of weapons lethality and portability; and [iii] new approaches to humanitarian crises.

GEO-POLITICAL TRANSITIONS AND THE SALW/ERW AND HUMANITARIAN INTERFACE

There are many reasons that explain the poor peace-building record of the international community to date.[17] One worth considering is that the state–government orientation that most peace-building operations seek to restore or sustain may bear decreasing relevance to the ways that many societies will structure themselves in the foreseeable future. It is increasingly evident, for example, that the period of "post-Westphalian" changes to the international, state-centric system has been harder to manage and that its direction is harder to predict than most had anticipated.

The peace-building policies of the United Nations as well as those of the European Union have set their sights on the improvement and restoration of state capacities as the principal approach to justice and security. In that context, it is assumed that the state, bound by its treaty and convention-based responsibilities, will eventually control the means of violence and deal with the socio-economic inequalities that are the root causes of so many aspects of violence and humanitarian crises. Yet, the poor peace-building results that the UN Secretary-General noted in *In Larger Freedom* may not solely be due to the UN's lack of appropriate machinery, but due in no small part to the fact that state-based solutions are the wrong prescription for the societies that struggle to survive in failing-state situations.

If one reflects on what has been called "peoples of the ghetto" and "stranded minorities", a picture emerges in which conventional state structures increasingly will neither have the interest nor capacity to deal with new types of territorial constructs.[18] The sources of human vulnerabilities and the monopoly over the means of violence may change dramatically. Yet, the issue here is not the accuracy of the forecast. Rather it is the willingness of those who develop strategies, policies and programmes in the field of humanitarian response and SALW/ERW to test some of the most fundamental assumptions upon which their prescriptions are based.

Policy planners and implementers, when dealing with the interface between SALW/ERW and humanitarian issues, might well have to consider the impact of various diaspora upon the sources and causes of violence in their countries of origin. They, too, might have to take into account traditional social structures, e.g. clan dynamics, more than is normally the case when relying upon state-centric perspectives. Planners and implementers more and more will have to look at networks across national frontiers that are not controlled by state authorities as part of new

approaches for dealing with conflict prevention, post-conflict reconstruction and the inevitable interface between instruments of violence and humanitarian crises.

NEW DIMENSIONS OF LETHALITY AND PORTABILITY

One assumes that the definitions of SALW/ERW—though flexible—are nevertheless tied to certain assumptions about lethality and portability that characterize today's type of violence. Also one assumes that the sorts of instruments of violence, which help instigate and perpetuate humanitarian crises, are relatively fixed within broad parameters. Even, here, however, it is evident that new trends will result in SALW that will provide for easy portability with far greater lethal impact than one has witnessed to date and that the range of such weapons will become increasingly "unconventional."

Another way to look at the instruments that comprise SALW/ERW is through lenses of intent. SALW in particular offers to their users means to assert influence and power. Its "uniqueness" is the way that the availability of such instruments can defy more legitimate ways of asserting authority and enforcing compliance. With limited training and virtually no conventional military support structure, those with highly portable and lethal small arms and light weapons can dominate in ways that it had traditionally been assumed only states could.

From this intent perspective, the perpetrators of such violence will have a growing number of different means to assert their authority, ways that are highly portable and lethal. Weapon delivery systems (for example, the air vehicle developed by MIT's Lincoln Laboratory[19]) that can be held in the palm of the user's hand can deliver exponentially greater firepower and lethality than the AK-47. Increased range and velocity of even conventional ammunition can significantly expand the operating range of the perpetrators. Stinger missiles may soon be out-dated as highly portable micro-missiles become available.

Whatever such changes may be, they foretell capacities and lethality that go well beyond the dimensions, which SALW/ERW planners appear to be considering to date. Yet, in a world of rapid change and complexity, the reality of new ways that perpetrators of violence will have at hand to foment and sustain humanitarian crises has to be at the forefront of one's considerations.

NEW DIMENSIONS OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS AND RESPONSE

In the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks, the United States went to considerable lengths to cut off the flow of informal remittances from diasporas to certain targeted countries of origin. One such country was Somalia, and in this instance the US initiative brought on severe food shortages and an upsurge in violence. The diaspora is becoming a recognized—though complex—means of ensuring survival and a modicum of development. As recent studies have indicated, the overall impact of the resources of the diaspora can be far greater than direct official development assistance (ODA) or humanitarian aid. They, too, can influence perpetrators of violence, though this can prove to be a double-edged sword—as some of the diaspora proved at the onset of the 2003 war in Iraq.

New types of aid delivery will require new types of security. The World Food Programme is already experimenting with community-based insurance schemes, where credit and cash will replace the relief items and delivery systems that have become hallmarks of relief work over the past four decades. This sort of initiative inevitably will change the relationship between assistance,

the humanitarian worker and security, as the delivery of commodities becomes secondary to the protection of credit systems.

In posing these sorts of possibilities, one is not trying to predict what will be. Rather it is to suggest that for those seeking to deal with the interface between small arms, light weapons, explosive remnants of war and humanitarian action, the assumptions upon which policies are based need to be subject to regular review and that the consequences of rapid change and complexity must be incorporated into one's strategic thinking.

THE EU'S APPROACH TO SALW/ERW AND HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

Through its member states, the Parliament, the Commission and ECHO, the European Union has played and continues to play key roles in the field of SALW/ERW reduction and humanitarian response. ECHO reflects the EU's overall humanitarian commitment, providing approximately 30% of all worldwide humanitarian assistance for developing and implementing humanitarian programmes. An additional 25% from Member States means that in total the EU has provided approximately €607 million in the past year for humanitarian activities. Since the adoption of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000, the EC's role in both SALW and ERW has been significantly strengthened. Through the offices of the Commission, over €7.7 million were provided between 2001 and the beginning of 2004 to support SALW activities in affected countries, and the European Development Fund in 2003 provided €43 million to deal with both ERW and SALW.[20]

PROMOTING COHERENCE, COMMON APPROACHES AND COMMON STANDARDS

These statistics underscore the fact that the EU is one of the world's major contributors to SALW and ERW as well as to humanitarian programmes. This financial role also emphasizes the EU's central leadership role as well as the impact that it already has on determining the substance of the international community's response to humanitarian assistance and instruments of violence. In this context, there are five dimensions to the EU's approach, which in the opinion of this author are particularly significant in understanding how the weight of the European Union's humanitarian and SALW/ERW financial commitment is translated into practice:

1. Overarching international context. The EU's initiatives in the humanitarian and SALW/ERW sectors have sought to promote coordination wherever possible and also to support efforts to promote common approaches and common standards. The EU's work is not only reflected in its efforts to establish international obligations, but also in its willingness to work closely with and through major international organizations to implement EU-funded programmes and projects. This is reflected, for example, in efforts made by the EU to implement criterion 8 under the 1998 EU Code of Conduct on arms exports.[21]

There is a range of initiatives that demonstrate the EU's emphasis on coordination.[22] Indicative examples include its arrangements with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on information sharing and support for coordination in the field,[23] support for United Nations Mine Action Service's global programmes, and field-based coordination mechanisms such as the EU-funded Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative (SLIRI).[24] The EU's emphasis on common approaches and standards similarly can be seen in myriad ways, including the Wassenaar Arrangement to develop common standards to deal

with SALW to common initiatives with OCHA (as well as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) on the Global Disaster Alert and Response Coordination System (GDAS).

2. National and regional capacity building. The EU has made efforts to strengthen regional and national capacities to deal with instruments of violence and also, where not conflicting with humanitarian principles, to strengthen regional and national approaches to humanitarian crisis prevention [e.g. disaster risk management] and response. When it comes to SALW/ERW, the range of regional organizations and national authorities supported by the EU is extensive. It includes, for example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (for example, the Partnership for Peace trust fund] and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development at the regional organizational level, and governments in Latin America and the Caribbean, Albania and Cambodia.

In the context of humanitarian assistance, principally that concerned with disaster risk reduction and management but also with concerns such as HIV/AIDS, ECHO provides considerable capacity-building support for training, capacity-building, awareness-raising and early-warning projects as well as the organization of relief services to countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. In 2004, its "DIPECHO" programme (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) provided €13.7 million for such activities worldwide. These initial inputs are frequently designed to be complimented by more sustainable support by development-oriented agencies and institutions of the EU as well as by national governments and other development partners.[25]

3. Interface at the declaratory level. The EU's approach at the declaratory level recognizes the inter-relationship between instruments of violence and threats to development. This inter-connectedness has been reflected on many occasions, but in the context of this study, it was a point significantly underscored in 1999 in the EU Development Council Resolution on Small Arms, and frequently thereafter. In a tangential vein, ECHO has taken a very practical position on linking issues of extensive humanitarian activities with issues concerned with the protection of civilians as well as humanitarian workers in violent circumstances.[26]

Of particular importance is the emphasis that the EU has placed on the inter-relationship between instruments of violence, humanitarian and development in pronouncements on conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction over the past three years.[27]

4. Conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. Conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction is perhaps the clearest demonstration of the EU's attempt to foster a holistic approach to humanitarian action and SALW/ERW. The EU's 2002 Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts emphasizes the need for coherent and comprehensive preventive strategies, noting that these include arms control and humanitarian instruments.[28]

The EU continues to play an extensive role in post-conflict reconstruction, with particular attention to security sector reform (SSR) and DDR. Both SSR and DDR offer direct and indirect prescriptions for dealing with the sources of humanitarian crises and the control of instruments of violence. The EU has in that regard supported relevant programmes in Africa's Great Lakes region through the World Bank administered multi-donor reintegration fund, in Central America, in Sierra Leone through the UN and bilaterally as well as multilaterally in Côte d'Ivoire.

5. Experiments in deconcentration. Following discussions with representatives from various EU institutions, an innovation that seemed to be of considerable institutional importance was what was called deconcentration, or the delegation of greater authority from Brussels to overseas

delegations. While this initiative does not seem to remove some of the more difficult institutional barriers that make true coordination within EU institutions a problem, deconcentration does at least allow for "the field" to put together the first draft of country strategies.[29]

Though not necessarily reflecting the extent of coherence that will be discussed in the following section, deconcentration at least in principle allows in-country Delegations greater responsibility for the implementation of EC programmes. To that extent, the issues pertaining to humanitarian assistance, SALW and ERW have in principle an opportunity to be addressed jointly at the field level.

EMERGING GAPS

Each of these elements reflects opportunities to enhance coherence within the EU as well as among its key partners when dealing with the intersection between SALW/ERW and humanitarian action. And yet, there are conceptual, programming and institutional gaps that, if narrowed, could further enhance that coherence.

1. Conceptual dimensions of the interface. The EU has not brought together SALW/ERW and humanitarian issues into a conceptually inter-related approach in any substantive way. It has in other words not been able to bring together the linkages of reconstruction, DDR/rehabilitation, SSR, humanitarian assistance and development in a strategic, holistic and coherent manner. This is evident when it comes to practical programming at the regional as well as national levels. One clear exception to this conclusion is ECHO's 2004 regional approach to West Africa. This sort of approach should be the norm rather than the exception, and even in this particular instance, its LRRD (linked relief, rehabilitation and development) programmes should focus in a more concentrated way on the demand side of SALW.

Conceptually there appears little effort to explore new dimensions of the interface or indeed individual components of that interface. As suggested earlier, relevant instruments of violence are changing dramatically, certainly in terms of portability and lethality. So, too, are those factors that create large-scale human vulnerability and the state constructs that might be used for longer-term solutions. And yet, the EU's institutional capacity to explore these issues and their inter-relationships in a consistent way seems almost non-existent. Given the dynamics and rapidity of change in these areas, the EU cannot maintain its leadership role if it is not willing to confront possible transformations in these critical areas.

Related to the EU's lack of capacity to explore the changing dimensions of the interface is the EU's tendency to perpetuate the divide between so-called "natural disasters" and "complex emergencies." To perpetuate this divide means that a crucial factor in societal stress—one that is relevant to the emergence of cultures of violence—is ignored. Conceptually, the EU—and ECHO in particular—will have to be more attuned to the inter-relationships between a broader range of vulnerabilities, societal implosion and violence.

2. Programmatic issues involving SALW/ERW and humanitarian issues. Despite the EU's frequent references to the inter-relationships between humanitarian crises and insecurity brought about by uncontrolled arms, there appears to be no clear conceptual framework that translates these sentiments into relevant strategies. This lack of a clear conceptual framework could also explains why programmatically the interface has not really been translated into consistent practice.

In reviewing the SALW/ERW programmes and projects funded by the EU, it would appear that there is little evidence of a more balanced approach between what earlier was referred to as supply and demand when it comes to SALW. The EU's overall activities are very heavily skewed on the supply side, and this is inconsistent with much of the EU's declaratory positions and, more substantively, inconsistent with its "human-centred" approach to development.

As opposed to ERW, there are no Ottawa-type standards that guide SALW policies. The EU does not seem to have pressed for such standards, and in their absence SALW programming—let alone inter-related programming— falls prey to short-termism. Once again, such narrow perspectives mean that an inter-related approach to SALW/ERW and humanitarian action—from a demand-side perspective—is programmatically very difficult to plan.

In the more immediate, the EU would serve the survival interests of particularly vulnerable peoples, for example, in refugee and IDP camp situations, by focusing upon ways to enhance order and discourage exploitative practices. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and others are attempting to deal with sexual exploitation in camps, and a range of mechanisms are being considered—from enhanced in-camp patrolling to working more closely with traditional social structures to special sensitizing workshops.

3. Institutional gaps. There can be little doubt that the conceptual and programming issues noted above relate in very fundamental ways to the diverse nature of the EU's institutions and agencies. This has been the subject of many analyses throughout the history of the European Community and Union, and at this stage the key is to see how and in what ways within the present structure greater coherence can be fostered.

In so saying, there appears to be relatively little "strategic communication" between some of the EU's main components that deal with issues of SALW/ERW and humanitarian affairs. Procedures do exist between the Directorate-General for External Relations (DG Relex), ECHO and the Directorate-General for Development, for example, to share information and to comment, when so required, on proposals, programmes and projects. Yet, officials give the impression that such communications are intended more to anticipate possible conflicts rather than to ensure coherent planning and approaches.

Deconcentration, as described earlier, would seem to offer opportunities to establish more strategic approaches to the humanitarian and SALW/ERW interface, but that too, according to officials, is weakened by different procedures and institutional perspectives. ECHO, it has been suggested, has been consistently reluctant to sacrifice its humanitarian stance by working too closely with those involved in development and peace-building activities. DG Relex feels that while field-based strategies (for example, Country Strategy Papers) make sense, Brussels has to be the final arbiter of country strategies, and the development arm of the EU overlaps the two. Measures for greater coherence need to be established.

An institutional gap, evident when it comes to SALW, but also affecting humanitarian and development concerns, is reflected in the failure of EU Member States to apply criterion 8 of the EU's Code of Conduct on arms exports. It is apparent, according to EC officials, that most member states do not confer with their respective development departments when granting arms export licenses. The effort to have member states at least to assess their export activities in terms of recipients' national development and macro-economic situations has not been successful. Member states have national legislation and policies that do not conform to other member states, and the Commission has no authority to impose common standards. Even though most member

states are in favour of common guidelines, there is grave concern among some that such measures would be legally binding.[30]

TOWARD GREATER COHERENCE

The effectiveness of humanitarian action will in no small part depend upon the ways that the issues of SALW/ERW are managed. Alternatively, there is a compelling argument to be made that, unless those deeper socio-economic and structural factors that create humanitarian crises are removed, the environment for the proliferation of SALW will flourish.

These correlations are known to the EU, and yet there is no overarching policy framework in which they are developed and transformed into coherent policies, programmes and projects. At the same time the EU has made substantial contributions to so many of the activities concerned with SALW/ERW and humanitarian concerns, and yet their full impact is dissipated because of a lack of institutional coherence.

Such problems are by no means unique to the EU, and can be seen in other large multinational organizations—in the private as well as public sector. There are ways that can bring greater coherence to the humanitarian–instruments of violence interface, while still using the present capacities and strengths of the organization. These might be seen in programmatic as well as procedural and institutional terms:

PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

While the EU has in various ways acknowledged the interface between SALW/ERW and humanitarian issues, it has not sought ways to bring them together in an overarching programmatic sense. There are five ways that such programmatic perspectives could be introduced:

1. Conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction framework. After many years of frustration, the United Nations only recently accepted that its peace-building efforts had been ineffective and that inadequate attention had been paid to ways to bring the objectives of the different components of the UN together more effectively to help fragile states build peace. For the UN, the objective of peace-building served as a catalyst to promote policy and programmatic coherence.

This may be instructive to the EU, for the commitment to an abiding objective such as peace-building—not just in declaratory terms but programmatically—should serve to bring the disparate components of EU policies to come closer together. In that regard, SALW/ERW and humanitarian objectives should be incorporated in an integrated way into the support which the EU gives to SSR and DDR.

2. Common agreement on export controls. While export controls are but one element of a far larger issue—one that has more to do with illegal rather than legal transfers—the EU nevertheless needs to ensure that its forthcoming export guidelines are sensitive to the relationship between factors affecting humanitarian vulnerability, development and arms expenditures.

3. Vulnerability analyses. As part of the more general architecture dealing with peace and stability, the EU should introduce a more inter-sectoral focus on vulnerability. In 2002 and 2003,

the EU emphasized the importance of anticipating and preventing conflict. One such approach is through vulnerability analyses that would link core issues relating to demand-side issues of SALW and humanitarian crisis prevention.

To the extent possible, the EU should seek to promote this form of programming approach to other partners with whom it works closely, including those organizations represented in the United Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee concerned with humanitarian affairs.

4. Regional concentrations. The EU has been sensitive to the importance of a regional focus for many of its conflict prevention and post-conflict activities, e.g. ECHO's West African regional approach. These approaches have been principally focused upon issues pertaining to refugees, and need to be expanded in order [a] to empower regional organizations to monitor and record the flow of arms, and, where possible, to take action to stem that flow, [b] to support preparedness and prevention work dealing with disasters and emergencies at the transnational level, and [c] to propose transnational development programmes that can address vulnerabilities that are often at the root of humanitarian crises and cultures of violence.

5. Enhanced forecasting capacity. Rapid change and complexity will affect the nature of humanitarian crises and solutions as they also will affect the portability and lethality of SALW and ERW. The leadership role of the EU in these sectors would suggest that the EU's ability to anticipate possible consequences of socio-economic, political and technological change should be significantly strengthened.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES

These programmatic proposals will have little impact unless they find ways to bring together the key entities within the EU structure which could benefit from them. At the same time, the outputs from these proposals need to be seen as means for enhancing existing obligations and responsibilities. With this in mind, there are four procedural adaptations that the EU might wish to consider to harmonize the interface between SALW/ERW and humanitarian concerns:

1. SSR/DDR linkages. Standard practice should dictate that EU-supported SSR/DDR activities be incorporated into governance- and capacity-building measures that will provide for vulnerability assessments that will ascertain socio-economic status and trends, incorporate monitoring capacities with specific reference to instruments of violence, and establish or enhance the capacities of entities to establish and maintain licensing arrangements.

2. Field-headquarters vulnerability checklist. It would appear that the development of EU country strategies is essentially a one-way process, with the initial framework being developed in the field and subsequently passed on to headquarters for finalization. Two recommendations in this regard should be considered. In the first place, relevant institutions within the EU should develop a checklist of priorities that every country strategy should incorporate. Among these priorities, a vulnerability assessment should be a standard feature. The vulnerability assessment component would include all factors that increase vulnerabilities, including the unauthorized access to and use of instruments of violence.

3. Scenario testing. EU country strategies should undergo "scenario testing," or, an exercise to test the EU's political, development and humanitarian objectives against possible factors that could challenge the assumptions upon which the EU's proposed country strategies are based. This

should be led by outside facilitators and include EU headquarters and field representatives. A central focus of this scenario testing should be factors affecting vulnerability and stability.

4. Strategic monitoring. The three points immediately above should provide the basis for a strategic monitoring process that would bring all key EU components, for example DG Relex, the Directorate-General for Development and ECHO to maintain a pro-active assessment process of the strategic impact of EU country programmes, with particular reference to issues of vulnerability and stability.

INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

A dominant theme of this report is that the institutions of the EU have become major players in humanitarian affairs as well as in the world of SALW/ERW. At the same time, it would seem that greater coherence would not only have a greater impact on these three elements individually, but also that the whole—or the overall impact of greater synergy among the three—would be greater than the sum of its parts.

Coherence poses practical problems for that complex web of institutions that comprise the EU. However, this report believes that the issue for the EU is not that of new structures to deal with the SALW/ERW and humanitarian interface, but rather ways to use the present structures in a more targeted way.

1. Inter-service groups. It is understood that "very informal" inter-service groups, comprising representatives of different components of ECHO, DG Relex and DG Development, meet to review issues of mutual interest. As described by various officials in the Commission, these would seem to offer a perfect forum for programmatic reviews of conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction policies and programmes that incorporated SALW/ERW and humanitarian components. However, they would have to be more regular and part of an official review function.

2. In-country presidency and the field delegation. In relevant countries, the official responsible for the EU presidency, supported by the delegation, should establish a formal body to review conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction policies and programmes, to include a particular focus on instruments of violence and humanitarian action. Funds should be made available to ensure that field-based analyses of the situation are undertaken on a regular basis.

3. Expanding the focus of existing consultative bodies. The Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Exports and the Council Committee on Disarmament are but two examples of bodies whose focus could be expanded to look at the inter-relationship between instruments of violence and humanitarian issues more regularly and systematically.

Notes

[1] For the purposes of this paper, *explosive remnants of war* (ERW) will include landmines, though that interpretation goes beyond other definitions of ERW, for example "unexploded ordinance other than landmines left over from use in armed conflict. ERW includes abandoned stockpiles of munitions." While the distinction between landmines and ERW is important for technical reasons, they are merged here in an attempt to reflect the social-psychology and psychology of violence. This paper uses definitions of small arms and light weapons presented in Steve Tulliu and Thomas Schmalberger, *Coming to Terms with Security: A Lexicon for Arms Control, Disarmament and Confidence Building*,

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2003. Small arms is "a term generally understood to refer to small calibre weapons including revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles, and light machine guns. Small arms are a category of light weapons." Light weapons are defined as "weapons of a weight and size such that they are either man or crew-portable." The highly complex issue of the nature and scope of humanitarian assistance is defined in United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Glossary of Humanitarian Terms*, 2003, as "aid that seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality, as stated in General Assembly Resolution 46/182. Assistance may be divided into three categories—direct assistance, indirect assistance and infrastructure support—which have diminishing degrees of contact with the affected populations."

2 Over the past few years, an extensive literature has emerged on the subject of small arms, light weapons and their impact. In this regard, this report needs to acknowledge the considerable work done under the *In the Line of Fire* series, for example Ryan Beasley, Cate Buchanan and Robert Muggah, *Surveying the Perceptions of Humanitarian and Development Personnel of the Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the Small Arms Survey, 2003.

3 Robert Muggah and Martin Griffiths, "Reconsidering the Tools of War: Small Arms and Humanitarian Action", Overseas Development Institute/Humanitarian Practice Network, *HPN Network Paper 39*, 2002. In chapter 2, "Counting the Humanitarian Costs of Small Arms," the authors provide a very useful table on "key indicators of humanitarian impacts".

4 Iain Hall and Hari Gupta, *A Comparative Review of Refugee Security Mechanisms*, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, pp. 25ff.

5 Interview with UN official in Kabeho, Rwanda, 6 November 1994.

6 Interview at NGO meeting organized for the Study Team on Integrated Missions, 9 February 2005.

7 The distinction between direct and indirect in this instance concerns the extent to which an act of violence—supported by such instruments of violence as a weapon or unexploded ordinance—has immediate impact upon the survival needs of an individual or groups of individuals. The more immediate the impact, the more direct are the consequences between survival and violence. Indirect consequences are more contextual, relating to real or perceived situations of imminent or long-term threats by an individual or groups of individuals that can create or perpetuate humanitarian crises.

8 See discussion on armed non-state actors in Max Glaser, "Humanitarian Engagement with Non-state Armed Actors: The Parameters of Negotiated Access", Overseas Development Institute/Humanitarian Practice Network, *HPN Network Paper 51*, 2005.

9 Interview with the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Brussels, February 2005.

10 World Health Organization, *Preventing Violence: A Guide to Implementing the Recommendations of the World Report on Violence and Health*, 2004.

11 Robert Muggah and Eric Berman, *Humanitarianism under Threat: The Humanitarian Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons*, a report commissioned for the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2001.

12 This material is drawn from the author's study for the United Nations on integrated missions, for example Espen Barth Eide et al., *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*, *Independent Study for the Expanded UN ECHA Core Group*, 2005.

13 This is a point stressed in the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which recommended a reintegration fund up to the level of US$ 250 million to ensure that there would not continue to be the reintegration funding gap that all too often arises in DDR programmes.

14 Abby Stoddard, "Humanitarian Action: Mounting Challenges, Emerging Approaches," New Dimensions of Multilateralism: Speaker Series Session 2, Draft Background Paper, Centre on International Cooperation, 5 February 2004, p. 2.

15 Steven Popper, Robert Lempert and Steven Bankes, "Shaping the Future," *Scientific American,* vol. 292, no. 4, 2005, p. 49.

16 General Assembly, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All. Report of the Secretary-General*, UN document A/59/2005, 21 March 2005, para. 114. The comment regarding lack of long-term strategic capacity is found in Espen Barth Eide et al., *Report on Integrated*

Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations, *Independent Study for the Expanded UN ECHA Core Group*, 2005.

17 Espen Barth Eide et al., *Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations*, *Independent Study for the Expanded UN ECHA Core Group*, 2005, para. 114.

18 Below are two examples, each plausible and each reflecting situations where the statist assumptions of present approaches to gun violence and its humanitarian linkages need to be reassessed:
[i] **Peoples of the ghetto**. Humanitarian assistance to peoples of the ghetto will become one of the great political as well as relief challenges to be faced over the coming decades. Cities will be the catchment areas for 54% of the world's population within another decade, and ghettos of impoverished people will account for between 30 to 60% of urban populations. The culture of disaffection and alienation combined with the semi-autonomous and often criminal nature of ghetto existence will pose profound difficulties for those wishing to help the victims of severe malnutrition, epidemics and trauma. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), *An Urbanising World: Global Report on Human Settlements*, 1996. Norman Myers and Jennifer Kent expand upon this theme in *Environmental Exodus: An Emergent Crisis in the Global Arena,* Climate Institute, 1995, noting that "most developing-world cities have become the loci for some of the most degrading poverty known, with vast numbers living on the margins of subsistence. Of every 100 new households established in urban areas … , 72 were located in shantytowns and slums (in Africa 92 out of 100). Today more than one billion people—71% of developing world city dwellers—live in squatter settlements, often shantytowns and other slum-like localities. A full 100 million people have no form of shelter at all" (p.61).
[ii] **Stranded minorities**. As state adjustment is increasingly reflected in boundary changes, more and more groups will find themselves in enclaves where borders are uncertain or have actually changed. In some situations such groups may be regarded as buffers between states (the Kurds, for example); in other instances, they may be used as spearheads to disrupt the status quo in a neighbouring state (for example, Kazakh support for East Turkistan peoples on Chinese border); or they may be part of what has been called "borderland cultures … occupied by pathetic work seekers [living in] 'no group' lands." *Humanitarian Futures: A Report for the US Agency for International Development*, 1997, p. 44.
In the vast majority of instances, stranded minorities will live in situations where there may not be the inclination or political will to support them, or where there may not be the resources to do so. To that extent the stranded become abandoned, with only the most insecure means of existence, including periodic external support to supplement meagre domestic resources.

19 Mark Dwortzan, "It's a Fly! It's a Bug, It's a Microplane!", *Technology Review,* 30 September 1997, <http://www.technologyreview.com/InfoTech/11602/>.

20 For ECHO humanitarian contributions, see <http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/finances/echos_finances_en.htm>; for overall contributions to SALW/ERW, see <http://missions.itu.int/~rapparm/july7%20SmallArms.html>.

21 Criterion 8 proposes that member states consider the "compatibility of the arms exports with the technical and economic capacity of the recipient country, taking into account the desirability that states should achieve their legitimate needs of security and defence with the least diversion for armaments of human an economic resources."

22 The emphasis placed upon the importance of cooperation and collaboration with the United Nations system is indicative of this positive approach. See European Commission, *Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention*, EU document COM (2001) 211 final, 11 April 2001.

23 ECHO provides funds, for example, for OCHA-coordinated Humanitarian Information Centres in Sumatra and Sri Lanka.

24 Note, for example, ECHO's 2005 support for humanitarian coordination in Côte d'Ivoire. See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/field/ivory_coast/index_en.htm>.

25 See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/field/dipecho/index_en.htm>.

26 European Commission, *Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention*, EU document COM (2001) 211 final, 11 April 2001.

27 See, for example, the EU programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, 2002.

28 See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/field/ivory_coast/index_en.htm>, p. 2.

[29] These reflections stem from interviews with representatives from the EC's DG Relex, DG for Development and UN Coordination, the EC Council and ECHO, from 11–12 May 2005.

[30] The Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Exports continues to work on guidelines that would allow for a two-stage filter system that would identify transfers of concern and then assess the impact upon the recipient country.

ACRONYMS

DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DG Relex	Directorate-General for External Relations
ECHO	Humanitarian Aid Department
ERW	explosive remnants of war
GDAS	Global Disaster Alert and Response Coordination System
IDPs	internally displaced persons
LRRD	linked relief, rehabilitation and development
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	official development assistance
SALW	small arms and light weapons
SLIRI	Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative
SSR	security sector reform
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
WHO	World Health Organization