Talking about Disarmament: 9
THE ROLE OF SMALL ARMS IN PEACE PROCESSES

INTRODUCTION

Two generals met to end a war that had resulted in 558,000 deaths and 412,000 wounded. The terms of surrender stipulated the conditions for disarmament: '[t]he arms, artillery and public property to be parked and stacked and turned over to the officer appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side arms of the officers nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed.' By being allowed to retain their side arms, the officers were being treated with honour—not unnecessarily humiliated—and by the same token the men who fought under them were also being honoured. When Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee met on 9 April 1865, both mass disarmament and the symbolic retention of weapons were instrumental in moving the United States from four years of civil war into a period of peace and prosperity.

As weapons are, by definition, part of all armed conflict, they are a major concern in any transition to peace. As the above example shows, current efforts to better manage the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants have a long history. In the last decade, the United Nations, regional organizations, and other groups of interested states have increasingly become involved in the mediation of both inter-state and intra-state wars. If they secure an end to hostilities, such third parties often participate in removing the instruments of war from the former belligerents, or in monitoring the disarmament of defeated non-state actors.

This chapter examines how concerns related to small arms can influence peace negotiations and attempts to achieve political agreement. It focuses on how these concerns have been addressed after agreement has been reached. In particular, it examines the implementation of disarmament during the many multi-dimensional peace operations undertaken, mostly by the United Nations, since the end of the Cold War. This issue warrants attention because, since the late 1980s, peace missions have included a greatly expanded number and range of tasks, most of them in the context of civil war settlements, and a key consideration has been how to disarm the combatants. In most conflicts during this same period, small arms and light weapons have been the most commonly used weapons and thus the major focus for disarmament. Issues related to weapons and disarmament are generally among the most political and contentious between belligerent parties, and the way in which they are addressed is therefore of key importance to the resolution of conflicts.

The key findings of this chapter are as follows:

- Weapons are commonly used as bargaining chips during peace negotiations, and parties often have a vested interest in providing inaccurate information about the numbers and types of weapons they hold in order to strengthen their bargaining positions. It is therefore vital to develop systematic and reliable means of monitoring arms possession and verifying claims.

- Disarmament and weapons control are increasingly included in the mandates of peace operations, but mandate objectives are often too vague and resources too sparse to implement them effectively. The responsible organization's decision-making procedures and ability to generate support will affect the scope of this problem.
- Political will and commitment from the parties are necessary, though alone not sufficient, conditions for disarmament to succeed.
- Prospects of success must be realistically assessed before and during an operation, with regard to possible motivations for parties' non-compliance, as well as considerations of deception.
- Disarmament should not be limited to active combatants, but should include other armed groups that have participated in the conflict, and in some cases also civilians.
- The design of disarmament and related interventions aimed at establishing and building lasting peace must accommodate the characteristics of the local environment. In particular, they must address the interests of all parties to the conflict, the reasons why ex-combatants and/or other civilians hold and use weapons in that environment, and their willingness and interest in preferring a peaceful resolution to a violent one.

Issues of weapons management affect peace processes in many different and complex ways. This chapter will review this topic only as it affects small arms and light weapons; more research is necessary to explore the interplay between weapons control and the resolution of armed conflicts. Although many of the issues addressed are relevant to disarmament in general, small arms and light weapons have been a major concern in all of them.

This chapter mainly explores the following questions:

- **How are weapons issues and, in particular, the subject of disarmament dealt with during peace negotiations, and how can this influence the outcome of the process?**
- **What are the main challenges to implementing effectively disarmament following peace agreements and to achieving sustainable results?**
- **What is the function of disarmament and small arms control in peace operations and how do they relate to other elements of the transitional process?**

The chapter begins with an analysis of how arms issues are approached during peace negotiations. This study shows that weapons are a central issue in most negotiations, given both their military significance and symbolic value.

The second section examines formal disarmament and weapons control measures undertaken after a peace settlement, in particular as part of multi-dimensional peace operations. It charts the movement to expand the scope of activities included in peace missions since the end of the Cold War, and in particular the inclusion of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). Since most disarmament exercises in this period have taken place under the auspices of the United Nations, they provide most of the evidence discussed here; however, other experiences are included as far as possible. The focus is limited to DDR carried out in the context of peace settlements. Excluded from this analysis are the downsizing of military forces in peacetime and demobilization and reintegration programmes carried out in post-conflict settings that are not part of peace agreements.

Examples are drawn from case studies of such diverse environments as Sierra Leone and the Solomon Islands. The collection of weapons as part of a peace agreement has been referred to by some analysts as 'disarmament by command' or Phase I collection programmes (Laurance and Godnick, 2001; Faltas, 2001), and some of their more general features are outlined in the *Small Arms Survey 2002*. This chapter does not specifically address weapons collection in settings other than post-conflict, or programmes for destroying surplus weapons. An overview of many past and ongoing small arms collection initiatives is nevertheless provided in Table 9.1.

Although successful disarmament is commonly viewed today as a key element in transitions from war to peace, it cannot be dealt with in isolation from the broader peace-building process. The third section of the chapter therefore makes the link between disarmament and some common elements of this process, including demobilization and reintegration, transitional justice, security sector reform, and weapons management. These activities are closely linked and often are—or should be—undertaken simultaneously. Not only are such efforts important for achieving peace, they are also directly relevant to the success of weapons reduction and control measures.

Table 9.1   Major small arms and light weapons collection programmes, 1989–2002

Location	Time period	Framework	Organizer	Small arms and light weapons collected / destroyed*	Sources
Africa					
Mali	1995–96	Peace-building	UNDP	3,000 weapons	van der Graaf and Poulton (2001)
Operations Rachel, Mozambique	1995–2001	Peace-building/ crime prevention	Government (Mozambique and South Africa)	4,372 weapons; 266 grenades; 477,000 rounds of ammunition	Hennop (2001)
Mozambique	1995– March 2002	Peace-building/ crime prevention	TAE	6,692 weapons; 4,023 explosives; 237,766 rounds of ammunition	Christian Council of Mozambique (2002)
Liberia	1996–97	Peace-building	ECOMOG/ UNOMIL	17,287 weapons; 1,393,300 rounds of ammunition	UNSG (1997); Fraser (2001)
Sierra Leone	1999– February 2002	Peace-building	NCDDR/UNAMSIL (and ECOMOG in the early stages)	26,000 weapons; 935,495 rounds of ammunition	NCDDR (2002b)
South Africa	1999–July 2002	Crime prevention	South African Police Service	22,000 weapons	South African Press Association (2002)
The Republic of Congo	2000– August 2001	Peace-building	IOM/UNDP; CDS; Government	16,000 weapons	Demetriou, Muggah, and Biddle (2001)
Lesotho	2001–02	Peace-building	South African government; US State Department	3,843 weapons	US State Department (2002)
Angola	April–June 2002	Peace-building	UNITA	25,000 weapons	South African Press Association and Agence France Presse (2002)
Uganda	2002	Peace-building	Government	10,000 weapons	Maero (2002)
Sierra Leone	2002	Peace-building	Government (CACD)	7,951 weapons; 3,826 rounds of ammunition	ISS (2002b)

Table 9.1   Major small arms and light weapons collection programmes, 1989–2002 (continued)

Location	Time period	Framework	Organizer	Small arms and light weapons collected / destroyed*	Sources
Americas					
Panama	1989–90	Peace-building	US Army	10,000 weapons	US, GAO (2000)
Nicaragua	1989–93	Peace-building	ONUCA/BED	159,833 weapons; 250,000 rounds of ammunition	UNDDA (1999)
Seattle, USA	1992	Crime prevention	Government	1,172 weapons	Callahan and Rivara (1994)
El Salvador	1992–93	Peace-building	ONUSAL	10,200 weapons; 9,200 grenades; 4,000,000 rounds of ammunition	Laurance and Godnick (2001)
Haiti	1994–95	Peace-building	US Army	3,389 weapons	US, GAO (2000)
El Salvador	1996–99	Peace-building/ crime prevention	MPCD	9,527 weapons; 129,696 rounds of ammunition	Laurance and Godnick (2001)
Mexico	July 2001	Crime prevention (guns for food program)	Government	126 weapons; 7,200 rounds of ammunition	San Antonio Express-News (2001)
Mendoza, Argentina	2000–01	Crime prevention	Government/NGOs	2,566 weapons	Appiolaza (2001)
Brazil	2001	Crime prevention	Government/NGOs	100,000 weapons	Viva Rio (2001)
Brazil	July 2002	Crime prevention	Government/NGOs	10,000 weapons	Viva Rio (2002)
Argentina	August 2002	Crime prevention	UN-LiREC/UNDP/ government	2,200 weapons	Desarme.org (2002)
Argentina	November– December 2002	Crime prevention	UN-LiREC/UNDP/ government	8,000 weapons, 7,200 ammunition	UNDP (2002b)
Peru	November– December 2002	Crime prevention	UN-LiREC/UNDP/ government	2,573 weapons	UNDP (2002b)
Asia-Pacific					
Australia	1996–98	Legal reform	Government	643,726 firearms	Meek (1998); Australia (2000)
Cambodia	1998– September 2002	Peace-building/ crime prevention	Government	119,000 weapons	Xinhuanet (2002)
Solomon Islands	2001–May 2002	Peace-building	PMC	1936 guns; 2300kg of explosives	PMC (2002)
Pakistan	June 2001– March 2002	Crime prevention	Government	141,180 weapons; 848,407 rounds of ammunition	Pakistan News Service (2002)
Bougainville	March 2002	Peace-building	UNPOB, UNOPS, UNDP	65 musket rifles, thousands of rounds of ammunition, a dozen mines, eight grenades, and C-4 plastic explosive.	UNDP (2002a)
Europe					
Croatia	1996–97	Peace-building	UNTAES	8,356 rifles; 6,083 anti-tank rocket launchers; 13,573 grenades; 1,755,000 rounds of ammunition	Boothby (2001); UN, Department of Public Information (1997)
United Kingdom	1996–97	Legal reform	Government	23,000 firearms (amnesty programme); 162,000 firearms (buy-back)	UK, House of Commons (1999); UK, Home Office (2000)
Kosovo	June– September 1999	Peace-building	KFOR	10,000 weapons; 27,000 grenades; 1,200 mines; 5,000,000 rounds of ammunition	BICC (2001)

Table 9.1   Major small arms and light weapons collection programmes, 1989–2002 (continued)

Location	Time period	Framework	Organizer	Small arms and light weapons collected / destroyed*	Sources
Albania	1997–2002	Crime prevention/ conflict prevention	UNDP/UNDDA/ UNOPS	200,377 weapons	UNDP (2002c)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1999–July 2002	Peace-building	SFOR	20,062 small arms; 76,168 grenades; 6,601,458 rounds of ammunition	SFOR (2001); Deutsche Presse-Agentur (2002)
Croatia	2001	Peace-building	Government	1,555 weapons; 9,090 kg of explosives	Croatia (2002)
Macedonia/FRY	August– September 2001	Peace-building	NATO	3,875 weapons; 397,625 mines, explosives, and ammunitions	NATO (2001)
Russia	2001–02	Crime prevention	Government	517 weapons; 500 kg of explosives; 172,500 rounds of ammunition	ITAR-TASS (2002)
Georgia	2002	Peace-building	OSCE	1,300 weapons; 210kg of explosives	OSCE (2002)
Cyprus	2002	Peace-building	UN	4,500 weapons	UNWire (2002)
Norway	2002	Pilot project	Government	5,000 weapons	Aftenposten (2002)

Note: * Figures reflect small arms and light weapons collected on a voluntary basis and/or confiscated. Confiscated arms were destroyed in all the programmes listed here. See the relevant sources for more details.

Source: Florquin and Waszink (2003)

Police double-check that weapons collected in the Philippines have been completely destroyed.

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WEAPONS AS A BARGAINING CHIP

Although some wars come to an end through the military defeat of one party by another, today they are more commonly ended through a negotiated settlement between two parties, both of which are capable of continuing the conflict. Negotiations usually do not end with a peace settlement, but continue through its implementation as provisions are renegotiated or problems emerge. During these discussions, the parties' military strength is a major determinant of their bargaining power. Two major indicators of their strength are the number of combatants they command and the quantity of weapons they hold. These two closely linked issues therefore tend to become important bargaining chips and a source of contention during the discussions.[1]

During most peace negotiations, disarmament of armed opposition groups, of militias, and, in

some cases, of government forces is a central focus. Non-state armed groups usually have an interest in keeping part of their stocks hidden, or at least in retaining access to outside supply sources in order to maintain some leverage *vis-à-vis* the government, particularly if the benefits of peace prove disappointing. They may also use their weapons as a bargaining chip during negotiations. During the peace process in El Salvador in the early 1990s, for example, the armed opposition group Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) linked the issue of disarmament to the redistribution of land, thus maintaining a high degree of pressure on the government to comply with its promises of reform. Governments, on the other hand, are not usually prepared to fulfil their commitments under a peace settlement until they are convinced of the opposition's good intentions. Willingness to give up weapons serves as a powerful indication of this.

Weapons are often used as bargaining chips during negotiations.

The importance of addressing the issue of disarmament—as well as demobilization and reintegration measures—during peace negotiations has been emphasized repeatedly (Greene, 1999; UNSG, 2000, paras 12–15). Ideally, detailed provisions outlining how these activities will be carried out should be included in the peace agreement (UNSC, 2002, para. 25). The agreement should also provide for the disposal of the collected arms and ammunition in order to avoid problems at a later stage, as occurred in Liberia in the late 1990s. Because no provisions had been made for the disposal of weapons in the 1996 Abuja II Agreement (the extension of the collapsed Abuja I peace agreement), it took over two years to persuade President Taylor in 1999 to destroy collected weapons. This put further strain on an already long and convoluted peace process.

If disarmament provisions are to be adhered to, it is vital that the parties consider the agreement fair. It should appear more beneficial and attractive to them than the alternative of continued fighting; and they must be confident that it will be implemented effectively and transparently. In fact, experience shows the advantages of making negotiations inclusive and transparent to all parties and stakeholders in a conflict. Exclusion of one or more groups can lead to disgruntlement and more violence (World Bank and Carter Center, 1997, pp. 3–6).

In some situations, even small groups have been able to disrupt and jeopardize the entire process. In Nicaragua, incomplete disarmament and unfulfilled promises of reintegration support during the peace process in the early 1990s led groups of former combatants to re-mobilize. The violent acts of these groups, known as the *recontras* and the *recompas,* significantly destabilized the former conflict zones; and it took years to achieve a settlement with all the groups (Oliver, 2000).

The decision as to whether or not to include a group at the negotiating table can also have a direct impact on the disarmament process itself. If an agreement is concluded, its provisions, including those relating to disarmament, will not usually cover groups that have not participated. Even where the latter wish to surrender weapons, they often have to be turned away, at least where disarmament is being conducted by an international peace mission operating under a strict mandate. Ideally, peace agreements and mandates should allow for flexibility in this respect.[2]

At the same time, it is not always possible to engage all groups in negotiations, as not all groups believe it is in their interest to participate. In Bougainville, for example, a small hardline faction called the Me'ekamui Army initially refused to join the peace process. This group controls the area surrounding the Panguna mine— a major source of economic revenue—that it keeps off-limits to all others by the continued threat of armed force. Where the incentives to continue armed conflict are stronger than those to end it, disarmament efforts are likely to fail.

Table 9.2   Selected disarmament components of peace agreements and peace operation mandates since 1993

Implementing force/personnel	Text of mandate/peace agreement
ECOMOG, Liberia	Disarmament being the ultimate objective of the cease-fire, the Parties hereto agree and express their intent and willingness to disarm to and under the supervision of ECOMOG, monitored and verified by the United Nations Observer Mission. In conformity therewith, the parties agree that: 1. All weapons and warlike materials collected shall be stored by ECOMOG in armouries designated by ECOMOG, monitored and verified by United Nations observers. 2. All weapons and warlike materials in the possession of the parties shall be given to ECOMOG, monitored by United Nations observers, upon appropriate recording and inventory, and placed in designated armouries. 3. Said armouries shall be secured by ECOMOG, monitored and verified by United Nations observers, upon proper documentation or inventory of all weapons and warlike materials received. 4. Each of the warring factions shall ensure that its combatants report all weapons and warlike materials to ECOMOG, monitored and verified by United Nations observers, upon proper inventory. Such weapons and warlike materials, upon inventory, shall be taken to the designated armouries by ECOMOG, under the monitoring and verification of United Nations observers. 5. All non-combatants who are in possession of weapons and warlike materials shall also report and surrender them to ECOMOG, monitored and verified by United Nations observers. Such weapons and warlike materials shall be returned to the owners after due registration, licensing and certification by the governing authority after the elections. 6. ECOMOG shall have the authority to disarm any combatant or non-combatant in possession of weapons and warlike materials. The United Nations observers shall monitor all such activities. 7. For the sole purpose of maintaining the cease-fire, ECOMOG shall conduct any search to recover lost or hidden weapons, observed and monitored by the United Nations observers. Cotonou Agreement (25 July 1993)
UNAMIR, Rwanda	To contribute to the security of the city of Kigali inter alia within a weapons-secure area established by the parties in and around the city; To monitor observance of the cease-fire agreement, which calls for the establishment of cantonment and assembly zones and the demarcation of the new demilitarized zone and other demilitarization procedures. United Nations S/RES/872 (14 November 1993)
UNOMIL, Liberia	To monitor compliance with other elements of the Peace Agreement, including at points on Liberia's borders with Sierra Leone and other neighbouring countries, and to verify its impartial application, and in particular to assist in the monitoring of compliance with the embargo on delivery of arms and military equipment to Liberia and the cantonment, disarmament and demobilization of combatants. United Nations S/RES/866 (26 March 1993)
UNMIH and MNF Haiti	Assuring public order, including the disarmament of paramilitary groups. United Nations S/RES/940 (31 July 1994)
IFOR, Bosnia and Herzegovina	The Parties understand and agree that the IFOR has the right and is authorized to compel the removal, withdrawal, or relocation of specific Forces and weapons from, and to order the cessation of any activities in, any location in Bosnia and Herzegovina whenever the IFOR determines Forces, weapons or activities to constitute a threat or potential threat to either the IFOR or its mission, or to another Party. General Framework Agreement for Peace (Dayton Agreement, 14 December 1995)
UNMOT, Tajikistan	Monitor the assembly of United Tajik Opposition fighters and their reintegration, disarmament and demobilization; United Nations S/RES/1138 (14 November 1997)
MINURCA, Central African Republic	To supervise, control storage, and monitor the final disposition of all weapons retrieved in the course of the disarmament exercise; United Nations S/RES/1159 (27 March 1998)
UNOMSIL, Sierra Leone	To monitor the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants concentrated in secure areas of the country, including monitoring of the role of ECOMOG in the provision of security and in the collection and destruction of arms in those secure areas; United Nations S/RES/1181 (13 July 1998)

Table 9.2   Selected disarmament components of peace agreements and peace operation mandates since 1993 (continued)

Implementing force/personnel	Text of mandate/peace agreement
UNAMSIL, Sierra Leone	To assist the Government of Sierra Leone in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan; To that end, to establish a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra Leone, including at disarmament/reception centres and demobilization centres. United Nations S/RES/1270 (22 October 1999)
KFOR, Kosovo	Demilitarizing the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups as required in paragraph 15 below. United Nations S/RES/1244 (10 June 1999)
OSCE, Moldova	Ensuring transparency of the removal and destruction of Russian ammunition and armaments, and co-ordinating financial and technical assistance to facilitate withdrawal and destruction. OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 329 (9 December 1999)
MONUC, Democratic Republic of the Congo	To develop, within 45 days of adoption of this resolution, an action plan for the overall implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement by all concerned with particular emphasis on the following key objectives: the collection and verification of military information on the parties' forces, the maintenance of the cessation of hostilities and the disengagement and redeployment of the parties' forces, the comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of all members of all armed groups referred to in Annex A, Chapter 9.1 of the Ceasefire Agreement, and the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces. United Nations S/RES/1291 (24 February 2000)

Source: Bevan (2002)

Box 9.1   Northern Ireland and the politics of paramilitary weapons

The decommissioning of small arms and light weapons from Northern Ireland's republican and loyalist paramilitary organi-zations—with a particular focus on the stockpile of the Irish Republican Army (IRA)—has been the major political stumbling block in the Northern Ireland peace process for the past eight years. During the multi-party negotiations which led to the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998, and thereafter throughout the implementation of the accord, most political crises have revolved around the arms issue. The significance of these weapons surpasses that seen in many other recent peace processes, reflecting both the symbolic and the practical value of arms in a society divided along traditional sectarian lines, with widespread distrust between groups and a prevailing culture of paramilitarism. While the experience of Northern Ireland is in some ways unique, it can still shed considerable light on broader issues of political inclusion, confidence-building, and the establishment of new concepts of security acceptable to communities in conflict (Hauswedell and Brown, 2002).

The symbolism of weapons

After more than 30 years of sectarian violence, paramilitary arms in Northern Ireland carry a symbolic, ideological, and psychological weight that exceeds their objective military significance (for paramilitary stockpile estimates, see: Hauswedell and Brown, 2002, p. 44; Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 88). This has made the question of decommissioning resistant to political deal-making and compromise throughout the peace process. Both parties have anchored their positions on the issue of arms: the Ulster Unionists by expressing their reluctance to share power through their position of 'no guns, no government', the republican Sinn Fein by indicating that there would be 'no surrender' for an undefeated army. In large part, this impasse can also be seen as an attempt by pro-Agreement supporters from both sides to retain a focus on the weaponry in order to avoid being brought down by internal or external criticism concerning other, more substantive political issues in the Agreement.

Two principal events in 2001 helped ease the stalemate, at least temporarily, and led to the first substantive steps forward on decommissioning. One was Sinn Fein's electoral success in June 2001—when it became the largest nationalist party in the north—which proved the efficacy of its peace strategy and gave it the political space to disarm without appearing to have surrendered.

Paramilitary arms in Northern Ireland carry a symbolic, ideological, and psychological weight that exceeds their objective military significance.

Box 9.1   Northern Ireland and the politics of paramilitary weapons (continued)

Then, revelations in late summer 2001 about IRA involvement in the training of the FARC paramilitaries in Colombia soured republican relations with the US government and large swathes of Irish America. This embarrassment was compounded by an unforeseen external incident, namely, the 11 September 2001 attacks. Its association with an organization viewed as terrorist threatened to place republicanism beyond the pale, and forced the IRA to take the initiative. Its first act of 'putting arms completely and verifiably beyond use' occurred in October 2001, and was followed by a second such gesture in spring 2002 shortly before the Irish general elections, when Sinn Fein gained five seats in the Irish Parliament. These acts generated much optimism about the prospects of a lasting peace. Unfortunately, events have since taken a turn for the worse and in the winter of 2002, no end to the conflict was yet in sight.

**Political inclusion and confidence-building**

In the same way that political inclusion can encourage and provide pressure to disarm, the inability to achieve political clout can be a major disincentive to disarm, as is illustrated by the Northern Ireland loyalists' resistance to surrendering their weapons. The loyalist paramilitaries, which are not as well represented at the polls, have not achieved a similar degree of political inclusion. The two major groups, the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, have refused to reciprocate on decommissioning and have been, since 2001, responsible for approximately 60-70 per cent of political violence in Northern Ireland (Police Service of Northern Ireland, 2003).

Acknowledgement that constitutional participation or other forms of political empowerment provide a space in which disarmament can more easily be undertaken is among the pivotal lessons of the Northern Ireland peace process to date. Exclusion, while it can act as a lever that pressures 'hardliners' and representatives of armed groups, simultaneously cuts away at their political room for manoeuvre. Making disarmament a condition for political participation or inclusion may lead to situations of deadlock, while political and social empowerment may serve as incentives for disarmament.

Given the sensitive nature of disarmament and the protracted distrust among the parties in Northern Ireland, the establishment of a mutually agreed control mechanism proved to be a crucial step in building confidence before any substantive disarmament could occur. With the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD), chaired by the Canadian ex-General John de Chastelain, a unique third party mandate was institutionalized. The Commission has served as an interlocutor with the paramilitary organizations to monitor, review, and verify progress on decommissioning of illegal arms. The procedures set up by the Commission included repeated visits to 'surplus' IRA arms dumps by independent international inspectors, and a 'dual-key' system, which implied that the armed group still retained possession of the weapons even though its arsenals had been exposed. However, the work of the Commission has been regularly interrupted due to a lack of co-operation from the various paramilitary groups.

Redefining decommissioning as a process that, rather than surrendering and publicly destroying weapons, seeks to 'put them beyond use' by 'sealing' arms dumps, exemplifies the type of creativity needed for the peace process to move forward. A certain degree of secrecy about the method of disposal and the quantity of arms decommissioned—seen to be contradictory to the requirement of transparency in an open democracy—has also allowed the IRA to save face *vis-à-vis* internal criticism and the triumphalism of political opponents. Confidentiality, however, could be accepted only as long as a credible independent body which had the trust of the participants could verify the process.

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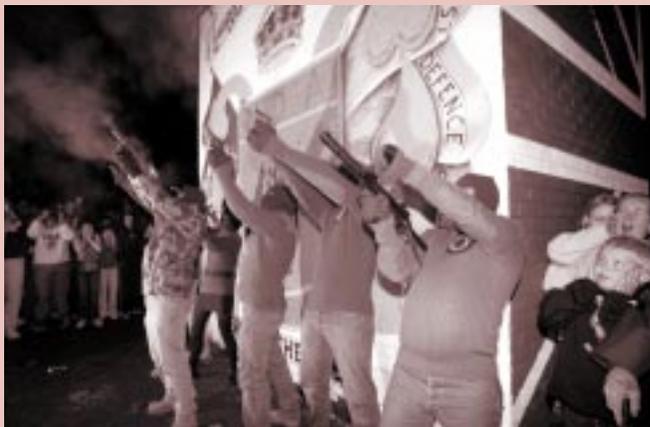
Members of the Protestant paramilitary group, the Ulster Freedom Fighters, fire weapons into the air beside a bonfire.

Box 9.1   Northern Ireland and the politics of paramilitary weapons (continued)

A package deal

Along with the confidence-building process, and in response to a rather inefficient strategy of singling out the issue of decommissioning, what seemed like a more propitious framework for disarmament in Northern Ireland was developed by the British and Irish governments and the pro-Agreement parties in 2001 in the form of a 'package deal'. Through this scheme, decommissioning was increasingly linked to other issues of security such as the demilitarization of state forces and, in particular, police reform. This was in line with a growing recognition that a 'farewell to arms' could only be achieved in the broader context of peace-building, meaning a full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, mutual enhanced security, and the inclusion of civil society in the process.

Despite the positive developments that followed the introduction of this approach, with IRA's decommissioning acts in 2001 and spring 2002, progress has since ground to a halt. Following increased sectarian tension and violence, and a stand-off between Unionists and Republicans after the exposure of an alleged IRA spy-ring, the downwards political spiral culminated with the suspension of the power-sharing government on 14 October 2002 (Northern Ireland Office Online, 2002). Subsequently, the IRA decided to suspend contacts with the IICD and, in January 2003, the decommissioning process received yet another blow when the Unionist Volunteer Force announced it would break off talks with the Commission (Lister, 2002; Cowan, 2003). Despite the almost complete deadlock, efforts to revive the process continue. Although creative solutions have been devised to encourage the surrender of weapons in Northern Ireland, it remains to be seen whether they will eventually bring a long-awaited end to the conflict.

Source: Hauswedell (2002)

Disarmament deferred: The danger of forgetting the guns

As identified in the *Small Arms Survey 2002,* practical disarmament measures—including weapons collection, control, disposal, and the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants—have received much greater attention and support in recent years and have now become an established component of conflict resolution and prevention strategies. Nevertheless, in many cases, matters of disarmament are still not dealt with explicitly or thoroughly during peace settlement negotiations. In practice, negotiators have often decided to postpone this question until a later stage because of its sensitive nature and the risk of it ending or impeding progress around the negotiating table. As a consequence, specific provisions are not always included in peace agreements. Experience shows, however, that the decision to postpone discussions of disarmament for fear of upsetting fragile peace talks is often ill-advised and may generate serious problems later. The international community has been criticized by practitioners and analysts alike for this tendency to hastily conclude an agreement in the interests of immediate 'success' (Kühne, 1998, p. 18).

Provisions for the recovery of small arms and light weapons, along with a comprehensive DDR strategy, was, for example, neglected in the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, which brought an end to the war in Bosnia. The result was that only a few *ad hoc* and uncoordinated DDR activities were carried out, contributing to increasing instability and tension in the area. King (2001) identifies two reasons for the lack of attention to DDR in the Bosnian context. First, political tensions during the talks would have prevented agreement on such sensitive issues, and second, NATO in its first peacekeeping operation lacked experience in issues going beyond traditional military security. The disarmament of small arms and light weapons did not receive the same attention as that of heavy weapons, a recurrent problem as conventional arms control regimes traditionally have not considered weapons with a calibre of less than 125mm. This inexperience and lack of preparation prevented the application of lessons learned in earlier DDR processes carried out under UN auspices, such as the need to put 'security first' (King, 2000; 2001).

The decision to postpone discussions of disarmament for fear of upsetting fragile peace talks is often ill-advised and may generate serious problems.

An additional explanation of the lack of attention sometimes accorded to the design of DDR, and in particular disarmament, in peace accords maintains that international mediators lack expertise and interest in the subject (Greene, 1999; UNGA/UNSC, 2000, para. 57). The senior political figures that are usually chosen for such tasks are often inclined to give priority to political aspects of an agreement over technical aspects, and may also lack the necessary technical skills to appropriately address such issues in detail. Agreements have been criticized for, among other things, establishing unrealistic timetables and not providing for the security needs of ex-combatants, thus discouraging combatants from committing to disarmament (Gamba, 1998). It is also important that those drafting disarmament provisions consider the control that the political and military leaders exert over their combatants. A leadership with strong central control—if willing—is more likely to be able to adhere to the agreements that they sign and to ensure that the forces under their control comply with their provisions. Due to the many specific considerations and requirements that need to be taken into account, it is vital to involve people with specialist knowledge of disarmament in peace negotiations.

Efforts to resolve disarmament issues during negotiations are advantageous, not least because they allow negotiators to identify significant obstacles and may facilitate a more realistic assessment of the prospects for success. If discussions concerning the control and reduction of weapons lead to a stalemate or breakdown of the process, this may indicate that the necessary political will or preconditions for peace are not yet in place. While failure to address disarmament during negotiations may contribute to the failure of some peace processes, it is difficult to assess the influence of this factor overall. In most, if not all, cases, it would be inaccurate to blame a peace operation's lack of success entirely on considerations related to weapons. It may be argued that, if weapons cannot be dealt with in the discussions, the situation is not yet ripe for a negotiated settlement.

Deliberations over weapons may also help gauge the intention and commitment of the various parties in other ways. There is ample evidence that parties regularly engage in negotiations, and even sign agreements, without any intention of adhering to them.[3] Sometimes the period of negotiation and cease-fire is seen as an opportunity to build up military strength and regroup before the next offensive. The two failed attempts at disarmament in Angola in the 1990s might have been avoided—for example by postponing disarmament until a more credible political settlement had been reached—if more realistic assessments had been made regarding the parties' commitment based on their observed actions during the negotiations and the ensuing implementation of the demobilization process.

Including specific disarmament provisions in a peace agreement may also benefit implementation by significantly enhancing transparency, oversight, and understanding of the process. Without them, suspicions, allegations, and a general lack of confidence and trust are much more likely to arise. Similarly, provisions that are not specific enough, leaving too much scope for interpretation, can generate confusion and disagreement, as well as encourage deception and manipulation. A legitimate and transparent disarmament process in combination with the effective dissemination of information can bolster confidence-building between the parties.

One approach that has proved successful in promoting disarmament during peace talks is to link this issue to other aspects of the political process instead of treating it in isolation. A phased process in which the achievement of goals in the area of weapons collection leads to the attainment of desired objectives in another area can allow for gradual confidence-building among parties. The collection of weapons from an armed opposition group can, for example, be linked to increased political inclusion or demilitarization and reform of the state's security apparatus, as was done in Northern Ireland (see Box 9.1) and Macedonia (see Box 9.2).

Strength in numbers

In his report on *The Role of United Nations Peacekeeping in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration,* the UN Secretary-General highlights the need for accurate information from the parties during negotiations on 'the size and location of their armed forces; number, type and location of weapons' (UNSG, 2000, para. 12) in order to ensure successful implementation of DDR activities. In practice, however, parties to a conflict often have good reasons not to abide by this recommendation.

Belligerent parties usually have a vested interest in demonstrating their superior strength in order to win concessions from the other side. It is therefore common for a party to inflate the numbers of weapons it claims to hold during negotiations. However, when approaching the disarmament stage, the parties usually deflate the numbers in order to retain a greater proportion of their weaponry. Twyford and Alpers (2003) highlight this in their assessment of the still ongoing disarmament process in Bougainville, initiated after a devastating nine-year war with Papua New Guinea and between local factions that ended in 1997: 'To complicate matters, Bougainville factions had "talked up" the numbers they had at the start of the peace process, but have since tried to talk them down.' This negotiating strategy creates problems in terms of establishing the numbers of weapons to be collected during disarmament, as the inventories first presented often do not correspond to the stocks claimed or turned in at a later stage. It is also a major impediment to verification and assessment of the disarmament operation, as there are no accurate baseline figures against which to assess the numbers of weapons collected.

> **The likely inaccuracy of information supplied by the parties makes the collection of data from independent sources regarding weapons stockpiles imperative.**

The likely inaccuracy of information supplied by the parties makes the collection of data from independent sources regarding weapons stockpiles imperative. An attempt to generate such numbers was undertaken by a Small Arms Survey research team in Congo-Brazzaville and the methods they employed are described elsewhere in this volume (CONGO). Press reports can be another useful source of information, although their reliability varies. Claims made by the parties *before* negotiations should also be considered as these numbers might give an indication about actual troop levels.

Data can be particularly contradictory where disarmament has been interrupted and later restarted. This causes confusion about who has surrendered their weapons and who has not. Not only is this question important from a security point of view, but such information often determines who is entitled to demobilization and reintegration benefits, where offered. Good record-keeping can, to some extent, limit this problem (Ambrosi, 2002).

In order to assess whether disarmament objectives are being met and whether parties are acting in good faith, it is essential to evaluate not only the quantity, but also the types and the quality of the weapons collected. One way of doing this is by developing a measure of stockpile lethality, which can then be used to rate the stockpiles of weapons held compared with weapons collected. Regardless of whether a party is expected to turn in all, or only a part, of its weapons holdings, this measure would indicate whether the weapons collected constitute a representative sample of its stockpiles (see Small Arms Survey, 2002, pp. 314–15).

Developing reliable estimates of small arms and light weapons stocks is a difficult undertaking. A telling example of this is Afghanistan, where the almost impossible task of establishing the number of weapons in circulation poses a major challenge to effective disarmament. As well as having a traditional weapons culture, during 23 years of armed conflict the country has been flooded with small arms and light weapons from a variety of sources, including the substantial craft production taking place in areas across the border with Pakistan (Sedra, 2002, p. 37) (PRODUCERS).

Box 9.2   Weapons collection in the context of peace negotiations: Macedonia's Harvest revisited

In August 2001, a peace agreement brokered by the European Union and NATO put an end to some six months of conflict in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FRY). Ethnic Albanians agreed to disband their National Liberation Army (NLA) in exchange for substantial constitutional reforms aimed at improving the status of Macedonia's Albanian minority. In order to disarm the NLA, NATO deployed a peacekeeping force numbering some 3,800 soldiers in September 2001. The 30-day disarmament drive was dubbed 'Operation Essential Harvest'.

Whereas the Albanian-speaking population embraced the Ohrid peace accord of 13 August 2001, the Slav Macedonians only grudgingly accepted its terms, which were seen by many as a pretext for the secession of the Albanian-dominated parts of the country. Macedonian politicians argued that the international community had sided with the Albanian population. According to a poll of the Skopje-based Institute for Democracy, more than 50 per cent of the ethnic Macedonian population felt anger or hatred towards NATO (Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2001).

The controversy centred on the number of weapons to be collected and destroyed by NATO. While the target was set at 3,300 weapons—an estimate based on widely accepted NLA troop strengths of 2,000 fighters—these figures were disputed in Macedonian circles. During the conflict, the armed forces had suspected the rebels of holding 6,000–8,000 small arms and light weapons. When the target was negotiated, the numbers circulating in the Macedonian press skyrocketed. One government spokesman went on record saying that the NLA's armoury included 'no less than 60,000 [weapons]' (Agence France Presse, 24 August 2001) (STOCKPILES).

Despite these misgivings on the Macedonian side, Essential Harvest succeeded in collecting about 3,800 weapons and 397,625 units of ammunition, explosives, and mines. Another 2,000 weapons and 180,000 rounds of ammunition were seized during Operation Eagle by KFOR troops on the Kosovo-Macedonian border, many of them almost certainly destined for the NLA (BICC, 2002, p. 138). Collected weapons and ammunition were transported to the Macedonian town of Krivolac, where they were put on public display and later destroyed.

While the international community celebrated Essential Harvest as a success, the Macedonian public remained sceptical, arguing that the NLA had surrendered only a small part of its arsenal. Nationalist politicians such as Prime Minister Georgievski claimed that most of the weapons were unserviceable and called NATO's activities 'Museum Harvest' (ICG, 2001a, p. 4). However, Western military observers claim that 50-70 per cent of the weapons surrendered were in fact serviceable (Associated Press, 11 September 2001). Whether the collection and destruction of some 3,800 weapons had a serious impact on the military strength of the NLA is difficult to judge. In the summer of 2002, NATO sources were quoted as saying that the weapons collected represented some ten per cent of the NLA's arsenal (Ripley, 2002, p. 40). Still, since there was no attempt to register combatants or to assist them in their return to civilian life (Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 2001), there is very little reliable information on the real number of people involved in the NLA and what happened to them after the end of the conflict. Although it is difficult to assess accurately the effect of Operation Harvest on the numbers of weapons available to the NLA, enough military firearms remain in Macedonia to quickly arm a new rebel group (STOCKPILES).

Essential Harvest can be said to have been a political success in the sense that the NLA leadership underlined its support for the peace process by handing in the agreed number of weapons. Furthermore, the international community expressed its willingness to support the Ohrid Framework Agreement by sending a robust military force to oversee the disarmament component. Macedonia has since returned to an uneasy peace, no doubt preserved in part by the continued presence of observers from the OSCE and the European Union, protected by a small contingent of NATO soldiers ('Task Force Fox'). Still, inter-ethnic relations have not recovered and many in Macedonia believe that the current peace is in fact more like a truce. The run-up to the 15 September 2002 elections was characterized by a radicalization of political positions on both sides, although the risk of violence is now among feuding groups within both communities, rather than between Albanians and Macedonians.

While the risk of Macedonia breaking apart seemed lower in the summer of 2002 than twelve months earlier, this has less to do with the 'success' of Essential Harvest than with the fact that Macedonia's political system has returned to the familiar pattern of paternalist politics against the backdrop of an ethnically divided electorate (STOCKPILES). NLA structures are still operational, and some of the tensions within the Albanian community can be explained by the attempts of NLA leaders to turn their military fame into political gain. While the international community has regained some of the credibility lost among Macedonians in 2001, an uneasy feeling remains among many observers that the NLA manipulated the international community and NATO for its own purposes during the conflict. Military victory not being a viable option, it has been suggested that the NLA triggered a 'media war' to present the conflict as a struggle against Macedonian oppression, resulting in a peace agreement which broadly met their demands. Weapons collection programmes should ideally disable military capabilities and build trust among the warring parties. In the Macedonian context, major challenges still remain with respect to both objectives.

Source: Paes (2002)

Boulden (2000) provides a comprehensive list of the mechanisms and procedures that are used to monitor and verify the implementation of peace agreements, all of which have a role to play in monitoring disarmament. Military observers that *monitor, record, and report* on the activities of the parties play a key role on the ground. Data provided by the parties are confirmed through *inspections and monitoring* and cross-checked with information provided by outside sources. Finally, *patrolling and observation* are used to confirm that parties are adhering to their obligations. Joint commissions made up of representatives from the parties, as well as neutral third parties like the UN, provide a forum for *monitoring and discussing progress* in the implementation process. As Boulden (2000) stresses, the military components are central to any peace agreement, and verification of compliance—offering a reliable means of gauging the signatories' commitment and building trust—may significantly enhance long-term prospects for peace.

Disagreements over weapons have threatened negotiations and fragile peace agreements.

Discussions about disarmament measures and the size of weapons stockpiles are particularly crucial to the broader political process aimed at ending a conflict when paramilitary groups or militias are involved. In Northern Ireland, the political process became inextricably linked to, and ultimately dependent on, the decommissioning of weapons. The intractability of the controversy over weapons prolonged the dispute between sectarian groups, and it has taken years to develop ways of separating the weapons issue from the underlying causes of the conflict, with only mixed success to date (see Box 9.1). In Macedonia, conflict and animosity between the Slav Macedonians and the Albanian minority were reflected in the controversy over the size of weapons holdings and mutual allegations of deception (see Box 9.2). In both cases, disagreements over weapons have threatened negotiations and fragile peace agreements. Yet these cases also illustrate that the surrender of weapons, even if limited to a 'symbolic disarmament' of tactically insignificant numbers, may constitute a significant step forward on the road to peace.

REMOVING THE TOOLS OF WAR: DISARMAMENT AND WEAPONS MANAGEMENT AFTER CONFLICT

On 17 January 2002, disarmament in Sierra Leone was declared complete. This marked the end of a long and convoluted process, which less than two years earlier had completely collapsed when 500 UN peacekeepers were captured by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels and nine of them killed. Still, efforts to achieve peace continued and progress was swift after the government—assisted by UNAMSIL—relaunched the DDR programme on 18 May 2001, resulting in more than 46,000 combatants disarming in this last phase (Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, 2002). Because large numbers of weapons are still circulating after more than a decade of civil war, community-level weapons collection and destruction programmes will be continued.

Although many hurdles remain, the end of the formal disarmament process provides an important signpost along the road to sustainable peace in Sierra Leone. Particularly in light of the considerable difficulties encountered in earlier stages, remarkable progress was achieved within a relatively short period of time. At present, the disarmament process in Sierra Leone is considered by many to be one of the success stories among the several disarmament operations that have been part of international peace operations in recent years (see Box 9.5).

Since the end of the Cold War, three patterns of disarmament following armed conflict may be observed (Berdal, 1996). The first is based on a negotiated political agreement, which generally provides for measures of a military nature to be undertaken during the period of transition. These measures may include a cease-fire, cantonment and demobilization of soldiers, reform of the existing armed force or reintegration of troops into a new armed force, and

reduction of arms and equipment (Boulden, 2000). The second pattern is observed where one of the parties to a conflict has achieved military victory over its adversaries; here it is the victor who establishes the conditions for disarmament. Finally, in circumstances where there is no effective central authority, an outside actor may determine the modalities of DDR and undertake to disarm the warring parties. Operations conducted in situations of state collapse are usually distinct in that they rely on a higher degree of coercion to secure compliance with disarmament measures.

In most of the armed conflicts taking place since the end of the Cold War, small arms and light weapons have been the most common armaments used, and thus the focus for disarmament operations. The reduction in the number of small arms and light weapons through the disarmament of combatants is closely linked to, and often undertaken in conjunction with, their demobilization and reintegration. To the abbreviation 'DDR' that has been given to this process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, additional 'Rs' are sometimes added, referring to 'resettlement', 'repatriation', or sometimes 'reconciliation'.[4] In any comprehensive approach, these additional issues would certainly have to be addressed, although disarmament is the main element considered here.

While similar activities are involved when military forces are downsized in peacetime, the focus here is limited to DDR carried out after an armed conflict has ended. This section does not specifically address demobilization and reintegration programmes which have been undertaken in post-conflict settings but which are not part of a peace settlement. Examples of such programmes include the government-led Uganda Veterans Assistance Programme in Uganda between 1992 and 1995, and the demobilization of a large portion of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) initiated by the EPLF in 1993 (Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer, 1996a; 1996b). Despite the limited focus of this section, these programmes share many common elements, and much of the analysis undertaken here will also be applicable to these other cases.

Disarmament as part of a DDR process includes the collection, control, and disposal of weapons. The UN Secretary-General, in his report on the role of UN peacekeeping in DDR, affirms that, in addition to the collection of weapons, disarmament may entail the assembly and cantonment of combatants and the development of arms management programmes, including the safe storage and disposal of weapons (UNSG, 2000, para. 6 (a)). Disarmament is often a highly politically-charged undertaking, with a decisive impact on the whole process and on the prospect of a sustainable peace itself. Although large-scale disarmament tends to take place in the first phase of the process, the sequencing of the different elements of DDR should not be regarded as fixed. Sometimes demobilization or reintegration must get under way for the disarmament process to gain momentum. Disarmament is also a continuous process, which can go on for years or even decades after the first large-scale disarmament phase, particularly in cases where small arms have been widely distributed among the civilian population or where the initial disarmament process fails to recover large proportions of the weapons held by the parties. Although some references will be made to these longer-term efforts—referred to in the *Small Arms Survey 2002* as Phase II collection programmes—they are not specifically dealt with in this chapter (for a discussion of these programmes, see Small Arms Survey, 2002, pp. 292–7).

Disarmament as part of a DDR process includes the collection, control, and disposal of weapons.

The evolution of disarmament in peace operations since 1989

Since 1989, the disarming and demobilizing of combatants have increasingly been undertaken by the United Nations or other international organizations. The end of the Cold War allowed for renewed co-operation among the major powers in the United Nations. That new opportunity created optimism about the UN's capacity to undertake new and more complex tasks in the area of peacekeeping. While previous missions had mainly been authorized for traditional cease-fire

monitoring, the mandates of post-1989 operations have included a broad range of peace-building activities.[5] In a few cases, such operations have been assigned almost all the functions which would normally be assumed by national authorities, including basic governance, such as in Cambodia in 1992–93 and East Timor in 1999–2002. In the majority of cases, a more limited range of post-conflict peace-building measures, such as disarmament, demobilization, and supervision of elections, have been added to the traditional peacekeeping tasks in what has been characterized as 'multi-dimensional peacekeeping'. Since the deployments to Namibia (United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)) and Central America (United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA)) in 1989, UN peace-keeping missions have been increasingly involved in DDR activities. Between 1989 and 2000, at least 15 peacekeeping operations were engaged in such tasks (UNGA/UNSC, 2000, para. 43). Today, DDR has become a standard aspect of the majority of operations. The terms 'micro-disarmament' or 'practical disarmament' emerged in this period in reference to programmes that aimed to remove small arms and light weapons through collection and destruction in the context of UN peace operations (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 282).

Box 9.3   'Peace operation' defined

According to Erwin A. Schmidl (2000b), there are six main criteria that define a peace operation:
1. there is an international mandate or authorization for the mission;
2. an international or regional organization, or an *ad hoc* coalition of states, executes the mission;
3. the composition of the force and/or personnel is multinational;
4. its aim is to restore or preserve the status quo or to enable the peaceful transition from the status quo to a different, agreed-on status;
5. it aims to act for the benefit of the local population, not to conquer territory; and
6. it operates under the principles of 'measured force' and 'minimum damage', striving to limit 'collateral damage' as much as possible, whatever the specific mandate.

So far, most peace operations have been conducted within the UN framework. In these cases, the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has generally been responsible for the formal disarmament component, while other organizations and agencies have participated or taken the lead in the demobilization and reintegration activities. In some cases, however, regional organizations have also been in charge of the disarmament component of a peace agreement, whether alone or alongside the UN. Examples include NATO's implementation of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), responsible for disarmament in Liberia. Other organizations that have been involved in the verification of the military aspects of peace agreements (Boulden, 2000), range from regional organizations such as the OSCE and the European Union to *ad hoc* groups like the international

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As disarming begins in Afghanistan, Afghan citizens enjoy normal recreational activities again, such as volleyball.

peace monitoring organizations overseeing disarmament in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Where a functioning government is in place, national commissions are often established to oversee the process, such as the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) in Sierra Leone or the Joint Military Commission overseeing the demobilization of soldiers from UNITA in Angola. Table 9.3 provides a list of some of the major peace operations—both UN and non-UN—that have involved a DDR component.

Table 9.3   Major peace operations since 1990 with a disarmament component

Dates	Acronym	Name	Location	Disarmament Function
Aug 1990–Jan 1998	ECOMOG	ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group	Liberia	Forcible disarmament
Feb 1992–Mar 1995	UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia/FRY	Monitoring demobilization
Feb 1993–ongoing		OSCE Mission to Moldova	Moldova	Weapons destruction
Mar 1993–Mar 1995	UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia II	Somalia	Controlling and seizing weapons
Sep 1993–June 1996	UNMIH	United Nations Mission in Haiti	Haiti	Disarming paramilitaries
Sep 1993–Sep 1997	UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia	Liberia	Monitoring disarmament
Oct 1993–Mar 1996	UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda	Rwanda	Contributing to security in weapons-secure area and observing demilitarization
Feb 1995–June 1997	UNAVEM III	United Nations Angola Verification Mission III	Angola	Supervising the collection and storage of armaments
Mar 1995–Jan 1996	UNCRO	United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation	Croatia	Monitoring demobilization
Dec 1995–ongoing	IFOR/SFOR	NATO-led Implementation/Stabilization Force	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Disarming parties who threaten IFOR or other parties
Jan 1996–Jan 1998	UNTAES	United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium	Croatia	Supervising and facilitating demilitarization
Jan–May 1997	MINUGUA	United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala	Guatemala	Monitoring and collection
Apr 1998–Feb 2000	MINURCA	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic	Central African Republic	Supervise, control storage, and monitor
Jul 1998–Oct 1999	UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	Monitoring disarmament and demobilization
June 1999–ongoing	KFOR	NATO-led Kosovo Force	Kosovo	Demilitarization
Aug 1999–ongoing	MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
Oct 1999–ongoing	UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	Observing disarmament

Source: Bevan (2002)

What were first *ad hoc* initiatives to address the apparent need for disarmament and demobilization during the implementation of UN peacekeeping missions have since evolved into an established part of international peace operations. Learning from experience, increasingly standardized approaches have been developed to plan and design disarmament programmes. However, no two operational scenarios are exactly the same, and there are many constraining variables which continue to confront missions with a range of challenges when carrying out DDR activities.

A DDR programme that forms part of a peace operation is generally both politically sensitive and administratively complex. A host of actors are involved, including governments, opposition/rebel groups, peacekeeping forces, international organizations, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, and NGOs. Numerous other activities also need to be undertaken during the transitional period after an armed conflict. These activities are now becoming integrated into a more multi-faceted and comprehensive approach to peace operations, and are being treated as components of a broader peace-building strategy. Such a strategy could include preparations for elections, reform of the security sector, measures aimed at reconciliation and justice, human rights verification and monitoring, resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, rebuilding of infrastructure and productive assets, and macroeconomic stabilization measures. Still, integration and co-ordination are easier to

> A DDR programme that forms part of a peace operation is generally both politically sensitive and administratively complex.

Table 9.4   Requirements for successful disarmament

Type	Requirements	Challenges
Political	• Specific provisions for disarmament included in peace agreement • Inclusion of all factions in DDR process • Genuine political will and commitment of parties	• Issue of disarmament postponed to post-agreement stage • Insufficient knowledge results in vague provisions and unrealistic time lines • 'Spoilers' reneging on their commitments
Security	• Security provided for ex-combatants • Establishment of a clear mandate with sufficient enforcement powers to support implementation • Personnel with technical expertise to oversee process	• Ambiguous mandates based on political compromises • Gaps between operational requirements and objectives, and available resources • Different interpretations of the mandate, a lack of common doctrine, differing force objectives, capacities, and language problems • No effective central authority to ensure combatants comply with disarmament provisions
Economic	• Funding ensured for the entire DDR process • Demobilization/reintegration process must address economic security of ex-combatants and their dependents	• Insufficient commitment of donors and reluctance to fund longer-term reintegration measures • Lack of economic opportunities for ex-combatants
Social	• Dissemination of information to combatants and communities and other confidence-building measures • Establishing procedures for dealing with violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights committed by former combatants and leaders	• Lack of trust between former warring factions • Hostility towards ex-combatants in local communities • Compromises accepted to achieve a peace settlement, such as the provision of blanket amnesties for past IHL/human rights violations
Administrative/ planning	• Assessment of ex-combatants' profile and needs • Establishment of clear objectives • Assignment of responsibilities and tasks among the different actors involved • Establishment of lead agency to manage the process • Procedures and criteria established for monitoring and evaluation	• Involvement of large number of agencies with differing mandates and agendas • Insufficient time for planning • Delayed arrival of necessary personnel/resources • Competition between different agencies and actors • Baseline data unavailable and data collection capacities limited in target community

Source: King (2001)

achieve on paper than in practice. In addition, the sequencing of and interaction between these activities is not sufficiently understood, and this complexity implies that there are countless ways in which things can, and frequently do, go wrong.

Most disarmament processes are initiated with the consent of the belligerent parties as part of a peacekeeping operation. It is therefore often assumed that the implementation of disarmament measures will be consensual as well. In practice, however, armed groups often resist being demobilized and disarmed. It is now recognized that an element of coercion may be necessary, and peacekeeping forces are in some cases permitted to use force to fulfil their mandates.

Requirements, challenges, and solutions

Jeremy King (2001) divides the criteria that DDR strategies should fulfil, and accordingly the challenges they face, into several categories: political, security, economic, social, and administrative/planning. Table 9.4 sets out these categories and provides some examples of issues that may arise under each one, particularly those pertaining to disarmament.

Although no two peace processes are the same, some significant and recurring difficulties or considerations can be identified. Some of these will be addressed in more detail below, although this discussion is not an exhaustive account of the disarmament-related issues arising in peace processes (see Table 9.4).

Licence to disarm: The importance of mandates

Peace operations are conducted in accordance with the authorizations and instructions provided by their mandates. The mandate for a peace mission should thus be tailored to support the successful implementation of the peace agreement, where one exists. Ideally, the agreement should contain provisions for disarmament. In the absence of such an agreement, or if the existing agreement does not adequately address the issue of disarmament, it has been suggested that the mandate may be designed to compensate for this deficiency, allowing the mission to support practical disarmament measures (Greene, 1999).

Beginning with the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia in 1989, disarmament measures became a central function of post-Cold War peacekeeping (Cox, 1996, p. 83). Although the disarmament components of peace operation mandates in this period have become increasingly specific, peace operations are often criticized as being too vague and lacking in enforcement powers, thus impeding—or at least not sufficiently supporting—the effective implementation of disarmament measures. (Gamba, 1998; Fafo Programme for International Co-operation and Conflict Resolution, 2000; UNGA/UNSC, 2000, paras 56–64). Authorization of coercive disarmament is still rare and experience is at best mixed.

The mandate must be supported by rules of engagement that enhance the security of operations and personnel, while at the same time establishing restraints on the use of force appropriate for operations where peace—not victory—is the goal (United States Army, 1994, pp.15–16). Because of the often contentious and sensitive nature of disarmament, security will be of particular concern when disarmament is part of the mandate. It may be difficult to strike a balance between,

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NATO-led peacekeeping forces inspect rifles destroyed in a weapons collection and destruction campaign in Tuzla, Bosnia.

on the one hand, establishing one's authority and gaining the parties' respect and, on the other, carrying out the mandate in a way that promotes confidence and trust both between the parties to the conflict and between them and third parties. Often this is made more difficult by the parties' diminishing willingness to be disarmed, even when they have agreed to this on paper. If the UN peacekeepers can act professionally by maintaining their position as a legitimate, neutral, and trustworthy third party, this may encourage otherwise reluctant parties to disarm voluntarily.

To effectively carry out disarmament, peacekeepers need appropriate rules of engagement and mandates designed to support the provisions of the peace agreement. In what is generally referred to as the Brahimi Report (UNGA/UNSG, 2000, para. 56), the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations warns of the dangers of deploying troops with ambiguous mandates, which often result from political compromises. It concludes that an inadequately resourced force without a clear, credible, and achievable mandate will only raise expectations that it cannot meet, thus destroying the hopes and confidence of the local population, and ultimately damaging the credibility of the United Nations—beyond the immediate concern of placing ill-equipped troops in danger (para. 60). Unfortunately, past failures to effectively implement a disarmament mandate can often be directly attributed to inadequately equipped and resourced peace missions (Tanner, 1996, pp. 181–82).

The Brahimi Report also stresses the importance of 'a clear chain of command and unity of effort' (para. 64c), the latter referring to the need for all involved to work towards a common purpose. Obstacles to consistent conduct include differing interpretations of the mandate, a lack of common doctrine, varying levels of competency, contrasting force objectives, and language problems among the various national contingents involved in multilateral peace operations. These factors may equally jeopardize the implementation of a disarmament process (Tanner, 1996, p. 181; Gamba, 1998, p. 73; Carafano, 1997).

Since political compromise is a key cause of weak and ambiguous mandates, this obstacle is likely to be compounded in the context of the United Nations. Operations undertaken by smaller coalitions of states or more cohesive organizations like NATO may suffer less from weaknesses caused by internal bargaining processes, facilitating the establishment of clear mandates and rules of engagement, as well as streamlined decision-making.

As a key part of their mandate, peace operations should have a clearly defined objective which provides benchmarks for assessing operational success (United States Army, 1994, p. 14). Determining such benchmarks may be particularly valuable with regard to disarmament provisions for which objective, systematic, and reliable criteria for evaluating results are otherwise rarely developed and applied.[6] Clear objectives are necessary to monitor both progress and parties' compliance with their obligations to disarm.

On the other hand, very strict timelines and narrow definitions of target groups have sometimes prevented operations from taking advantage of unexpected opportunities for disarmament. While the mandate should provide a clear framework for operations, allowing for some flexibility with regard to disarmament can be beneficial.

Political commitment

As mentioned above, disarmament after war is usually undertaken on the basis of a negotiated political settlement, after one party has achieved a decisive military victory, or where an outside actor undertakes to disarm the warring factions because no effective central authority exists (Berdal, 1996). No two cases are likely to be played out in exactly the same way. Essentially, disarmament is a political process, and the political context and the disarmament process are therefore characterized by a high degree of mutual influence and dependence. Developments in one are likely to have a significant impact on the other.

> Past failures to effectively implement a disarmament mandate can often be directly attributed to inadequately equipped and resourced peace missions.

Afghan militia commanders inspect the weapons of militia fighters.

The development and implementation of DDR requires political will among the warring factions to end the conflict. As noted by King (2001) in an evaluation of the peace-building process in Bosnia, 'International actors may use pressure, but they cannot create political will where none exists. No matter the extent of planning and implementation, if conditions are not permissive, then efforts will falter'. The importance of political commitment to achieve success is illustrated by the case of Angola and the two failed attempts at disarmament there during the 1990s. Even if the two implementation processes had serious shortcomings, it would be extremely difficult to achieve a peaceful outcome in the face of obstruction and non-compliance by both the government and UNITA. By contrast, the latest DDR process initiated by the Angolan government in 2002 has made early and swift progress on the ground. The process was re-launched after UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi died in February 2002, which seems to provide further evidence of the primacy of politics and also of political personalities. According to observers, the current progress on disarmament has been made possible by the existence of genuine political will on the part of both sides (Porto, 2002, p. 4).

Civil wars are considered particularly difficult to resolve, posing complex and interrelated political, military, humanitarian, and developmental challenges.[7] Therefore, today's peace operations, of which disarmament is an integral part, may be more prone to fail as they generally operate in the difficult and challenging political environment of protracted civil conflict. Stedman (1996, pp. 38-39) emphasizes how parties are typically weaker in internal conflicts; as a result, commanders may lack the authority to order their troops to disarm, and splinter factions often emerge that wish to continue the armed struggle. Some groups or leaders may not agree with the terms of a peace agreement or they may even perceive peace as threatening their interests (Stedman, 1997, pp. 5–7). This was the cause of the appearance in 1997 of the Real IRA in Northern Ireland and of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedija, and Bujanovac (UCPMB), a splinter group of the Kosovo Liberation Army continuing to operate in Serbia until it surren-dered in May 2001 (Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, 2001). Furthermore, belligerent parties fighting for control within the boundaries of one state are even more likely than adversaries in inter-state wars to see the conflict as a zero-sum game whereby gains for one side constitute equal losses for the other. Against this backdrop, agreements are often signed with ulterior motives and with no genuine intention of honouring them. As mentioned earlier, it is extremely important to assess realistically the parties' genuine commitment to resolving the conflict before a disarmament exercise is initiated.

Another complicating factor is the frequent involvement of neighbouring countries or other external actors in these so-called 'internal' conflicts, and the subsequent need for a regional approach to their resolution (Hampson, 1996; UNGA/UNSC, 2000, para. 18). This is particularly pertinent to weapons issues, as many current civil conflicts are facilitated or sustained partly through the flow of weapons and combatants from surrounding states. The Liberian leader Charles Taylor's military assistance to the RUF was a key factor in perpetuating the conflict in Sierra Leone, while the RUF in turn provided Taylor with military material in at least one documented case (Berman, 2000, pp. 13–14).

Parties' genuine commitment to resolving the conflict must be assessed before a disarmament exercise is initiated.

297

The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo is another example of a conflict that will require a regional solution in order to untangle the web of different actors involved, and this is acknowledged in the ongoing attempts to achieve a settlement (CONGO).

Berdal (1996) argues that the nature of 'identity-driven' or communal intra-state conflicts, characterized by long duration and high levels of violence, directly influences disarmament and demobilization. In this context, it is first of all particularly challenging to generate the trust and confidence necessary to achieve long-term peace and stability. Even when agreements have been signed, violence easily flares up at critical junctures, for example when unexpected events, problems, or delays arise during the process. At times, these flare-ups are also deliberately orchestrated in order to demonstrate the fragility of the peace or cease-fire, and thereby enable a party to strengthen its negotiating position by exploiting the fear of failure. Armed forces have also frequently been engaged in widespread repression and violence against their own populations, and remedies for this require more than just institutional reform. Finally, these conflicts have generally lasted for years, sometimes decades, and thus have profoundly transformed the societies in which they occur. The social and economic destruction they entail are typically very great, making the demobilization of combatants who may have never experienced civilian life all the more difficult.

It is clear that disarmament can be successfully undertaken only where the necessary political conditions have been satisfied. At the same time, there is a synergy between the disarmament and the political process, and advances in the former may spur political progress. Yet this does not mean that disarmament in itself is enough, or that it should be used as a means of generating political will where there is none. Undertaking disarmament in the absence of any commitment from the parties would not only be counter-productive and a waste of time and resources; it could also be dangerous.

Undertaking disarmament without the commitment of parties involved is counter-productive, and wastes time and resources.

Consensual versus coercive disarmament

Whereas consensual disarmament is undertaken where parties agree to relinquish some or all of their military capabilities, coercive disarmament in an internationally mandated peacekeeping or peace enforcement operation occurs where external actors are permitted to use force or threats of force when necessary in response to non-compliance. Often, coercive disarmament implies that forces are able to engage more actively in measures to disarm the parties through, for example, searching for and seizing illegal weapons.[8]

The perceived need for coercive disarmament measures has grown out of the many obstacles to fulfilling a disarmament mandate by consensual means, the most important of which, perhaps, is the parties' own tendency to renege on commitments they have agreed to on paper. The extent to which peacekeeping troops should enforce disarmament is controversial, as is the more general debate concerning peacekeeping versus peace enforcement. The capability of multinational peacekeeping forces and the risks involved are typically at the heart of these discussions. To what extent are peacekeeping forces able to enforce their mandate faced with parties that will not voluntarily comply? The decision on whether or not to employ coercive means has serious security implications for both peacekeeping forces and other actors in the process, as well as local populations.

The second United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) was notable as the first UN mission mandated to enforce disarmament under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which authorizes the use of forceful measures if international peace and security are threatened (Cox, 1996, p. 129).[9] It also provides ample illustration of the risks involved in coercive disarmament, including the disruption of the perceived neutrality and legitimacy of the operation. As a result, trust eroded between the peacekeepers and the Somali factions, some of which felt threatened by the coercive nature of

the United Nations' activities. This culminated in open hostility and the tragic murder of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers, which further escalated the use of force to the level of open warfare (Mockaitis, 2000, pp. 48–49; Tanner, 1996, pp. 193–94). After its operation in Somalia, the United Nations concluded that its peacekeepers were not suited to coercive disarmament in hostile environments (Wulf, 1998, p. 65). Such measures may be inherently futile in highly fragmented environments, especially so-called 'failed' or 'collapsed' states like Somalia. In these scenarios, there may be no central leadership strong enough to compel combatants to comply; as well, there is often limited political will to end the conflict among the parties contending for power.

It has been argued that their well-established command structures and military doctrines have made coalition forces more effective than UN forces in operations involving coercive weapons control (Tanner, 1996, p. 191), as illustrated by, for example, the US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) in Somalia and IFOR in Bosnia. Still, various factors may have contributed to the perceived effectiveness of these operations. UNITAF was a very strong force consisting of as many as 20,000 US troops and, although it did assume some responsibilities in terms of weapons control and management, it never actually engaged in a comprehensive disarmament effort (Berdal, 1996, pp. 25–26). Both operations were also in a unique position since the parties had explicitly conceded them authority to enforce their mandates. Mockaitis (2000, pp. 54-55) affirms that, despite consisting mainly of NATO units trained in inter-operability, the IFOR troops in fact experienced tremendous difficulties when faced with their first unconventional ground deployment. The argument about the effectiveness of coalition forces may therefore apply first and foremost to those that have operational experience and joint training in peace operations, as well as a clear chain of command ensuring cohesion among the various national contingents.

Still, one decisive advantage of NATO and US-led operations is sufficient military assets. There is broad agreement that effective disarmament always requires a credible military force, and this is obviously all the more important when compliance must be enforced (Kühne, 1998, p. 77; UNGA/UNSC, 2000, paras 48–55). At present, the United Nations and probably most other regional organizations lack the necessary capabilities for coercive disarmament operations. A decade ago in Cambodia, the United Nations was forced to abandon its efforts to disarm the factions after the Khmer Rouge refused to comply. This development generated much debate about the possibility of enforcing disarmament, but this was eventually rejected on the grounds that it would jeopardize UN neutrality and place unrealistic demands on UN forces that were not equipped for coercive action (Cox, 1996, pp. 83–133). Today, the UN still faces such limitations, and the situation seems unlikely to change in the near future.

Operating under a Chapter VI mandate—with no legal authority to employ force beyond that for self-defense—Tanner (1996, pp. 169-204) points out how some UN missions have in practice used limited coercive measures against small-scale resistance, while successfully retaining the strategic consent of the major parties. Tanner refers to this grey area as a 'strategy of compellence', which he defines as 'a show of force within the confinements of peace support missions that operate under the strategic consent of the parties' (p. 196). The advantage of this strategy according to Tanner (p. 203) is that it allows for a combination of 'trust-building with the threat to take actions against non-compliant conduct'. Another advantage is that it could address the challenge of disarming irregular armed groups (pp. 202–03). However, there may be certain requirements for such a strategy to succeed, among other things: disposing of sufficient military capacity to establish a credible threat; communicating the determination to use force if necessary to the warring factions; parallel activities designed to build trust and establish the mission's legitimacy; and providing sufficient flexibility for force commanders to use circumscribed coercive measures when appropriate.

> Effective disarmament always requires a credible military force, and this is obviously all the more important when compliance must be enforced.

The UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), for example, as part of its mandate to demilitarize the area, initiated a weapons buy-back programme among the civilian population. Although the disarmament of the Serb paramilitary forces was successfully completed, it was evident that many members had brought their weapons with them when they returned to civilian life. Although the voluntary nature of the buy-back programme was emphasized, it was made clear that any unauthorized or unregistered weaponry it subsequently discovered would be confiscated. UNTAES was from the outset well-equipped to use force to implement its mandate if necessary (Boothby, 2001).

Obtaining the parties' consent to grant a third party authority to enforce an agreement, as mentioned above in the case of IFOR, may in some cases further legitimize, and reduce the risks of, applying a 'strategy of compellence'. Whether it would be advisable to actually resort to coercive means, even if the parties had agreed to this in principle, is more questionable. As mentioned earlier, parties sometimes make commitments on paper, without any intention of adhering to them; perhaps more commonly, initial good intentions may evaporate in light of later developments. Once again, if the necessary political conditions for sustaining disarmament are absent, enforcing such measures is not only unlikely to help resolve the conflict, but may in some cases further destabilize the situation and put people's lives at risk.

A major research project evaluating weapons control and disarmament measures in peace support missions between 1989 and 1996 concluded that the distinction between consensual and coercive operations tended not to be clear-cut on the ground. Most operations—regardless of their mandate—had started with the consent of the principal faction leaders (Gamba and Potgieter, 1996). However, the consent may not be shared by all parties or at all levels, and it may therefore already at the outset be—or later become—fragmented. It is also common that the level of consent declines as operations continue. This is particularly evident when the disarmament phase starts (Tanner, 1996, p. 169). It is thus at this later stage that coercive means may be required, and even when permitted by the mandate, they should be seen as a strategy of last resort. Coercive disarmament measures early in a process may destabilize a fragile cease-fire. Based on experience to date, the assumed distinction between consensual and coercive operations may in practice be less than precise and not well suited to realities on the ground.

Deterrents to disarmament

A variety of factors can discourage the surrender of weapons or otherwise hinder effective disarmament, both at the collective and the individual level. Three key factors that commonly deter disarmament will be outlined here.

Profiting from war

Conflict almost invariably has a profound effect on the political, social, and economic structures of a society. These structures—such as political alignments, new or reinforced social groupings and relations, and economic practices that provide predictable revenue—may be self-sustaining and present more attractive options than disarmament. As noted by Keen (2001), continued violence may serve the aims of those who sustain it. In many cases, the combatants are in fact much less exposed to violence than are civilians, and therefore less interested in a return to peace. The documented co-operation between warring factions in several recent armed conflicts, such as in Liberia, demonstrates how such groups may limit their own exposure to violence (Keen, 2001). The importance of economic motivations in fuelling current civil wars and the existence of so-called war economies have increasingly been a focus for research in

recent years (Keen, 1998; Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Berdal and Malone, 2000). Many rebel groups control territories containing valuable natural resources, with which they finance their war. Both UNITA in Angola and the RUF in Sierra Leone have obtained substantial funds by selling diamonds on world markets—often in direct exchange for weapons. In Cambodia, the illegal sale of timber, gems, and arms to the Thai military was critical in allowing the Khmer Rouge to maintain control over parts of Cambodia after defecting from the Paris Peace Agreements (Berdal, 1996; Hampson, 1996).

Individual insecurity

Combatants may also be reluctant to give up their small arms since this entails giving up a valuable instrument of both personal and economic security. Individual soldiers may wish to keep weapons to ensure their livelihoods, should alternative means prove insufficient. Ex-combatants that have spent many years or even their entire lives soldiering face many difficulties in adjusting to a civilian life. They frequently lack the skills necessary to find civilian jobs, and consequently are often particularly disadvantaged in post-war societies, frequently characterized by economic weakness, massive unemployment, and poverty.

In addition, former combatants are often burdened by other problems such as disability and psychological trauma. In addition to having to give up their former group identities as soldiers, as ex-combatants they are often resented by the civilian population, particularly where large-scale abuses have been committed during the war.

Armed groups may decide to hold on to some of their small arms and light weapons because they lack confidence that peace will hold and distrust the adversary. Even where a political settlement has been reached, a peaceful outcome is often far from certain. This insecurity can be counteracted by gradually building up confidence between the different parties and designing the process so as to provide evidence along the way that the parties are acting in good faith, for example by ensuring that the process is transparent and by allowing all parties to participate. Another strategy is a phased process, as suggested earlier, linking disarmament to other measures that can reassure or benefit the groups or individuals surrendering weapons.

Ulterior motives: Optimism versus realism

It is also crucial to act upon suspicions of deception rather than ignoring them. An eagerness to proceed with the operation as planned, combined with a certain degree of wishful thinking, has sometimes made relevant international actors turn a blind eye to an obvious lack of political will and good intentions on the part of one or several parties. As a result, problems that may have required a strategy reassessment have not been dealt with in a timely or adequate manner.

In Angola, during both attempts at demobilization in the 1990s, there was ample evidence that the parties were not acting in good faith. Particularly during the first round of demobilization in 1991–92, UNITA openly redeployed some troops to strategic points around the country rather than into the assembly areas, and defectors declared that troops on both sides were deliberately kept outside the demobilization process (Hampson, 1996, p. 121). A senior UN official was quoted saying that 'nobody believed UNITA was handing in their real weapons' (Human Rights Watch, 1999). This 'strategy of denial' has probably wasted resources on disarmament processes that were destined to fail from the outset. A realistic assessment of the possibilities of successful disarmament and the resources this requires is essential, starting with the planning stage and continuing throughout the operation. As one of the candid observations in the report on UN peace operations states, 'the Secretariat must not apply best-case planning assumptions to situations where the local actors have historically exhibited worst-case behaviour' (UNGA/UNSC, 2000, para. 51).

Disarmament at any price?

The results of the formal disarmament programmes undertaken to date have clearly been mixed. In some cases, political problems or even a complete breakdown of the peace process have been closely linked to disagreements over weapons and disarmament. This raises the question: is the surrender of weapons always a necessary precondition for peace, or should disarmament sometimes wait? Moreover, are there circumstances in which disarmament may in fact undermine the peace process?

Experience suggests that knowing when to initiate disarmament is a key factor in determining success. The most important preconditions are that the parties are genuinely committed to resolving the conflict and the political process is sufficiently advanced to have generated some degree of confidence in the possibility of peace. Otherwise, the parties are unlikely to risk relinquishing key assets of military strength. In many cases, as in Angola, disarmament has been initiated before a credible political settlement is on the table and without evidence that the parties are acting in good faith.

Knowing when to initiate disarmament is a key factor in determining success.

Box 9.4   Disarmament Pacific-style: Bougainville and the Solomon Islands

During the Second World War, Pacific Island states were home to thousands of armed troops and the site of famous conflicts such as the Battle of Guadalcanal. In recent years, small arms have reappeared as vectors of civil conflict and violent crime, with profound social and economic impacts. Bougainville was the site of a devastating nine-year war ending in 1997. While it began primarily as a conflict between local landowners and the Papua New Guinea (PNG) government over the distribution of benefits from Bougainville's Panguna mine, it eventually turned into a much more complex conflict, both between Bougainvilleans and PNG, and among Bougainvilleans themselves. In the Solomon Islands, tension and incidental violence between the local inhabitants of Guadalcanal and settlers from the island of Malaita had been building for some years, when in June 2000 armed militants from the Malaita Eagle Force and members of the Solomon Islands police jointly raided the police armoury and ousted the national government. Violence escalated further between militants from Malaita and Guadalcanal, resulting in death, injury, and widespread human rights abuses.

Disarmament processes in these two societies have to some extent been determined by the nature of each conflict and the way in which they have been resolved. In Bougainville, the conflict was long and its resolution complex, involving a wide range of actors. Various earlier attempts at peace, while not successful in themselves, established a basis for the achievement of a negotiated political settlement in mid-1997, characterized by the full engagement of most actors. In the Solomon Islands, the conflict was more acute and its resolution somewhat messier. While the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) concluded in October 2000 brought an end to the fighting itself, it did not enjoy the full support of all groups. This flawed process has contributed to an uneasy peace, and breaches of the TPA continue to occur.

In Bougainville, a complex three-stage weapons disposal plan has been intricately linked to proposals for autonomy and possible future independence. The weapons disposal process is led by the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville

Weapons collected in the Solomon Islands in June 2002 were thrown overboard into the sea.

© Marsali MacKinnon

(UNOMB). Technical management of weapons containment and joint awareness programmes are the responsibility of the Peace Monitoring Group (PMG), an unarmed, neutral organization whose personnel are drawn from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu, supported by a team of military personnel. Local and district Weapons Disposal Subcommittees, supported by the PMG, are involved in raising awareness about weapons disposal and organizing containment ceremonies throughout Bougainville.

Different areas of Bougainville began to disarm at different times, and have so far reached different stages in the process. Stage One containment, leading

Box 9.4   Disarmament Pacific-style: Bougainville and the Solomon Islands (continued)

to a parliamentary vote in March 2002 on constitutional amendments to give effect to the Bougainville Peace Agreement, proceeded at a rapid pace. In the months following the vote, the rate of weapons surrendered generally slowed, but in some areas encouraging progress occurred. In all, 1,445 weapons were turned in, but an absence of baseline data makes it difficult to evaluate the significance of this number. At the end of July 2002, many districts were poised to move to Stage Two containment but had not yet done so.

In the Solomon Islands, peace agreements and peace monitoring bodies have focused heavily on weapons disposal, arguably at the expense of resolving deeper issues. An International Peace Monitoring Team was established to facilitate the peace and disarmament process, as well as an indigenous Peace Monitoring Council, which liaises with groups and communities throughout Guadalcanal and Malaita and runs a media campaign to encourage militants to comply with the TPA. Contact with the indigenous Anglican Melanesian Brothers and Sisters—a religious community primarily based in the Solomon Islands—has been especially important, as they are a source of influence in the local community, and they have been formally commissioned to negotiate with militants over weapons surrenders. While public support for disarmament has been consistently strong, tensions between groups remain, and ex-combatants have been slow to disarm. Unlike the Bougainville peace talks, combatant groups were not generally part of the process, but rather its target (Kabutaulaka, 2000, p. 24).

Weapons collection started in November 2000, and results were initially encouraging. In fact, the overwhelming majority of weapons surrendered to date were given up in the first two months. However, many of these weapons were home-made, and estimates showed that hundreds of high-powered police weapons stolen during the conflict remained in circulation. Several factors deterred ex-combatants from disarming. Many militants cited the fact that the militant leader Harold Keke from Guadalcanal never signed the TPA. Another factor was the insecurity—enhanced by increasing crime levels—which was broadly felt across the community. In large part, this insecurity was generated by the armed militants themselves.

Additionally, the compensation process which sprang up during 2001 was very different from that of traditional Solomon Islands society, where compensation is traditionally tied to reconciliation and the exchange of pigs, shell money, and other goods.[11] Although mechanisms for compensation had not been included in the TPA, the Solomon Islands government began paying 'disarmament allowances'—essentially, large sums of cash—to factional leaders and former commanders soon after the first weapons hand-overs (Hegarty, 2001, p. 3). This fuelled ex-combatants' expectations about financial incentives for laying down their weapons, thus impeding progress on disarmament. Eventually, the Solomon Islands government had to stop the practice, simply because it no longer had enough funds to meet ex-militants' demands. Moreover, the role of members of the Police Field Force—the paramilitary wing of the Royal Solomon Islands Police—in facilitating human rights abuses and disturbing public order in the June 2000 uprising undermined public trust in the ability of the police to fulfil their law enforcement duties, and caused many citizens to remain armed.

Despite these constraints, community support for disarmament developed fresh momentum in early 2002. A new amnesty deadline of 31 May was set, and the Peace Monitoring Council members fronted an energetic radio and print media campaign. The campaign peaked during the week prior to the 31 May deadline as the Royal Solomon Islands Police surrendered a significant number of high-powered weapons and agreement was reached on the contentious issue of weapons disposal, with hundreds of weapons dumped into the sea and all 2,000 collected weapons subsequently slated for destruction. However, significant numbers of high-powered weapons still remain in society, deeper issues remain to be resolved, and law and order problems continue. Still, police and other law enforcement agencies are slowly recovering morale, and consistent community pressure may yet provide the impetus for complete disarmament to occur.

Considered as part of a broader commitment to peace and reconstruction, the Bougainville disarmament effort has so far been the more successful, since it carries with it the ownership and commitment of all parties to the conflict, including now the Republic of Me'ekamui. In the Solomon Islands, on the other hand, stakeholders have repeatedly identified the flawed nature of the peace process itself as the source of many problems. The TPA has been described as being a one-sided affair, 'bulldozed into being' by one party, which in many ways served simply to institutionalize existing disorder.[12] In its failure to include all militant groups, it built fundamental flaws into the peace process that were to manifest themselves later as obstacles to disarmament. There is a continuing need to debate the fundamental causes of the conflict, such as land tenure and provincial autonomy, within the context of a broader constitutional review.

The blurring of distinctions between criminal elements and ex-combatant groups in both communities, and the limited economic opportunities available to ex-combatants, contribute to making full weapons disposal difficult (Regan, 1999). In both Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, there is also scope for further reconciliation work. Some sort of restorative justice process, along the lines of a truth and reconciliation committee, has also been suggested and could prove useful. Ultimately, to achieve a durable peace in these two Pacific Island states, disarmament and reconciliation measures must be embedded within their particular cultural context.

Source: Alpers and Twyford (2003)

Disarmament should not be initiated before a favourable political situation has emerged, the necessary funds to execute the entire process have been secured, a sufficient number of peacekeeping forces has been deployed, and the infrastructure to support the operation is in place. Without these necessary conditions, disarmament may be only partial or even fail completely, leading to obvious operational difficulties due to the lack of infrastructure and, more seriously, to political destabilization, as the power balance between different factions is disturbed with unforeseen consequences (Berdal, 1996, pp. 28-30). Such a lopsided disarmament resulted from the weapons collections undertaken by the Inter-African Force in the Central African Republic (MISAB) and the subsequent UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) in 1997. Some 2,000 small arms had been looted from government depots during riots led by a group of rebel soldiers, and disarmament was undertaken after the signing of a peace agreement between the armed forces and the government. According to Faltas (2001), the disarmament programme led to increased frustration, disappointment, and insecurity because, although the opposition was persuaded to turn in its weapons, most government supporters were allowed to retain theirs.

Failing to take advantage of the momentum created by a peace settlement may also contribute to failure. The considerable hope and goodwill among both civilians and combatants at the sudden prospect of peace may create a unique willingness to surrender the instruments of war. Disarmament has on numerous occasions been jeopardized because the process was not implemented in a timely fashion—either because of delays in the deployment of peacekeeping troops or in the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

At one point, the demobilization of soldiers by the United Nations after the civil war in Mozambique in 1993–94 came close to breaking down because of delays in the assembly and discharge phases. Soldiers became impatient and gradually lost faith in the peace process as they lingered in the assembly areas for months waiting to be allowed to go home. As optimism and hopes of an early discharge waned, groups of soldiers rose up in protest and some UN personnel were taken hostage. It would have been relatively easy for the soldiers to rearm at this point, as the weapons were temporarily stored in the assembly areas. Fortunately, a collapse was averted and the soldiers were eventually demobilized and allowed to return home (Berman, 1996).

The emerging lesson is that there is a narrow window of opportunity for disarmament after civil wars that—if not taken advantage of—may later be closed. According to a local mediator, in the Solomon Islands some militants spontaneously offered to give up their weapons to the authorities before the necessary provisions were in place, but were turned away. Later, during the formal disarmament campaign, when uncertainty about the benefits of peace had spread, it proved much more difficult to persuade the militants to surrender their weapons.[10] While a timely response is necessary to seize early opportunities for disarmament, flexibility is also essential to take advantage of such opportunities whenever they occur.
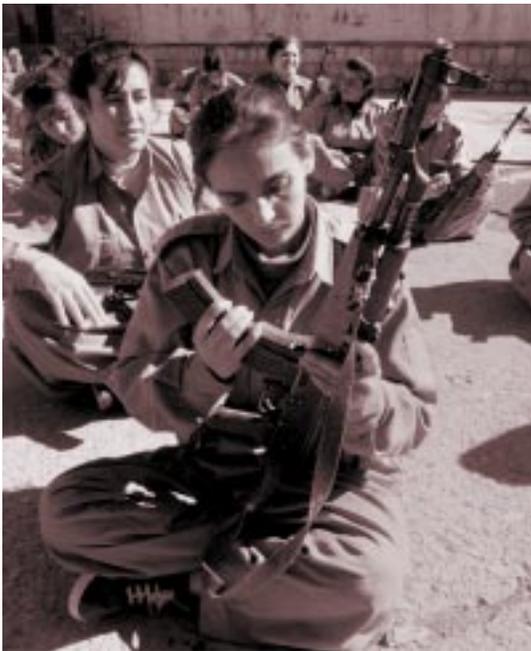
The international community has been criticized for using elections as an exit strategy in transitional processes, and, in a similar vein, for viewing disarmament as a measure merely designed to pave the way for elections. Treating disarmament as a minor hurdle to be crossed, a short step towards a political goal, or anything less than a complex and professional exercise is not conducive to a sustainable disarmament strategy or a lasting peace. In Liberia, the UN wanted to withdraw only two months after the elections in 1997, at which point soldiers had only partially surrendered their weapons and not even entered the demobilization and reintegration process (Kapungu, 1998). The consent of one or more parties sometimes evaporates once they realize that they will not have much political representation after an election, and they may then instead decide to continue the armed struggle. In Angola, when Jonas Savimbi lost

There is a narrow window of opportunity for disarmament after civil wars that—if not taken advantage of—may later be closed.

the elections mandated by the Bicesse Accords in 1992, UNITA immediately rejected the results and resumed fighting. However, returning to violence is much easier if disarmament has failed to reduce significantly the number of weapons available to the factions. Such experiences have apparently led to a rethinking of strategy, as current operations like those in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan envisage a longer-term involvement by the international community, extending beyond elections.

Disarming civilians after war

The concept of DDR implies that disarmament is linked to the demobilization of combatants. The cantonment phase of demobilization, which provides the best opportunity to disarm combatants before they are discharged, must be exploited. However, this limits the target group for disarmament to combatants—an approach that does not take into account the reality of many of today's armed conflicts, in which a variety of armed groups take part in the fighting and the boundaries between combatants and civilians are not clear-cut. Often, a range of irregular armed groups participate in the conflict, such as paramilitary groups, militias, and civil defence forces. In many cases, warring factions also distribute weapons among the civilian population. During the civil war in Mozambique, for example, the government distributed 1.5 million AK-47s to civilian 'self-defence' units (INTERPOL, quoted in Vines, 1998). Very often, peace agreements and peace operation mandates omit provisions for the disarmament of civilians and other armed groups.

A soldier in Iraq, from a town in which 400 women have joined Kurdish fighting groups.

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In response to this challenge, in recent years target groups have been expanded to include armed groups beyond regular government and rebel forces. The special needs of child soldiers, as well as female combatants, are also increasingly acknowledged, and provisions for the dependents of ex-combatants are sometimes included in DDR programmes. Voluntary weapons collection programmes, in the form of buy-backs aimed at the civilian population, have on a few occasions been undertaken in conjunction with peace operations, including by the US Army in Haiti in 1994–95 and by UNTAES in 1996–97.

In their study *Demobilizing Armed Civilians,* Jensen and Stepputat (2001) criticize some DDR programmes for failing to take into account the role that armed civilians play in many internal armed conflicts. What they term 'taken-for-granted assumptions' about the nature of current armed conflicts may contribute to the development of badly informed and ill-conceived intervention strategies. For example, while the blurred lines between civilians and combatants are now generally recognized, the distinction is often maintained in practice. In both the academic literature and actual programming, civilians are generally assumed to be innocent victims with no involvement in the conflict. Another example is the stereotypical definition of women as victims and men as perpetrators, which overlooks the ways in which women are

sometimes involved in conflicts, for example as weapons-smugglers or even soldiers. Furthermore, the notion of 'community' as a homogenous and peaceful entity ignores conflicts and divisions within communities over issues like leadership, resources, and inheritance, which may be magnified or transformed in different ways by a larger national conflict. Rather than operating within the no-longer-valid military–civilian dichotomy, they propose that initiatives should be guided by the question: 'Who is involved in violence, how, and for what reasons?'

Jensen and Stepputat also identify some of the factors which need to be considered in the demobilization of armed civilian groups. Their recommendations include: involving these groups in peace negotiations; adjusting the standard phases in a conventional DDR process to conform to the characteristics of civilian armed groups; adopting lean benchmarks as the local nature of the process is likely to make it more time-consuming and complex; and making NGOs with good local knowledge responsible for undertaking such programmes in close co-operation with government. At the same time, they emphasize the need to consider carefully the possible dangers involved when singling out specific groups and providing them with benefits and formal recognition, as this may engender further conflict at the communal level.

This proposed change of approach could have significant implications for the way DDR programmes are conceived, so that they better conform to the realities on the ground. In some cases it might be appropriate to incorporate this aspect into the mandates of peace operations. However, a variety of other actors could engage in such initiatives, in collaboration with or outside the context of a peace operation, such as UN agencies, regional organizations, governments, NGOs, or civil society organizations. The process of collecting weapons left over from conflict can last years or even decades, so, although external support is often necessary, local actors are often the most appropriate implementers.

Supporting DDR: Co-ordination and funding

Major limitations on the implementation of many DDR programmes have been attributed to the participation of external actors. As mentioned earlier, these operations are often extraordinarily complex, with numerous actors involved including governments, peacekeeping forces, the UN and its various agencies, other international organizations, development agencies, and NGOs. This multitude of different actors has often led to disjointed and difficult responses on the ground. Better co-ordination among them has been repeatedly called for.

The report of the UN Secretary-General on the role of UN peacekeeping in DDR, for example, encourages enhanced coordination within the international community, emphasizing the respective roles that donor governments, regional organizations, NGOs, the World Bank, and private business play in DDR operations (UNSG, 2000, section IV, paras. 97–112). Increased awareness of this challenge has prompted efforts to improve relevant procedures (see, for example, ECHA Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration, 2000).

DDR programmes have also frequently been under-resourced, lacking the wholehearted commitment of contributing states. Insufficient funding can constitute a risk to the entire DDR process. In fact, during the first attempt at demobilization in Angola, the living conditions in the camps were so bad that soldiers were reported to have been close to starvation (Berdal, 1996, p. 44). More recently, in Sierra Leone the inability to satisfy basic needs during encampment also caused discontent and even revolt among ex-combatants (Kingma, 2002, p. 195). In his report to the Security Council on small arms of 2002, the UN Secretary-General encourages the Council to 'consider strengthening the financing of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes through the expansion of measures covered under the budget for peacekeeping operations, thus ensuring that such activities are not entirely dependent upon voluntary contributions from Member States' (UNSG, 2002, p. 6).

The initiative taken by the World Bank in 2002 to create a multi-national programme for anticipated DDR activities in the Greater Great Lakes Region in Africa responds to some of these concerns, including the need for better co-ordination among donors and early identification of responsibilities as well as funds. The objective will be to provide a comprehensive framework for DDR covering up to 350,000 ex-combatants in the DRC, Rwanda, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), the Republic of Congo, Namibia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Although this is a promising effort to apply some past lessons, it remains to be seen how it will play out in the DRC, given the country's complex politics, its weak central government, the conflict's regional dimension, and the sheer scale of the DDR task in Congo's vast territory. An eagerness to begin implementation before the necessary political conditions are met could well undermine the project's effectiveness.

It is generally easier to secure funding for disarmament than for demobilization and, especially, reintegration activities. These latter activities are generally less attractive to donors, as they require longer-term involvement and produce less tangible results. However, the case of Liberia illustrates how disarmament is likely to be undermined if not accompanied by these other measures. Due to the looting of resources during the fighting in 1996, ECOMOG and UNOMIL were faced with a severe lack of funds when disarmament resumed in 1996–97. Therefore, they focused on the disarmament aspect of the operation. As a result, the combatants were never properly demobilized and reintegrated (Kapungu, 1998). Another recent example of the importance of maintaining funding beyond the first phases of a disarmament process is Congo-Brazzaville, where a lack of funding for the expansion of the IOM/UNDP Reintegration of Ex-Combatants and Weapons Collection Programme into the most volatile region of the country seems to have contributed to a renewed outbreak of violence in March 2002 (Batchelor and Muggah, 2002).

In Box 9.5, Ginifer identifies consistent external commitment and support as one of the factors contributing to the successful completion of the disarmament process in Sierra Leone in 2002.

Box 9.5   Sierra Leone: A success story?

There is a growing consensus that the DDR process in Sierra Leone, despite being protracted and problematic, is one of the more successful operations of recent years. By the end of the summer 2002, large numbers of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, had been collected, demobilization and reintegration were under way, and elections had been held without a return to violence. The National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (NCDDR) was responsible for the process, assisted by UNAMSIL and in the earlier phases also by ECOMOG. With a large number of different actors having a stake in the process, co-operation has been an important factor contributing to this outcome.

In January 2002, the official disarmament process in Sierra Leone came to an end and the UN disarmament mandate terminated. A total of 72,490 combatants had completed the disarmament process and surrendered 26,000 weapons (NCDDR, 2002a). This marked the ending of a process which had started in November 1999 but broke down in May 2000, when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels took 500 UNAMSIL personnel hostage. Fighting resumed and the process was delayed for a year. The situation stabilized only when British military forces intervened. After a second peace accord (Abuja II) was signed, DDR could be completed.

Some of the key lessons from Sierra Leone would include the following.

Security first. Establishing a secure environment is vital to an effective DDR programme. In Sierra Leone a significant factor which eventually contributed to bringing fighting to a close was the intervention of British military forces and the retraining and revitalization of the Sierra Leone army (SLA), which persuaded the RUF to disarm since it realized it could not prevail militarily. A further lesson is that a secure environment needs to be extended beyond disarmament and demobilization to include the reintegration phase. There are continuing security challenges in Sierra Leone that might lead to a reversion to violence should international commitment waver. It is vital that the militia and rebel structures be fully dismantled and

Establishing a secure environment is vital to an effective DDR programme.

Box 9.5 Sierra Leone: A success story? (continued)

government authority established. Disarming irregular militias should not be viewed as a secondary objective in DDR programmes, but should be taken as seriously as the disarmament of government and rebel forces. There were concerns in June 2002 that some Civil Defence Force (CDF) contingents had retained their command structures in some areas, although there were few reports of violent activity. By the end of the summer there was every indication that Sierra Leone was internally secure, though concerns remained about infiltration over the border with Liberia.

The regional dimension. The second lesson relates to the importance of the regional dimension in DDR. Liberia has been a consistently destabilizing factor—both in terms of the arms which have flowed into Sierra Leone from Liberia, and in terms of the latter's support for the RUF, which almost succeeded in overrunning Sierra Leone. Further, RUF and CDF combatants were allegedly fighting for President Taylor in Liberia in the summer of 2002, perhaps trying to avoid demobilization or grasping an opportunity for employment. Demobilization has to take into account the impact of returning combatants from Liberia and the potential for renewed conflict and destabilization, sparked from outside. The UN Secretary-General warned in June 2002 that the civil war in Liberia could threaten the fragile recovery of Sierra Leone (BBC, 25 June 2002).

Disarmament during and after peace processes. Disarmament during quartering/cantonment processes needs to be backed by community weapons collection and destruction (Small Arms Survey, 2002, ch. 7). Even though the disarmament process that concluded in January 2002 was quite comprehensive, it is clear that considerable numbers of arms are still in circulation within Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) has been conducting a Community Arms Collection and Disarmament programme since 30 November 2001. This programme targets civilians, a group that was not covered by the official process.[13] By July 2002, a total of over 40,000 units of arms and ammunition had been collected.[14] At the same time, a UNDP community arms collection support scheme was being planned, including 'weapons for development' components.[15]

Reintegration: the missing link. Developments in Sierra Leone show that a greater emphasis on reintegration is still necessary. In June 2002, for example, there were serious concerns that existing funds would dry up in August, while there were still around 20,000 ex-combatants waiting to go through the NCDDR process.

The employment prospects of ex-combatants were a further matter of concern raised in July 2002. At that time, most ex-combatants of the CDF, RUF, and Sierra Leone Army had not enrolled in any training programme. Although some had received short-term training in skills such as car repair and carpentry, there were doubts about whether these skills were appropriate (International Peace Academy, 2002, p. 3). Many ex-combatants had high expectations of acquiring skills and jobs and were said to have been uninterested in taking up agriculture, the sector most likely to provide opportunities (ICG, 2001, p. 14). Evidence from Sierra Leone suggests that long-term reintegration depends on the revitalization of the economy and that success will depend on community-based projects, including training and livelihood support. A balanced distribution of reintegration payments between civilians and ex-combatants to avoid discontent has been seen as particularly important in Sierra Leone, where high levels of resentment constitute a key challenge and the need for reconciliation is acute.

Integration and reform of the armed forces. A major concern in Sierra Leone has been whether the country's police force and army can effectively take over from the 17,000 peacekeepers when they leave. A national strategy is required in order to transfer responsibilities from the UN peacekeepers, the UN Secretary-General has noted (BBC News, 2002; UNSG, 2002). The Sierra Leone army and police are being retrained and re-equipped with assistance from the United Kingdom and other partners. By June 2002, over 2,000 RUF and CDF ex-combatants had been integrated into the SLA. However, experience shows that integrating rebels into new national armies can be difficult, although the process in Sierra Leone seemed to be progressing satisfactorily during the summer of 2002.

A Sierra Leone model? Although substantial challenges remain, the DDR process in Sierra Leone provides some valuable general lessons including those mentioned here. At the same time, it highlights the contextual nature of DDR. It is clear that some of the approaches that have worked in Sierra Leone will have only limited relevance in other contexts, mainly, perhaps, because of the degree of commitment and support that Sierra Leone received from the international community. The commitment of substantial international forces and sustained funding made a considerable impact upon the decision of the RUF to disarm, and continued post-conflict development support is so far helping to make peace seem the more attractive option.

Source: Ginifer (2002)

DISARMAMENT—AND THEN WHAT?

The need for a multi-dimensional approach to disarmament and small arms control is now widely acknowledged. This is reflected in the policies and programmes undertaken by multilateral and bilateral donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. Increasingly, small arms control is viewed as a vital component in the promotion of human development. Development agencies and other actors who would not previously support activities related to the military or security sector are increasingly getting involved in DDR, security sector reform, and other such initiatives (DEVELOPMENT).

A Cambodian girl watches over family possessions, including her pets and father's rifle.

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The various elements of post-conflict peace-building have often been considered part of a 'relief-to-development continuum'. More recently, the concept of a 'contiguum' has emerged, emphasizing the coexistence and overlap between the different aspects (de Zeeuw, 2001, p. 12). According to this widely-held view, disarmament and weapons issues cannot be dealt with in isolation but need to be integrated with other processes, such as demobilization and reintegration, restructuring of armed forces, democratization, good governance, security sector reform, transitional justice, and socio-economic development. For disarmament to be sustainable, preventive weapons control measures must also be established, such as limiting the supply of weapons into an area through the adoption of embargoes and moratoriums and improved enforcement. Adopting legislation that establishes strict and unambiguous rules for weapons possession and use is another key component of effective small arms control.

All these elements are mutually reinforcing in achieving the overall goal of establishing a sustainable peace. However, they are also to some extent mutually dependent. There are several reasons why they are necessary for disarmament and small arms control to succeed. Among other things, they contribute to:

- improving public security;
- developing a legal framework that can promote accountability, hinder impunity, and deter future violations including the abuse of force by security forces; and
- establishing conditions for social and economic development.

Conversely, without effective disarmament after armed conflict and the development of mechanisms for responsible weapons management, these other activities are likely to be undermined.

The number of programmes that incorporate small arms control into broader development and conflict resolution strategies is mushrooming. The UNDP has been instrumental in forging this link between security and socio-economic development through its Small Arms Reduction Programme. These programmes include 'weapons for

development' collection schemes (Small Arms Survey, 2002, pp. 297–303), public awareness campaigns, and the provision of jobs and skills training for ex-combatants. Currently, UNDP is involved in two such regional projects and is in the process of launching a third. In terms of country-specific projects, UNDP is currently involved in ten countries, while another 20 projects are either about to be launched or under discussion, in addition to the five projects that have already been completed.[16]

The European Union initiative 'Assistance on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia' (ASAC) is another example of the trend to adopt a more comprehensive approach to disarmament and weapons control in post-conflict settings. The project has assisted the Cambodian government in the development of weapons legislation as well as in improving stockpile security and record-keeping. Furthermore, it has incorporated civil society programmes to raise public awareness, as well as weapons collection and destruction programmes using a 'weapons for development' approach.

The rest of this section briefly describes some of the elements that should accompany disarmament in order to improve the prospects of longer-term peace and stability. A better understanding of the relationship between these elements and the disarmament process would assist the development of peace-building strategies.

Reintegration of ex-combatants

Demobilization and reintegration are vital to the success of disarmament, as they focus attention on the users of weapons. Unless those who pull the trigger decide to stop, disarmament efforts will not yield lasting results. Former combatants are much more likely to return to political violence or turn to crime if the reintegration process does not provide them with more attractive options. At the same time, caution is required when singling out one group for special benefits, particularly when this group is seen by the rest of the population as responsible for the fighting and, in many cases, for abuses against civilians. Other groups, in particular refugees and the internally displaced, also require special support. As victims of the conflict, they will often be thought to be more deserving.

To reduce the risk of tensions and to support community development and reconciliation, programmes increasingly provide assistance that benefits the whole community instead of a specific group. However, Kingma (2002, pp. 193–94) points out that there are several reasons why ex-combatants may require a degree of special support. From a humanitarian perspective, they often need it in order to sustain themselves, at least in the initial period after demobilization. Other reasons include: the fact that they may have sacrificed long periods of their lives to fighting; the contribution they can make to development by using their particular skills; and, finally, the important consideration that without support ex-combatants are more likely to engage in violence and crime.

Despite its crucial impact on the prospects for long-term stability, reintegration is nevertheless very often the least emphasized component of DDR efforts. Donors are generally more interested in funding short-term disarmament measures rather than reintegration activities, which typically require a long-term perspective and yield less visible and measurable results. Most DDR programmes therefore have difficulty ensuring sustained support and follow-up through all phases of the process.

Controlling arms flows

While removing weapons already in circulation in an area is important to reducing arms availability, particularly after war, its effectiveness is not guaranteed unless measures are in place to control the supply of new weapons. The analogy of trying to pump out water from a flooded basement at the same time as water is pouring in from an underlying spring has been used to describe this dilemma (Eck, 1996).

The Brahimi report on the role of UN peacekeeping in DDR highlights the necessity of coupling disarmament with efforts to control illicit arms trafficking. It proposes such measures as placing UN forces along borders to deter smuggling, or even in surrounding countries to monitor regional arms flows and liaise with relevant authorities. Furthermore, it states that a local arms embargo may at times be a necessary precondition for effective disarmament. Bilateral information-sharing and co-operation are also listed as important responses to arms trafficking (UNSG, 2000, paras 48–52). However, the significance of controlling arms flows depends to some extent on the degree of political commitment. If there is a genuine commitment to end the conflict, the availability of weapons supplies is likely to make less of a difference. Nevertheless, even if a political settlement is achieved, excessive arms availability may still fuel armed crime and social violence in the post-conflict period. In the absence of initial political will, limiting the availability of weapons may force the warring factions to consider other ways of pursuing their interests than by violent means.

Another fundamental element in improving control over illegal weapons is the prior clarification of which weapons civilians may legally possess. This has been recognized by the Sierra Leone Police, who as part of their ongoing community weapons collection programme have also developed rules for weapons possession and licensing (Koroma, 2002).

Justice

In any transition away from war, one of the most important issues is the manner in which violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed during the conflict are dealt with. This issue of transitional justice is usually framed as one of retribution versus reconciliation.[17] The argument for retributive measures is that the guilty must be punished, both for the sake of doing justice and to deter similar abuses from happening in the future. In practice, justice must often take a back seat for the sake of peace. Often, a blanket amnesty for past abuses is necessary in order to get parties to sign a peace agreement. Punitive measures might therefore be precluded in those cases where they are the most warranted. Even where amnesties are not needed to secure peace, proceeding with large-scale prosecutions might jeopardize a fragile peace and the possibility of democratic reforms, if undertaken before stability is to some significant degree consolidated.

The only way to achieve and sustain peace may therefore be through reconciliation. This is obviously a challenging approach in view of the horrific and large-scale abuses that take place in many of today's armed conflicts. Even so, it is sometimes possible to prosecute and punish war criminals in the longer term when this cannot be carried out in the immediate aftermath of an armed conflict. Meanwhile, engaging actively in reconciliation work should be a priority. This may take many forms depending on the local cultural context and the nature and scale of the abuses committed. In certain places in Africa, for example, traditional practices such as cleansing rituals have proved to be quite successful (Accord, 2002; Kingma, 1999, p. 8).

An increasingly common 'third way' between the opposing calls for punishment and forgiveness is the establishment of a 'truth commission', the most well-known example of which comes from South Africa. Truth commissions investigate the abuses committed and usually submit a final report with their findings, but they have no powers of prosecution. This can be a pragmatic solution in cases where it is not politically feasible to prosecute war criminals. Uncovering and exposing the truth about what happened can provide people with at least a minimal degree of justice as well as solace, thus contributing to the process of reconciliation.

> **Box 9.6   Traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution and weapons control**
>
> One strategy that has been attempted in some instances is the use of traditional methods to support weapons control and disarmament, such as religious, tribal, or communal institutions and constraints. Although little research has so far been undertaken that reliably ascertains the effectiveness of these methods, experience so far seems to indicate that they have had a positive effect in specific communities.
>
> One example of this is the conflict resolution strategy developed by the pastoralist communities in the district of Garissa in Kenya, which includes disarmament as one of its components. Local committees consisting of elders, youth, and women have, in collaboration with the authorities, established a number of mechanisms aimed at resolving local clan conflicts. While fighting between the tribes had its roots in struggles over water and land, the practice of revenge killings had contributed to its escalation. The initiatives taken in response to these problems include the improvement of water management to enhance distribution, mediation between the warring sub-clans including the use of blood-money and confiscation of livestock as compensation, and the establishment of an early warning system to intervene when new tension develops. Disarmament is undertaken by encouraging weapons owners to surrender their guns in exchange for an amnesty offered by the government. The main conflict prompting these efforts in Garissa has now ended. In this case at least, the application of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, in combination with attempts to address the functions weapons serve in the local context, seems to have produced some promising results (Subow, 2002).

Security and governance

After conflict, the need to establish public security is for obvious reasons acute. Improving public security is also a precondition for other necessary transition activities. This is particularly important with regard to small arms disarmament. When trust and confidence in the public security apparatus are absent, people are likely to want weapons for their own protection. After conflict, when insecurity is high and the future uncertain, people may therefore be particularly reluctant to surrender their arms.

In many areas emerging from conflict today, security sector reform and good governance are also key requirements to building a stable and peaceful society in the longer term. The word 'reconstruction' is often used to define this process. However, it may be somewhat misleading since in many cases security and good governance did not exist in the past, and this deficiency may even have been at the heart of the conflict itself. This makes the establishment of such structures more challenging, but all the more essential to avoiding a return to violence.

The current challenges facing Afghanistan—although more extreme than most other cases because of widespread warlordism—are a good example. The general lack of security has been identified as the principal threat to peace-building in Afghanistan, and the international community has pledged support for three key priorities in this area: a representative national army, a national police force, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (Sedra, 2002). A certain level of security is also necessary for social and economic development activities to get under way. Afghan President Hamid Karzai summarized the intertwined character of these elements in a speech during the international donor conference held in Tokyo in January 2002: 'security and development are two sides of the same coin because over a million Afghan combatants cannot be absorbed into the mainstream of society and economy without imaginative developmental efforts' (quoted in Sedra, 2002, p. 23) (DEVELOPMENT).

An Afghan soldier and civilian share a joke as the soldier takes away his knife in a weapons confiscation campaign.

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Reducing demand: The key to long-term success

If disarmament is to be successful and sustainable, the reasons why people wish to hold and use weapons must be addressed. While the collection of weapons coupled with improved control over arms trafficking can reduce their supply, disarmament should always be accompanied by measures aimed at reducing the demand for weapons. While this has not been a major focus for small arms research to date, numerous programmes designed to reduce violence at the local level explicitly or implicitly address what can be termed 'demand factors' (Quaker United Nations Office, 1999; Quaker United Nations Office, Project Ploughshares, and BICC, 2000). Depending on the situation, these factors may include a lack of trust in or absence of public security forces, the need for protection against crime or the authorities' abuses of power, limited or no recourse to means of peaceful conflict resolution, societal norms and attitudes encouraging or condoning the use of weapons, and a dependence on weapons as a means of sustenance. The effect of, and interplay between, these various factors is complex and context-specific, and much more research is needed to increase our understanding of demand and how it can be influenced. This understanding is vital, however, for the long-term success of efforts to reduce the availability and misuse of weapons.

Understanding why people hold and use weapons is vital for disarmament to succeed in the long-term.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the central role that arms—in particular small arms—and related issues of disarmament and weapons control have played in efforts to achieve political settlement of armed conflicts since the end of the Cold War. In particular, it has examined the implementation of disarmament measures in the context of multinational peace operations.

During most peace negotiations, the disarmament of armed opposition groups, militias, and in some cases government forces is a central concern. Experience shows that procedures for disarmament, and for weapons disposal, should be spelled out in the agreement and not avoided because of their sensitive nature. Although postponing discussions about disarmament and other contentious issues is sometimes a carefully considered strategy—which may prove successful—evidence suggests that in many cases weapons issues are not sufficiently addressed because negotiators lack expertise about them or fail to appreciate their importance. Indeed, the lack of specific provisions relating to weapons in the settlement can produce confusion, undermine transparency, and encourage deception, all of which may prove significant obstacles to long-term peace.

When such provisions do exist, it is vital to monitor and verify parties' compliance with them. Parties often have a vested interest in withholding information or providing inaccurate information to strengthen their bargaining power. It is therefore necessary to compare information provided by the parties with data collected from independent sources, for example concerning the sizes and quality of weapons stocks. The improvement of data collection procedures or the development of new methods for the generation of information on small arms holdings could positively contribute to such efforts.

With the emergence of multi-dimensional peacekeeping after 1989, the demobilization and disarmament of forces have become established components of international peace operations. These efforts have varied significantly in their outcomes, although the attempt to identify lessons learned and best practices continues, and many of the

preconditions for success have been identified, along with remaining challenges. First of all, the parties must be interested in ending their conflict. Warring factions may have many reasons other than a genuine desire for peace to engage in negotiations, and this needs to be recognized by the external actors involved. The structures and dynamics created by conflict may be self-sustaining and provide stronger incentives to continue the conflict than to end it. As military historians have emphasized, wars do not always continue for the reasons for which they began. Individual combatants may also be reluctant to disarm if they feel this will strip them of their only means of personal and economic security as they enter civilian life. One way to discourage a return to violence is to make peace appear more attractive. The emerging multi-dimensional approach to disarmament and small arms control takes this into account by integrating these measures with others that may reduce the demand for weapons, for example by improving public security and promoting social and economic development.

In many peace operations, difficult decisions have had to be made in the face of the dwindling acceptance of the parties to what they have previously agreed on paper. The use of coercion to enforce agreements continues to be a controversial issue. Although this strategy failed in Somalia, other missions have managed to strike a balance between gaining the confidence of the parties to the agreement and the civilian population on the one hand, and employing limited threats or the use of force to deal with non-compliance on the other.

It is vitally important that disarmament is undertaken at the right time—not before a credible peace agreement is on the table or the situation is otherwise judged to be ripe for settlement. Wishful thinking in this respect may lead to a waste of valuable resources, political capital, or even the lives of peacekeepers and civilians. On the other hand, donors and outside supporters must be sufficiently committed to an inclusive and comprehensive process, tailored to the reality of the particular conflict setting, for it to be successfully executed. In particular, disarmament programmes have to look beyond the disarmament of combatants to include other groups that have been involved in the fighting. Traditional methods of weapons control, where they exist, should also be considered in certain contexts.

It is imperative to consider disarmament in conjunction with other key elements of the peace-building process. Collecting weapons, for example, will not reduce arms availability in the long-term unless accompanied by measures aimed at reducing people's desire for weapons, as well as their ability to acquire them through controls on supply. Without disarmament, public security and social and economic development will be undermined, though at the same time these are needed for disarmament to succeed. Because they are mutually interdependent rather than a sequence of discrete events, these elements should be viewed as part of a single, comprehensive, and integrated peace-building strategy.

One final conclusion that can be reached with regard to the role of small arms in peace processes is that efforts to remove them are of limited value, as long as the political conditions needed for a resolution of the conflict are not in place. Politics is the primary determinant of success for weapons control and collection in the context of armed conflict. As long as incentives remain for some parties to continue a conflict, and the political will to end it is limited, disarmament is unlikely to succeed no matter how well planned or implemented it is.

9. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASAC	Assistance on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia
BED	Special Disarmament Brigades
CACD	Community Arms Collection and Destruction
CAR	Central African Republic
CDF	Civil Defence Force
CDS	Comité de Suivi (follow-up committee)
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DDRRR	Disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
FMLN	Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (El Salvador)
FRY	Former Republic of Yugoslavia
IFOR	Implementation Force
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IICD	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRA	Irish Republican Army
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
MINUGUA	UN Verification Mission in Guatemala
MINURCA	UN Mission in the Central African Republic
MISAB	Mission Interafricaine de Surveillance des Accords de Bangui
MNF	Multinational Force in Haiti
MONUC	UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MPCD	Patriotic Movement against Crime
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCDDR	National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
NLA	National Liberation Army
ONUCA	United Nations Observer Group in Central America
ONUSAL	United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PMC	Peace Monitoring Council
PMG	Peace Monitoring Group
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
TAE	Tools for Arms Project
TPA	Townsville Peace Agreement
UCPMB	Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedija, and Bujanovac
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda

UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNCRO	United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation
UNDDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UN-LiREC	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNMIH	United Nations Mission in Haiti
UNMOT	United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan
UNOMB	United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPOB	United Nations Political Office in Bougainville
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group
UNTAES	United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium
UTO	United Tajik Opposition

9. ENDNOTES

[1] There are other considerations, including access to supply lines and the number of wounded and prisoners of war, as well as numerous factors that determine whether a military force is capable of continuing to fight. However, the number of combatants under arms is a broad measure of negotiating strength.

[2] See also the discussion of mandates on pp. 295–96.

[3] See, for example, *A Vietcong Memoir* by Troung Nhu Tang (1985), former Minister of Justice for the Vietcong during the Vietnam War, who discusses the tactic of 'fighting and talking' which was used to advantage during the war against South Vietnam, the United States, and its allies.

[4] In accordance with its mandate, MONUC is developing what it has termed a 'DDRRR programme', comprising disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration.

[5] The Brahimi Report has defined peace-building as 'activities on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war' (UNGA/UNSC, 2000, para. 13).

[6] For a discussion of the evaluation of weapons collection programmes, see Small Arms Survey (2002, Ch. 7).

[7] For analyses of the complexities involved in resolving civil conflicts, see for example Zartman (1995), Hampson (1996), and Crocker, Hampson, and Aall (1999).

[8] Coercive disarmament can also be carried out in other contexts, for example when repressive regimes disarm civilian populations in an effort to reduce the threat of armed resistance to their rule. Such actions, however, are not included in what follows.

[9] Mockaitis (2000, pp. 43–44) argues that the UN mission in the Congo from 1960 to 1964 was the United Nations' first de facto peace enforcement operation, although it never received clear enforcement powers.

[10] Personal communication with one of the Solomon Islands Melanesian Brothers (Anglican religious community), May 2002.

[11] Personal communication with Joy Kere, PMC monitor, Honiara, 29 May 2002.

[12] Personal communication by Philip Alpers and Conor Twyford with Dr Sinclair Dinnen and David Hegarty, Convenor, State, Society, and Governance in Melanesia Programme, Australian National University, Canberra, 22 April 2002.

[13] According to police figures, between January and March 2002 the majority of crimes in the regions were not gun-related and the incidence of violent crime was dwindling. There is little evidence that ex-combatants, or for that matter civilians, are turning to gun use. This could be a false lull before violence breaks out, or instead indicate that the Community Arms Collection and Destruction (CACD) programme has been effective; the police are not yet in a position to judge (Interview with Al Shek Kamara, Superintendent of Police, SLP, Freetown, August 2002, and e-mail communications).

[14] Figures supplied to the author by the SLP, July 2002.

[15] For a further definition and analysis of this approach, see Small Arms Survey (2002, pp. 297–303). The UNDP's community arms collection programme follows up work done by the SLP and the UK. It is expected to improve registration of collected weapons and develop weapons licensing procedures with pilot projects in especially affected areas.

[16] Personal correspondence between the Small Arms Survey and Spyros Demetriou, UNDP Small Arms Regional Specialist, February 2003.

[17] For the most comprehensive treatment of this subject to date, see Kritz (1995).

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