

## **Guatemala Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, April 2007**

The first regional meeting to promote the Geneva Declaration (GD) among countries of the LAC region was held in Guatemala City, 23-24 April 2007.

Initially adopted in June 2006, the GD encourages signatory-states to adopt measures to reduce armed violence within a development perspective and is co-sponsored by Switzerland and UNDP.

The primary objective for the Guatemala meeting was fulfilled when twelve countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Peru) signed the 'Guatemala Declaration'. The meeting also demonstrated that the GD is not only a Declaration but one step in a coherent process which aims to provide concrete responses to the challenges posed by armed violence.

Participating countries agreed, inter alia, to support a comprehensive and inclusive approach by promoting the integration of armed violence reduction programmes into national and regional development policies.

They also acknowledged the important role that civil society has to play in reducing armed violence and agreed to promote active partnerships at all levels.

A second regional meeting to promote the GD is planned for Africa in Nairobi later in 2007 and a third for Asia will be held in Bangkok early in 2008.