

A joint event co-organized by  
the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)  
and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)  
6 February 2017, Maison de la Paix, Geneva

Seeking more coherent  
implementation in post-conflict security:  
**Can we better align SSR, DDR,  
SALW and Mine Action?**

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**EVENT REPORT**

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**DCAF**  
a centre for security,  
development and  
the rule of law

## **SPEAKERS**

Ambassador Thomas Guerber, Director, DCAF.

Ambassador Stefano Toscano, Director, GICHD.

Moderator: Carlotta Ferrero, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP).

Alan Bryden, Head of Public-Private Partnerships Division, DCAF.

Gianluca Maspoli, Advisor, GICHD.

Eric Berman, Director, Small Arms Survey.

Caty Clement, Associate Fellow, Global Fellowship Programme, GCSP.

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## **ORGANISERS**

### **THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF ARMED FORCES (DCAF)**

The DCAF is an international foundation whose mission is to assist the international community in pursuing good governance and reform of the security sector. We develop and promote norms and standards, conduct tailored policy research, identify good practices and recommendations to promote democratic security sector governance, and provide in-country advisory support and practical assistance programmes. The Centre has over 150 staff coming from more than 30 countries. We are based at the Maison de la paix in Geneva, having permanent offices in Beirut, Brussels, Ljubljana, Ramallah and Tunis.

### **THE GENEVA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DEMINING (GICHD)**

The GICHD is an expert organisation working to reduce the impact of mines, cluster munitions and other explosive hazards, in close partnership with mine action organisations and other human security organisations. We support the ultimate goal of mine action: saving lives, returning land to productive use and promoting development. Based at the Maison de la paix in Geneva, the GICHD employs around 55 staff members from over 15 different countries. This makes the GICHD a unique and international centre of mine action expertise and knowledge. Our work is made possible by core contributions, project funding and in-kind support from more than 20 governments and organisations.

## 1. REASONS FOR SEEKING A BETTER ALIGNMENT OF SSR, DDR, SALW AND MINE ACTION

Post-conflict peacebuilding is now characterised by an established range of targeted security programmes: Security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), small arms and light weapons (SALW) control, and mine action. The question of how to better align these four programmes motivated DCAF's Policy and Research Division to produce three research publications<sup>1</sup> addressing the intersections between DDR, SALW, mine action and SSR. The three *SSR Papers* highlight that SSR, DDR, SALW programmes and mine action are anchored in the same conceptual and normative commitment to human security; yet they also affirm that differences in scope, timelines and perspectives have made alignment of these four programmes challenging. In order to address these issues, DCAF and GICHD brought together a panel of experts from these four practitioner fields to examine the practical implications of linking these important programmes. Held at the Maison de la Paix in Geneva on February 6, 2017, the panel of experts addressed the frequent lack of coherence and the potential benefits that could derive from better aligning these programming areas.

In the opening of the event, Ambassador Thomas Guerber, Director of DCAF, noted that the overlap between DDR, SALW and mine action has long been recognized among peacebuilding practitioners. The *2009 Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict*<sup>2</sup> indeed stressed the idea that basic safety and security are pivotal for political reconstruction and development and that each of these types of programmes makes an important contribution to these goals. Yet, they tend to take place side by side in fragile environments, where they involve national and international actors in multiple and sometimes conflicting logics of action. If, on one side, the potential benefits of a comprehensive approach are well-known, in practice these gains are seldom realized. In part this is because the practical overlaps—both positive and negative—between SSR, DDR, SALW control and mine action are rarely articulated and in general poorly understood.

## 2. AN SSR PERSPECTIVE ON ALIGNMENT

The ultimate goal of SSR is the promotion of good governance in the security sector. Because good governance means prioritizing a democratic, accountable, transparent and human-rights-based process of institution building in post-conflict settings, SSR programmes inevitably look beyond armed forces engaging a broad range of state and non-state actors, including parliaments, the justice sector, civil society, and the media, among others. Including all state and non-state actors engaged in the provision, control and management of security makes SSR an intrinsically political activity, intended to restore sovereignty and promote inclusive provision of human security by the state for its people. As a reform process, SSR requires a holistic approach, and should resist the imposition of blueprint logics between different socio-political contexts.

Because of its character as a broader governance-focussed agenda, SSR can provide long-term stability and an overarching good governance framework for DDR, SALW control and mine action. Making the most of the governance dimension of SSR will depend on making operational linkages with the other programmes. At the operational level, SSR, DDR, SALW control and mine action intersect in activities that start from the community level and address immediate security needs through police reforms, weapons management and destruction, and actions aimed at building confidence among the population. At the governance level, reform focuses on the improvement of national capacities while eliminating dysfunctions in national policy-making and legal frameworks.

Linking DDR, SALW control and mine action to an SSR framework would support their institutionalisation and make them more sustainable in the long term yet alignment is also impeded by the fact that SSR is broader in scope than the other activities and has different time-frames. Overcoming silo approaches will be necessary to build trust and design country-specific strategies to tackle the particular challenges of each post-conflict/peacebuilding context. At the same time, prescriptive approaches that would force actors together artificially must be avoided, since each programmatic area requires a specific set of expertise.

### 3. A DDR PERSPECTIVE ON ALIGNMENT

The main premise of SSR Paper 14 on *DDR and SSR in War-to-Peace Transitions*<sup>3</sup> is that in state-building processes, DDR and SSR attempts are only successful if state authority is based on a stable and legitimate political settlement. While the short term goal of DDR is to disarm non-state actors, sever legacy chains of command and transform fighters into productive civilians, its long-term focus must be the prevention of a return to conflict. This shift of focus creates important conditions for redirecting funds from security to development programmes and marks one of the keys ways in which DDR can contribute to larger socio-economic development and human security.

As reflected in Module 6.10 of the UN IDDRS<sup>4</sup>, which developed synergies in the design, implementation and sequencing of different elements of DDR and SSR programmes, DDR is integrally linked to SSR. In so far as it serves to enhance the principles of democratic control of armed forces in a framework of military and security professionalism, democratic governance, rule of law and respect for human rights. DDR decisions have direct consequences for later efforts to professionalise the defence sector, whether through the integration of ex-combatants into regular forces or the decision to rebuild from scratch. DDR can also have far-reaching consequences for efforts at SSR, SALW programming and mine action through reintegration into society because ex-combatants may take their weapons with them into new roles such as private security or they may be recruited as deminers. Whether through integration into the regular armed forces or through reintegration into civilian life, the long term success of both SSR and DDR will depend on delinking middle-level officers from their former commanders.

Links between DDR and SSR have in practice varied depending on whether these programme occurred simultaneously or sequentially. Each approach entails opportunities and risks: the possibilities to link DDR with SSR are numerous and yet unexplored even though there has been close interaction between SSR and DDR in Sierra Leone<sup>5</sup> where the two programmes were carried out simultaneously and in the Great Lakes region<sup>6</sup>, where SSR followed DDR.

### 4. A MINE ACTION PERSPECTIVE ON ALIGNMENT

Mine action revolves around five pillars that together contribute to human security, including long-term socio-economic development. Mine action extends beyond humanitarian demining, to include also victim assistance, risk education, advocacy against the use of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, and stockpile destruction. The sustainability of mine action programmes relies on local and national ownership and good governance.

Strengthening the effectiveness of mine action through alignment with other programmes should not mean merging them. Rather, it is more productive to exploit complementarities and common features in a non-prescriptive way. From this perspective, SSR Paper 15 on *Linking Mine Action and SSR through Human Security*<sup>7</sup> shows that SSR and mine action share a common conceptual basis, rooted in a people-centred understanding of security – a concept of security not limited to the state, but taking into account threats and needs at societal and individual levels.

On this basis, it is possible to identify a number of avenues for enhancing coherence in the implementation of these programmes in post-conflict contexts. On the one hand, mine action can serve as an entry point to address governance issues, for instance the establishment of a national mine action authority and centre responsible for implementation of programmes. Moreover, its focus on people's safety and legal-normative framework can be used to leverage human security issues and SSR agendas. Mine action also provides reintegration opportunities in DDR. On the other hand, SSR supports the creation of the appropriate, effective and accountable institutions necessary to achieve optimal outcomes in mine action. The use of mine action as a reintegration tool should be coordinated carefully with other programmes in order to avoid side effects that are detrimental for the DDR process, such as providing better benefits to former combatants than the rest of the population.

These commonalities suggest significant potential to better link mine action and the other programmes. However, interaction is still limited at field level. Linkages between them are mostly confined to

physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) programmes and do not take advantage of the full spectrum of potential activities that could be aligned more coherently to improve the impact of interventions on the ground.

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## 5. A SALW PROGRAMMING PERSPECTIVE ON ALIGNMENT

SSR Paper 16 on *Integrating SSR and SALW Programming*<sup>8</sup> argues that SALW programmes contribute to SSR by helping to consolidate the state's control over the legitimate use of force. At the same time, SSR creates the governance capacity needed to enforce SALW control regimes and build communities' trust in the state's capacity to provide security as a public good.

Human security is the rationale for SALW programming which presents governments with policy options for better management and control of weapons and ammunition over their life-cycle. SALW programmes require a multidisciplinary approach to achieve successful implementation. Challenges to SALW management and control programmes may stem from the interests of the arms industry, political intransigence, or evidence that armed violence typically increases in post-conflict contexts.

While seeking perfect alignment of SALW and indeed all four programming areas would be setting the bar too high, cooperation is within reach. In particular cooperation offers hope of reducing fixed costs by co-locating experts and exploiting overlapping networks. To make the implementation of all four programmes more coherent, they have to be understood in the light of Agenda 2030 and its goals. The sharing of information and especially of expertise is also essential to further alignment, yet this potential is not always exploited to the fullest. This exclusion may reflect that lack of political support to bring these separate communities of practice together. Where such political support is lacking, the necessary energy to align institutional means of implementation has also been absent. As a result potential gains have been lost because of a lack of alignment in joint assessments, programme planning and evaluations or such practice areas as police training or public information campaigns.

## 6. THE WAY AHEAD: ADDRESSING OBSTACLES TO COHERENT IMPLEMENTATION

The interventions from the audience during the event contributed to identifying good practices. For instance, a Somali DDR programme that contributed to SSR in the country by initiating a genuine process of government capacity development. The case of the Ivory Coast was also mentioned as an example of a successful joint SSR/DDR and mine action response to the country's post-conflict needs.

The debate also showed that the alignment of these programmes requires overcoming a number of obstacles. The challenges are mostly operational in nature and coherent implementation is often hampered by shortages of funds, political will and technical capacities. Further, SSR, DDR and SALW programming may not share the same political perspectives towards security as mine action, which has a more humanitarian vocation. A challenge is also related to donor policies and regulations. On the one hand, rigid financial rules make it impossible to allocate funds to joint programming. On the other hand, the urgency to achieve short-term results tends to lead to siloed funding of projects based on narrow objectives that will yield comparatively less sustainable results.

Despite these challenges, the papers and the discussion during the event highlighted possible avenues to enhance the coherence among programmes. Five main points came out prominently:

1. **Human security**, intended as *freedom from fear and freedom from want*, provides a shared conceptual basis common to all programmes. In fact, they all aim at improving not only safety and security, but also ensuring longer-term socio-economic development.
2. **Good governance and local ownership** were indicated as preconditions to ensure that DDR, SALW control and mine action achieve sustainable and lasting results.
3. The promotion of a **human rights-based** approach and the focus on **Gender and Diversity** mainstreaming are common features

among SSR, DDR, SALW control and mine action and generate opportunities for more coherent and joint implementation, for instance in assessments and monitoring.

4. A better alignment between these programmes does not mean an overly strict or rigid focus on coherence, but rather a **pragmatic approach**. Differences in timing and immediate goals create a potential for complementarity among the programmes that have the same ultimate goal of human security.
5. SSR, DDR, SALW control and mine action have strong links with the **Sustainable Development Goals**. The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* creates thus a broader framework within which all these programmes fit and consequently closer cooperation should be sought in this light.

As we are moving away from a state-centred view of security and towards a people-centred understanding, characterised by national ownership, good governance and a gender-based approach, it is time to recognize conceptual and functional overlaps that enable and require working across programmes. Even though differences exist between these four areas of programming, cooperation remains possible and the three SSR Papers by DCAF promote innovative solutions to bridge the gaps between SSR, DDR, SALW control and mine action programming. DCAF-GICHD partnership in Ukraine<sup>9</sup> is a successful example of the benefits that can originate from collaboration. The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is extremely helpful in this sense, as it furnishes the background against which singular contributions have to be weighed and joined up to achieve better and more coherent results. The increasing importance of working towards collective outcomes is a major takeaway from this seminar.

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## CONCLUSION

Ambassador Stefano Toscano, Director of the GICHD, closed the event by pointing out that a more coherent and integrated approach can have a positive effect on the impact, sustainability and efficiency of each programme. Working closely can prevent the duplication of efforts by leading to a reduction of fixed costs and providing access to multidimensional expertise.

<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Series-Collections/SSR-Papers>.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, 11 June 2009, UN Doc. A/63/881-S/2009/304. See: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/63/881](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/63/881).

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/DDR-and-SSR-in-War-to-Peace-Transition>.

<sup>4</sup> See: [http://www.unddr.org/what-is-ddr/how-has-ddr-evolved\\_3.aspx](http://www.unddr.org/what-is-ddr/how-has-ddr-evolved_3.aspx).

<sup>5</sup> Christopher von Dyck, *DDR and SSR in War-to-Peace Transition*, Geneva, DCAF, SSR Paper 14, 2016, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Bryden, Vincenza Scherrer (eds), *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform*, Münster, LIT Verlag, 2012, p. 144.

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Linking-Mine-Action-and-SSR-through-Human-Security>.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Integrating-SSR-and-SALW-Programming>.

<sup>9</sup> Ursign Hoffmann, Gianluca Maspoli, Åsa Massleberg, Pascal Rapillard, *Linking Mine Action and SSR through Human Security*, Geneva, DCAF, SSR Paper 15, 2016, pp. 44-45.