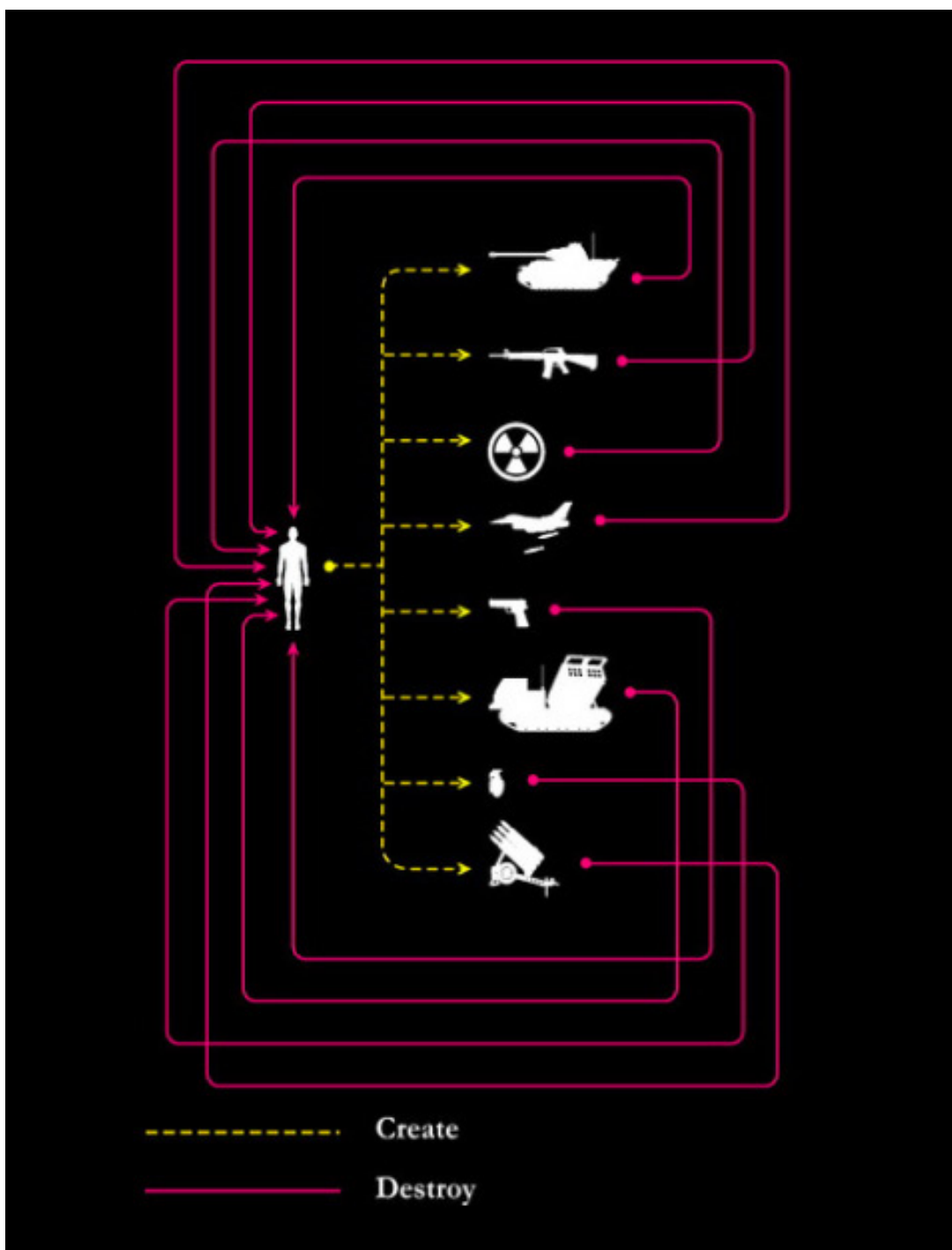


# FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

NGO Reporting on the United Nations  
General Assembly First Committee on  
Disarmament and International Security  
8 October–6 November 2012

## NO. 1

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## FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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Reaching Critical Will | A programme of the  
Women's International League for Peace and  
Freedom

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***The views in this publication are not necessarily those of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom or the Reaching Critical Will programme.***

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organization in the world. Reaching Critical Will works for nuclear and conventional disarmament, the reduction of global military spending, and the demilitarization of politics and economics in order to achieve human security and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Reaching Critical Will is your primary source for information, documents, and analysis about the United Nations General Assembly First Committee and other multilateral disarmament conferences and processes.

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- A calendar of events for this First Committee;
- All editions of the *First Committee Monitor*;
- Statements, documents, and analysis from meetings of the First Committee, Conference on Disarmament, nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Arms Trade Treaty, Programme of Action on small arms, and more;
- Research and analysis of critical issues related to disarmament and arms control; and
- News and information about civil society engagement on disarmament and arms control.

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Reaching Critical Will

# EDITORIAL: DIRECT ACTION

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

First Committee is set to begin once again in the midst of dynamic and dangerous times. The relevance of its mandate, disarmament and international security, is as pressing as ever. Looking around the world today one can see mounting regional and international tensions, civil wars and revolutions, increasing armed violence, and, overshadowing us all, the threat of nuclear weapons. High levels of military spending, weapons production, trade, and stockpiling, and armed conflict undermine the key objective of the United Nations: preserving international peace and security.

Yet one can also see many examples of ordinary people trying to rein back the violence, overcome militarism, and achieve peace.

Using social media, citizens of Israel and Iran are reaching out to each other to build a bridge between their countries and ensure each other that they do not want war with one another.

Villagers on from Gangjeong, Republic of Korea, have been actively campaigning against the construction of a naval base on Jeju Island that would destroy the local environment and villagers' livelihoods and turn Jeju, currently known as the "Island of World Peace," into an island of militarism.

In India, villagers in Kudankulam continue their protests against the construction of a nuclear power plant that they know will negatively affect their environment and safety.

In opposition to the increasing use of drones for "targeted killing" by the United States, the American Civil Liberties Union has taken the CIA to court; US law schools have condemned the utility and legality of the targeted killing programme; and the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has highlighted concerns with the increasing use of drone attacks.

In July, after years of global campaigning by grassroots and international activists, the UN was flooded with civil society actors promoting a robust arms trade treaty that would make a real difference on reducing levels of armed violence and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

In August, more than 100 campaigners from 30 countries participated in a meeting focusing on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons; another such conference will be held in early March 2013. Activists in countries with nuclear weapons continue to oppose the political and economic interests invested in maintaining these arsenals, including by breaking into existing facilities and preventing the construction of new facilities.

These are but a few examples of direct citizen action for disarmament and arms control going on right now, as diplomats gather in New York for First Committee. What direct action will First Committee take to support these efforts? Will it finally allow the General Assembly its rightful place in advancing disarmament by taking up work that the Conference on Disarmament has failed to address since 1996? Will it mandate a new negotiating process for the arms trade treaty that will not allow the interests of the few to overpower the interests of the many? Will it promote the vital contributions that women can make to disarmament and arms control processes?

As civil society continues to promote disarmament and peace around the world it is also watching its representatives in New York. First Committee is not just about general statements and stale resolutions. It should be a forum for dynamic discussion on the issues that matter most and provide the opportunity for bridging gaps—or creatively circumventing them—to make concrete progress. •

## REFLECTIONS ON THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY GENERAL DEBATE 2012

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held its general debate from 25 September–1 October. The theme for this year's debate, set by UNGA President Vuk Jeremic of Serbia, was "adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means". With the ongoing violence in Syria, threats of bombing Iran over its uranium enrichment programme, several protracted regional disputes, and ongoing retention and modernization of nuclear weapons, this theme was particularly timely. Most delegations addressed the theme and related it to issues of militarism, disarmament, or arms control.

### **By the numbers**

How many countries referred to...

- *Disarmament*: 52 countries
- *Nuclear weapons*: 66 countries
- *Conventional weapons*: 52 countries
- *Militarism or military spending*: 23 countries

### **Nuclear weapons**

References to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation increased this year, following a steady decline since 2009, when elite rhetoric in favour of a nuclear weapon free world was at its height. Most of those discussing nuclear weapon issues focused on Iran's pro-

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gramme, the anticipated Helsinki Conference regarding a zone free of weapons mass destruction in the Middle East, or the continued failure to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Rhetoric against Iran reached its height during Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech, when he drew a red line on a cartoon bomb indicating the point at which Iran should be attacked in order to stop its programme. However, the vast majority of countries appeared keen to avoid armed conflict and urged a diplomatic solution. Iceland's Foreign Minister Óssur Skarphéðinsson very clearly stated, "I listened to Mr. Netanyahu's speech on Thursday, and I have a comment to make on behalf of the Icelandic people: Don't bomb Iran. Don't start another war in the Middle East. At the same time I say to President Ahmadinejad and the Iranian leadership: Don't build a bomb. Let diplomacy work, not rabblousing or fearmongering. Let's work for peace together."

As for the nuclear weapons that actually exist, several governments criticized the lack of progress on disarmament. The Central African Republic's Foreign Minister Antoine Gambi noted, "The essential objectives of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation continue to be held hostage by political double standards, and by the discriminatory practices taken by some nuclear powers." He and many others called for concerted efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons along with all other weapons of mass destruction.

Addressing the problem with nuclear weapons more broadly, Austria's Vice-Chancellor Michael Spindelegger emphasized the importance of moving "beyond a strictly military security approach that originates from the cold war period." He argued, "It is time we change the discourse on nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons would be devastating for the whole world in its humanitarian and environmental effects. In the 21st century, such an existential threat to humankind can no longer be handled exclusively by a few states as a national security matter."

#### **Conventional weapons**

The number of countries referencing conventional weapon issues remained similar to last year. Many of these references critiqued the recently failed arms trade treaty negotiations. Maxine McClean, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados, expressed her country's "profound disappointment" at the conference's failure, while Frederick A. Mitchell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, asked, "What do we say to thousands of innocent victims and their families who are suffering as a result of the irresponsible and unregulated international transfer of conventional arms?" Mitchell argued, "A re-assessment of human life and dignity versus profit, and, commitment are critical if we are to prevail in our fight against the scourge of armed violence and terror plaguing our societies."

Sierra Leone's delegation likewise lamented the failure of negotiations and urged the international community to regroup in order to achieve a robust treaty soon. Foreign Minister Joseph Dauda cautioned, "If we continue to delay in this respect, we face the risk of their continuous use in committing grave violations of national and international law, which has the potential to destabilize peace and security. We therefore urge member states to consider our moral obligation to humanity as our key guiding principle, and sincerely commit ourselves to, contributing to the establishment of mechanisms to prevent the diversion of such weapons into the illicit market."

#### **Military spending and militarism**

As usual, a number of countries expressed critical views on global military spending. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon lamented that governments waste "vast and precious funds on deadly weapons—while reducing investments in people." Likewise, Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff noted, "The world clamors for food instead of weapons." Cuba's Minister for Foreign Affairs Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla questioned how global military spending of US\$1.74 can be justified in the face of poverty, while President Teodoro Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea argued it is time for humanity to stop "wasting resources on extermination plans".

A small number of countries also critiqued militarism in general, particularly as a solution to issues of international peace and security or as a tool to gain or retain power. Lesotho's Prime Minister Thomas Motsoahae Thabane noted, "Despite the lessons of history, there are countries that still believe they can solve the political problems of our time through war and coercion. It does not matter to them that history has shown that the goal of domination through the use of force is not only illusive and dangerous but is unsustainable."

While a few countries used the revolution in Syria to caution against military intervention, most countries referring to the pitfalls of militarism topic spoke more broadly about the inferiority of violent to peaceful solutions, particularly in the context of the principles and purposes of the United Nations. In this vein, Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, urged governments to overcome the drive for unilateralism and hegemony, arguing that the international community has bound itself together "in the solemn goal of promoting peace, not fostering wars; of self-determination, not unilateral intervention; of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, not the callous disregard for the wellbeing of our fellow man [sic]."

*Reaching Critical Will tracked all references to disarmament and arms control at this year's UNGA general debate. The Disarmament Index is available at [www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org). WILPF's PeaceWomen programme maintains an index on gender and women, available at [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org).* •



# AVERTING INSANITY ON THE ATT

Daniel Mack | Instituto Sou da Paz

As First Committee gets underway, among many essential items on the docket one may receive special attention: the resolution that will define how and when Member States will attempt to fulfill their mandate in the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) process.

The disappointment of July is still fresh in our mind, especially considering how close the Diplomatic Conference—seemingly—came to agreeing a text. However, the historical relevance of July will only become clear once UN member states actually finalize the process: was it a derailment or a postponement? Moreover, and most importantly, what will that failure signify in terms of substance—will it prove a stronger text can be negotiated or will it make governments ‘gun shy’ (pun intended) of seeking the necessary improvements to the draft treaty text (CRP.1)?

While the purported need for “more time” to discuss an instrument that has been dissected *ad nauseum* for six years was laughable, especially given the origin of this “need” in electoral politics, it could in the future prove to have a considerable silver-lining: the draft presented by the Chair, Ambassador Moritán, is so full of loopholes—some extremely dangerous—that it would have been very unfortunate if the text had been agreed upon.

The draft’s failings have many origins, with the consensus straitjacket as a major culprit. Also identified by some observers was the manner in which the Chair conducted the negotiations, with some states feeling disenfranchised because of linguistic and logistical problems, and others complaining that it was a “negotiation with the Chair” rather than among States. Finally, some of the draft’s major weaknesses were demanded by those governments requesting more time for negotiations, including the United States.

Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that as a starting point for negotiations the draft reflects important steps forward. There are remarkable achievements therein, including: recognition that under certain circumstances States must never authorize arms transfers; universal acceptance that prior to authorizing a transfer of weapons States must conduct ‘due diligence’ national risk assessments to ensure adherence to IHL and international human rights law; requirements that States report on their international arms transfers; and, importantly, agreement that small arms and light weapons must be part of the instrument’s scope given their prominence in the problems it attempts to tackle. In several sections, such as the Preamble, Principles, Goals and Objectives, Secretariat, International Cooperation, International Assistance, and most articles starting at 15 (Signature/Ratification), the draft needs minimal changes to become entirely adequate for its purpose.

This is the good. The “bad and the ugly” is that several other articles are flawed enough to completely undermine the very reason for negotiating an ATT. Among several others, the most dangerous are:

- a scope that ignores vast swaths of types of conventional arms (those not included in the UN Register) and the munitions and ammunitions that allow all weapons (whether under the Register or not) to kill, in addition to insufficiently covering the parts and components that can be transferred separately to circumvent the treaty’s objectives;
- a definition of “transfers” that incorrectly equates it with “trade,” thereby potentially excluding gifts, loans, and state-to-state transactions not strictly commercial in nature;
- a prohibition of arms transfers on the ground of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes based on intentionality—which would create the absurd situation that only a country publicly stating it was selling arms **for the purpose** of these breaches could be held responsible;
- a risk assessment procedure based on the legally-dubious and arguably extremely high threshold of “overriding risk” rather than the proper “substantial risk” of serious violations of IHL or human rights, and that furthermore fails to adequately include the substantial risks of diversion and facilitating organized crime or armed violence (including gender-based violence, but not only) as also sufficient reasons not to authorize an arms transfer;
- a clause that would allow States to circumvent the entire ATT by simply ensuring (or claiming) that irresponsible and dangerous transfers occurred under “defence cooperation agreements”; and
- a reporting mechanism that has no required provision for transparency whatsoever, allowing States to keep information on arms transfers secret from citizens.

In their reactions to both the substance and process challenges ahead, States will define during First Committee how July ultimately goes into posterity. As such, in our opinion, it would be essential that diplomats perform two main tasks regarding the ATT this October:

- acknowledge that the current draft text is inadequate for an ATT that would deliver actual change to the status quo of international arms transfers—and in fact contains serious loopholes and weaknesses that could undermine the treaty’s objectives and perpetuate “business as usual,” legalizing the irresponsible transfers it should outlaw; and
- draft and approve a resolution that gives negotiators the necessary tools to deliver in early 2013 the needed output, that is, an ATT that fulfills its humanitarian imperative.

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Undoubtedly, the substance of the ATT and the provisions of its text are more important than the exact process or date it comes into existence. Yet, often, substance depends on form. As such, we recommend not deciding to “use a hammer to fix a television” —or strapping a straitjacket onto oneself when needing to write. It is mind-boggling that after July some States are advocating for a continuation of the Diplomatic Conference’s rules of procedure, namely the unanimity approach, already a deviation of General Assembly norms.

There is no reason to hope that certain blockers would not repeat the behavior of filibustering and finally obstructing an agreement. Conceding the “tyranny of the minority” all the leverage again seems nonsensical if a different outcome (i.e. not failure) is desired. A famous saying comes to mind: “insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results”.

Unanimous decision-making in a negotiation seeking to establish norms to compel change to the behavior of actors happy with the *status quo* requires said actors to “legislate against themselves” or to make sure the instrument is so watered-down to make no difference in changing their behavior. It is mad to expect States to make decisions that would go against

their national priorities (as distorted, anachronistic, or callous they may be). Therefore, in democratic fashion, the overwhelming majority has the right to decide the paths taken by the international community, and those specific States that don’t agree have the right to excuse themselves from signing onto any instrument.

On the exact format of the next step, presumably several options are possible, including extending the Diplomatic Conference, establishing a new but final Conference, or determining a special session of the General Assembly or other formulation to conclude the ATT text. Regardless, two points are essential: this session must occur as early as possible in 2013 in order to benefit from July’s momentum and respect the urgency with which an ATT is needed; and its rules of procedure cannot be based on the distorted interpretation of consensus that hampered the negotiation of text and precluded possible agreement in July.

Governments need to give themselves the proper tools to have a chance of fixing the gaping loopholes in the draft ATT text, deemed “imperfect and inconclusive” by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Anything else would be a bit crazy.

*Daniel Mack is a Policy Coordinator in the Weapons Control division of Instituto Sou da Paz in São Paulo, Brazil. •*

## WOMEN, GENDER, DISARMAMENT, AND THE ARMS TRADE

Maria Butler, Madeleine Rees, and Ray Acheson | Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom

This year’s First Committee will once again address the issue of women and disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation through a resolution tabled by the government of Trinidad and Tobago. This resolution, first introduced and adopted by consensus as resolution 65/69 in 2010, recognizes “the valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures carried out at the local, national, regional and sub-regional levels in the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict, and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.”

Trinidad and Tobago and four other governments (Australia, Finland, Jamaica, and Norway) recently signed a declaration stating that they will strengthen this resolution “with a view to placing the contribution of women high on the international agenda for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.” The declaration was signed at General Assembly side event on 25 September 2012.

WILPF welcomed the declaration and the commitment to strengthening resolution 65/69. Indeed, the revised resolution should be forward looking and be more comprehensive, more specific, and more action oriented. For example, it could:

- emphasize the need for governments to ensure equitable representation of women at all decision-making levels in national institutions and international delegations which may make or influence policy with regard to matters related to disarmament and arms control;
- urge states to divert human and economic resources currently devoted to armaments to promote gender equality and development including implementation of the Millennium Development Goals;
- encourage the international community, relevant regional and sub-regional organizations and institutions, non-governmental organizations, and research institutes to recognize the association of the possession of weapons and preparedness to use military action with masculinity; and
- call on those states that have not yet generated National Action Plans for implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 to do so including incorporation of disarmament goals and indicators and measures to effectively increase the participation by women at all decision-making levels, particularly in institutions and bodies dealing with security and disarmament.



While working on this text during October, however, it is important to remember that the issue of women and disarmament extends well beyond one resolution in the General Assembly.

The gender dimensions to disarmament and the arms trade are widely recognized as consisting of connections between masculinity and the use and proliferation of weapons and the understanding that women are differently and particularly affected by armed gender-based violence.

WILPF members around the world experience the reality and impacts of armed violence from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to Colombia to Pakistan. In the DRC, for example, our members live in a country plagued by protracted armed conflict with high levels of sexual violence perpetrated by armed groups and armed government forces and influenced by a wide range of external actors. As a women's peace group, WILPF members organize and advocate for disarmament and women's equal participation in the process of peace building because without the control and reduction of arms, there is no end to war.

Thus we call on all states to move beyond rhetoric during this session of the General Assembly to respond to the realities of those most affected by arms, guns, and militarization. In addition to the resolution on women and disarmament, governments will also have an opportunity to do this through the extension of arms trade treaty (ATT) negotiations.

In the lead up to the ATT negotiating conference in July 2012, WILPF, together with the IANSA Women's Network, Amnesty International, and over 100 civil society organizations, called for a strong ATT that would help prevent armed gender-based violence. We see this treaty as an historic opportunity to reduce arms and to reduce violence. Specifically on reducing gender-based violence, we support a robust legally-binding criterion that would require states not to allow an international transfer of conventional arms where there is a substantial risk that the arms under consideration are likely to be used to perpetrate or facilitate acts of gender-based violence, including rape and other forms of sexual violence.

A large number of delegations spoke in favour of including gender in the ATT and many supported the inclusion of a robust gender criterion during the July negotiations. However, this support was not reflected in the final text—a text which is flawed for many other substantial reasons.

One of the overarching problems with the final draft treaty text negotiated in July is its failure to address the broader context and consequences of the arms trade. The preamble references the UN Charter's demand for the least diversion of resources towards arms. However, it then neatly avoids that element by emphasizing that states have the right—for political, security, economic, and commercial interests—to trade in arms.

Furthermore, in the preamble, reference to human suffering is only to the consequences of the illegal and unregulated trade, as if the profit from the manufacture and sale of weapons, if legal, has no consequence for humanity. There is a last minute recollection of the victims of armed conflict and that women and children are particularly affected. Yet nothing in the treaty's operative text substantively addresses this.

Regarding the gender dimension of the operational portion of the draft text, Article 4.6b requires each state party to "consider taking feasible measures, including joint actions with other States involved in the transfer, to avoid the arms being used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence or violence against children." It specifically excludes gender-based violence (GBV) from the mandatory risk assessment process that can result in a transfer denial. Furthermore, the draft does not indicate what measures might be undertaken, nor does it make such measures mandatory.

Without specific obligations, Article 4 will most likely not be used to prevent violence against women or GBV. It does not respond to the urgency and prevalence of such violence with guns. It fails to protect from or prevent armed GBV for the millions of victims and survivors in conflict and non-conflict settings.

Finally, across the corridors of UN Headquarters this October, member states will also mark the annual UN Security Council resolution 1325 open debate in the Security Council (scheduled for 29 October). Disarmament is a UNSCR 1325 issue and delegations should not leave disarmament out of their statements during the open debate. For more on this read: "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda: The two silent 'Ps': Proliferation and Profit" by Maria Butler at [http://www.peace-women.org/portal\\_resources\\_resource.php?id=1726](http://www.peace-women.org/portal_resources_resource.php?id=1726).

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# SMALL ARMS AT THE UN: NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE COMING YEARS

Hector Guerra | International Action Network on Small Arms

This year has been of particular relevance in the work on small arms and light weapons (SALW) at the United Nations, with the Diplomatic Conference (DipCon) of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the Review Conference (RevCon) of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA), preceded by their respective Preparatory Committees and now followed by the activities of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.

As we know, the ATT DipCon did not meet its goal to produce a treaty, and now the fate of the process will be decided this month during First Committee. Here governments will determine if there will be an extension of the negotiating mandate and a new conference. The DipCon received a high level of attention and important resources from the majority of Member States. Then, the PoA RevCon, which took place a month later, experienced the effects of that channeling of energy and resources: Many delegations were not present, or were less numerous in terms of their members, or were not represented at a higher level. Nonetheless, unlike six years before during the First RevCon, an Outcome Document (CRP.3/Rev.3) was adopted by consensus. This was deemed extremely noteworthy, considering the lack of results of the DipCon.

But what does this represent in practical terms for the advancement in the control of SALW, including the attention paid to the problem of their proliferation; the eradication of their diversion into the illicit market; and the prevention of their illicit use?

If we look at the final draft treaty text produced at the ATT DipCon, which most likely will serve as the basis of the future negotiations of the ATT, we could see that, in regards to SALW and ammunition, there were mixed results. On the one hand, SALW made it into the section on scope, after intense debates about the exclusion of hunting and sporting firearms. Yet we see that ammunition was excluded, in spite of a majority of voices calling for its inclusion, given its humanitarian impact. Also, the preamble includes a paragraph on civilian possession, but no indication about the responsibility of States to regulate it. Another gap to be filled is in the preambular paragraph on victim assistance, which only makes reference to the victims of armed conflict at a moment when most of the casualties resulting from armed violence are produced outside contexts of war, and the majority of them result from the misuse of SALW.

The Outcome Document of the PoA Review Conference fell short in some elements as well, such as the inclusion of SALW ammunition and parts and components within the scope of the PoA; gender mainstreaming, as well as UN resolutions 1325, 1612, and 65/69;

developing mechanisms to assess the risk of SALW diversion; the links between SALW and armed violence, and the impact on development.

It seems that the possibility of making the improvements needed by the PoA is deemed to be out of the question and the only possibility for evolution in the SALW process at the UN is through RevCon outcome documents that just go beyond the need to quote the PoA. In the run up to the Third RevCon, there should be a deep reflection on this. Otherwise the PoA will be a dogma and its modification for improvement a taboo. Can we effectively work with a 12-year-old document in a world that has experienced drastic changes in terms of human security and challenges directly involving SALW during the same time period? Let us just remember that during this period there have been major wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, and Syria; a new wave of widespread acts of terrorism; a global financial crisis; a reduction in the number of armed conflicts but an increase in armed violence in general. At the same time, however, there has been an advance in humanitarian disarmament as attained through the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

CRP.3/Rev.3 presents positive achievements such as references to the negative effects of the illicit trade in SALW on people with disabilities; the involvement of peacekeeping missions in the effort to trace illicit SALW; the importance of keeping pace with developments in SALW manufacturing technology and design for marking, tracing, and record-keeping purposes; and the need to further integrate the role of women into efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW and more fully involving women in policymaking. This is an important platform for the first steps of the next phase of the PoA, which should come hand in hand with greater transparency and a serious and generalized commitment for constant, quality reporting by States. Strengthened implementation is to be the basis of any future modification in the PoA.

The First Committee is an important moment in this year to complete work in favor of SALW regulation. First, it will be crucial to extend the mandate for ATT negotiations in the best possible conditions in order to wrap up a process that delivers a treaty that is not an empty document but a new pillar for the regulation of arms trade in a way that ensures lives, limbs, and livelihoods are protected around the globe.

The coming weeks in Conference Room 1 should also represent an opportunity to directly address SALW, as with past resolutions such as 66/47, "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", or 66/34, "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them".



Hopefully the presentation of resolutions is not a mere ritual but a reflection of the interest of States to address the problem of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, contributing to the work to be done in the next six years around the Programme of Action.

Important steps have been taken this year at the UN in the area of SALW regulation and disarmament. In the coming years this work should be kept alive and productive with a constructive spirit of negotiation

and international solidarity by Member States. Not taking it one step further could put at risk the credibility and efficiency of the United Nations as an institution for international peace and security, thus its possibility to contribute to meaningful changes in the lives of communities in all continents in the face of present and future threats and actual pandemic of armed violence.

*Hector Guerra is the Network Coordinator for the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). •*



**Arms Control Association**  
Working to Eliminate the Threats Posed by the World's Most Dangerous Weapons

### **Fifty Years After the Cuban Missile Crisis: Next Steps on Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation**

*Monday, October 15, 2012  
1:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.*

*Conference Room 1  
United Nations, New York*

Fifty years after the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis pushed the world to the brink of nuclear catastrophe, the nuclear danger has been reduced, but the threats posed by the bomb are still with us.

You are invited to a public forum on options for deeper U.S.-Russian nuclear reductions, curbing nuclear competition in South Asia, advancing a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and securing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

**"Options for Further U.S. and Russian Nuclear Reductions"**

**Hans M. Kristensen**

*Director, Nuclear Information Project, Federation of American Scientists*

**"Reducing Nuclear Dangers in South Asia"**

**Lt. General (ret.) V.R. Raghavan,**

*President, Center for Security Analysis, Chennai, India*

**"The Future of Multilateral Disarmament Conventions in the Middle East"**

**Dr. Sameh Aboul-Encin**

*Deputy Foreign Minister for Disarmament Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt*

**"Next Steps on the CTBT"**

**Daryl G. Kimball**

*Executive Director, Arms Control Association*

*This event is open to all governmental and nongovernmental representatives  
and members of the press.*

*The Arms Control Association is an independent, membership-based  
organization dedicated to providing authoritative information and practical  
policy solutions to address the threats posed by the world's most dangerous  
weapons.*

# OUTER SPACE SECURITY AND THE GGE

Tiffany Chow | Secure World Foundation

It has become clear in recent years that the international community agrees on the necessity of space security and sustainability, but has not yet reached complete agreement on how to pursue these important goals. Some Member States, such as the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, believe that a legally-binding treaty could ensure the security of the outer space domain. Others, such as the Europeans

and the United States, prefer a voluntary and normative process, encapsulated in the proposed International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for Outer Space Activities or the Long-term Sustainability of Space Activities (LTSSA) Working Group in the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). Underlying these differences are mismatched priorities. For those who feel that preventing an arms race in outer space (PAROS) is

the greatest threat to space security and sustainability, a binding treaty is the best way forward. For those who worry most about the growth of orbital debris and objects in space, and the risk of collision that comes with it, the pursuit of "rules of the road" is preferable.

In the midst of these proposed solutions, and divergent preferences, lies the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) in outer space activities. The GGE is born out of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee and will produce a non-binding, expert assessment after its three meetings are concluded. During last year's First Committee meetings, I authored an article for the *First Committee Monitor* addressing the importance of this effort and the need to learn from a similar GGE that met in the years between 1991 and 1993. The current GGE and the norm-building role it could fill is increasingly important in a time when space security and sustainability, and threats to both, are increasingly salient, yet States disagree on how best to achieve them.

We need to build trust and confidence among space actors to effectively address both issues of conflict in and the congestion of the space environment. The space domain is unsustainable without clear communication among all stakeholders. Therefore, TCBMs have the potential to move forward all discussions regarding space sustainability by laying down a foundation of trust. To achieve this important objective, the GGE will need to focus on being as inclusive as possible.

## SAVE THE DATE 12 - 18 OCTOBER

for an important and timely NEW documentary about the legacy of Nagasaki and Fukushima

Screening daily at the Quad Cinema at 5:10 PM

THE QUAD CINEMA: 34 W 13th Street (between 5th and 6th Ave) in Manhattan

"I found the courage to live."

Sakue Shimohira, Nagasaki survivor



## THE ULTIMATE WISH: Ending the Nuclear Age



"What would you do if this happened to you?"

Takako Shishido, Fukushima evacuee

A film produced by Robert Richter and Kathleen Sullivan  
Director: Robert Richter  
Editors: Ruth Schell, Michael Grenadier, Peter Kinoy  
Cinematography: Alan Jacobsen, Rick Miranda, Jessie Epstein  
Music: Sam Sadigursky and Arthur Solari  
Running time 39 minutes/ dolby surround

For more information: [theultimatewish.net](http://theultimatewish.net)

The GGE met for the first time from 23–27 July 2012, during which it decided its method and programme of work. The GGE will make decisions by consensus, will attempt to include interested parties outside the 15 State-selected experts, and will aim to complement other efforts in the space field. While no substantive accomplishments came out of this initial meeting, these principles of inclusiveness bode well for the process.

It is absolutely critical that the GGE adhere to these inclusive principles it has agreed upon if it hopes to produce a relevant and tangibly positive contribution to the goals of space security and sustainability. This is the case for a couple of reasons. First, given the structure of the GGE, it must make a concerted effort to bring in outside voices or it risks presenting a narrow perspective. According to UN design, the GGE is composed of 15 experts in the field designated by Member States. The States involved include the five permanent Security Council members and ten other Member States selected based on geographic fairness and self-nominations. Thus, the States represented in the space GGE are Brazil, Chile, China, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States.

While it is very important that any such initiative be geographically balanced, it is equally as important it also represents those nations with a vested interest in the space environment. There are nine launch States and only a handful are represented here. There are dozens of nations actively using space applications and services, obviously a far greater number than the 15 GGE countries. Finally, one could argue that the entire world relies upon space in some way, shape, or form, whether for the smooth functioning of financial mar-

kets or in support of telecommunications. From this perspective, the number of voices officially represented in the GGE seems paltry.

Second, other recent efforts in international space norm-building have further demonstrated the necessity of incorporating all stakeholder perspectives in the conversation. Those involved in the UNCOPUOS LTSSA Working Group recognized the need to include industry and civil society perspectives in their effort to outline best practices in space operations. As a result, those involved have done a fairly good job of soliciting inputs from these partners to be included in the official discussions. Alternatively, the experience of the European Union's (EU) proposed Code of Conduct has been quite the opposite. Initially drafted within the EU and then vetted with a select group of spacefaring nations, the Code has disenchanted other important players such as India. This failure to satisfactorily include nations with tangible investments in the space domain could undermine the Code's success, even if the values outlined within were universal and immaculately worded.

One could conceive of many other reasons for making the GGE as inclusive a process as possible. I have focused on these two because they constitute a strong enough argument for reaching beyond the expertise of the 15 States represented officially to bring in the voices of all space stakeholders. If the GGE fails to effectively and authentically include their perspectives, its report will fall flat and the international community will have forfeited a rare opportunity to affect real change. In a time when space security and sustainability are more and more crucial, we cannot afford to miss the chance.

*Tiffany Chow is a Project Manager at the Secure World Foundation. •*

## **SIDE EVENT**

### **NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: ITS FUTURE IN THE CD**

**THURSDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2012, 13:15–14:30**  
**Conference Room 1, North Lawn Building**

#### **Panelists:**

- Tim Caughley, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
- Ray Acheson, Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

# FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

The *First Committee Monitor* is a collaborative NGO effort undertaken to make the work of the First Committee more transparent and accessible. The *Monitor* is compiled, edited, and coordinated by **Reaching Critical Will** of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

*Contributing organizations and programmes to this edition:*

Instituto Sou da Paz

International Action Network on Small Arms

PeaceWomen

Reaching Critical Will

Secure World Foundation

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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Reaching Critical Will