disarmament forum

Education for disarmament

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The United Nations has long recognized the critical role of education in combating poverty, inequality, injustice and conflict. Every aspect of the UN's work is touched by education. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has gone as far to say that 'Education, is quite simply, peace-building by another name. … Experience and learning are indeed crucial pillars of peace.' It should be no surprise that disarmament education has been part of the UN's work for over two decades—and yet few people are aware of the UN's efforts in this area.

The latest UN disarmament education initiative was agreed in November 2000 through General Assembly resolution 55/33 E, which established a Group of Governmental Experts on Disarmament Education. The resolution invites representatives of UN organizations with special competence in disarmament, education or both to participate in the Group's work. UNIDIR is extremely pleased to be taking part.

UNIDIR is convinced that education is one of the crucial 'missing pieces' of global security. This *Disarmament Forum* is dedicated to an exploration of previous education initiatives and potential future directions. We have taken a broad approach to this theme, looking at both peace education and disarmament education, formal education initiatives and non-formal ones. We have asked 'what sort of education' and 'for whom'. After a short comment by the Chairman of the Expert Group, Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch, Bill Potter proposes a new agenda for disarmament and non-proliferation education. Edith Ballantyne and Felicity Hill look back on past UN disarmament education efforts and offer some lessons learned. A current global education campaign, that of the Hague Appeal for Peace, is outlined in Betty Reardon's contribution. Jean Pascal Zanders and Kurt Laforce describe the development of an innovative tool for education on chemical and biological weapons. Serge Franchoo, Arjun Makhijani and Arthur Petersen offer three different perspectives on engaging scientists in disarmament through education. Lastly, Ian Hill explores the topic of education more broadly through examination of the International Baccalaureate Organization's curriculum, notably its emphasis on respect and ethics.

This publication will hopefully be only the first of several activities to be undertaken by UNIDIR on education for disarmament. Starting with this issue of *Disarmament Forum* and through our participation in the Group of Governmental Experts, we will be trying to identify where UNIDIR, as a UN research institute, could best serve as an interface between international organizations and the research community for the promotion of education for disarmament, as well as co-ordinate with other international organizations, governmental initiatives, and non-governmental and civil society projects.

To order this issue, contact
Ms Anita Blétry
abletry@unog.ch
Tel.: +41 (0)22 917 42 63
Fax.: +41 (0)22 917 01 76

or online at www.unidir.org

UNIDIR
United Nations Institute
for Disarmament Research
Palais des Nations
A.522
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland