

Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project

Small Arms Management and Peacekeeping in Southern Africa

The combination of internal conflicts with the proliferation of light weapons has marked peace operations since 1990. This combination poses new challenges to the international community and highlights the fact that a lack of consistent strategies for the control of arms during peace processes (CAPP) reduces the effectiveness of ongoing missions and diminishes the chances of long-term national and regional stability once peace is agreed upon.

In November 1994, UNIDIR launched a project, entitled *Disarmament and Conflict Resolution: The Disarming of Warring Parties as an Integral Part of the Settlement of Conflicts* (the DCR Project), aimed at looking into the seldom-researched field of disarmament during multinational peace-keeping operations and the links among disarmament, conflict resolution and regional stability.

The DCR Project explored the predicament posed by United Nations peace operations which have focused on short-term needs rather than long-term stability. The project is based on the premise that the control and reduction of weapons during peace operations can be a tool for ensuring stability. Perhaps more than ever before, the effective control of weapons has the capacity to influence far-reaching events in national and international activities. In this light, the management and control of arms could become an important component of the settlement of conflicts, a fundamental aid to diplomacy in the prevention and deflation of conflict, and a critical element of the reconstruction process in post-conflict societies.

The three papers in this volume focus on specific policy issues which pertain to the region of southern Africa. Peter Batchelor of the Centre for Conflict Resolution at the University of Cape Town undertakes a comparative analysis of the successes and failures of peace operations in the region. He describes the difficulties encountered in Angola, Namibia and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe where arms embargos were put in place, but the warring parties nevertheless had access to external supplies of weaponry. Christopher Smith of the Centre for Defence Studies at the University of London takes a closer look at the flow of small arms in the region. He examines characteristics of light weapons as well as their global proliferation and goes on to analyze the implications that the international arms trade has for peace-keeping and future stability in southern Africa. Finally, Jakkie Potgieter of the Institute for Defence Policy in South Africa constructs a regional model for peace-keeping in southern Africa.

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