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Inclusive Security, Inclusive Cities

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Colombia, Medellín, Antioquia. A soldier stands amongst the burnt remains of the settlement of displaced families. © Paul Smith/Panos Pictures

For the first time in history the majority of the world's population resides in urban centres. It is also estimated that virtually all population growth over the next 25 to 30 years will occur in cities (UN-HABITAT, 2008a, p. ix).² But as urban areas have grown, so has the problem of urban armed violence. While urban areas are not necessarily more violent or less safe than rural areas, their size concentrates perpetrators and victims of violence (OECD, 2011, p. 13; World Bank, 2011a, p. 17).³

Armed violence thus represents a challenge not only for states, but also for local government authorities, particularly at the city level. Local government agendas typically feature security and protection from violence as key electoral campaigning and public administration

issues. Security has outgrown the realm of national governments: at the local level residents now frequently demand local security provisions, violence reduction programming, protection from violent crime, and victim assistance.

Meeting these demands by providing the required services can be costly. In addition, high levels of urban violence impede economic and social development and undermine local governance, trapping 'the poorest population in a dangerous cycle of poverty and violence' (World Bank, 2011a, p. 1).

Nonetheless, cities continue to attract considerable in-migration and serve as a pivotal environment for human communities. The simultaneous growth of cities and urban violence thus calls for greater attention: not only do cities tend to offer

This Geneva Declaration Policy Paper is one of a series⁴ designed to support policy decisions for the ongoing debates about the development framework that will follow the Millennium Development Goals. This series will position armed violence reduction and prevention in the broader context of sustainable development to show how dealing with violence can have a positive developmental impact. Based on current evidence, the papers seek to highlight approaches that, it is believed, will reduce and prevent armed violence.

These Policy Papers are produced by the Secretariat of the Geneva Declaration, and their contents do not imply endorsement by the countries that have adhered to the Geneva Declaration.

greater economic and social opportunities, but they can also serve as ideal settings for the promotion of effective development and armed violence reduction policies.

The first section of this paper highlights the particularities of urban armed violence and its detrimental impact on development. The section that follows it presents a selection of the most critical risks facing cities—inequality, firearms proliferation, and limited government capacity. The third section then proposes an agenda for cooperation between the Geneva Declaration and city governments around the world and outlines several concrete steps for more effective armed violence reduction and prevention (AVRP) strategies in urban areas.

I. The challenges of urban armed violence

Compared to violence perpetrated in rural areas, urban violence tends to be more concentrated, more lethal, more variable, and less detectable, especially in larger cities. In general, cities make the issue of violence more complex: among other factors, socio-economic inequalities, disorder, and volatility complicate the process of monitoring and evaluating rates and trends of urban violence.

Evidence shows, for example, that the prevalence of gangs and organized crime in urban areas makes violence potentially more lethal (OECD, 2011, p. 14; UNODC, 2011, p. 39). In the Americas, firearms-related homicides represent a high percentage of the total number of homicides. In Central America and the Caribbean, where urban gang violence and organized crime in cities are pervasive, 63 per cent of homicides are committed with a firearm (Small Arms Survey, n.d.). This figure drops to 54 per cent for South America and 43 per cent for North America. In Europe, where gang and gun violence is less prevalent, firearms are used in only 21 per cent of homicides (UNODC, 2011, p. 39).

In most parts of the world enhanced monitoring capacities and more research are required to inform our understanding of the numerous manifestations of armed violence and effectively reduce or prevent such violence in urban settings (see Box 1).

Violence undergoes a dynamic transformation over time and space, as reflected in changing methods, objectives, and perpetrators of violence. This has also entailed a blurring of the line between political or conflict violence and non-political or purely criminal violence. These changes—along with the growth of transnational criminal gangs and the expansion of non-state armed groups, which can be particularly pronounced in urban areas (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 2)—represent additional challenges to designing targeted, yet flexible programmes to tackle armed violence and its impact.

The heterogeneity of urban armed violence

Urban violence is unevenly distributed geographically, socio-economically, and demographically. Developing countries and communities are not only more vulnerable to armed violence—whether due to limited access to health care, predatory security forces, or a weak justice system, or a combination of these factors—but also bear a dispro-

Box 1 Measuring Armed violence

A number of challenges can complicate efforts to monitor and compare rates of and trends in armed violence. Among these are variations in the definitions of the various types of armed violence and limited access to reliable data.

The most common proxy for measuring violence is the number or rate of intentional homicides or 'murders' per 100,000 population (UNODC, 2011, p. 16). Yet legal and statistical definitions of 'homicide' vary, making cross-national comparisons difficult (Gilgen and Tracey, 2011, p. 58).

While data is also collected on other crimes, injuries, and violent events, it is not necessarily comparable. Nor do official or media records always provide specifics regarding the perpetrators, the type of harm experienced by the victims, the instruments used, or the context in which violence occurred. Violence against women is particularly poorly monitored and, in all likelihood, significantly underreported (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 138).

portionately high part of its impact (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, ch. 5; World Bank, 2011b, p. 188).

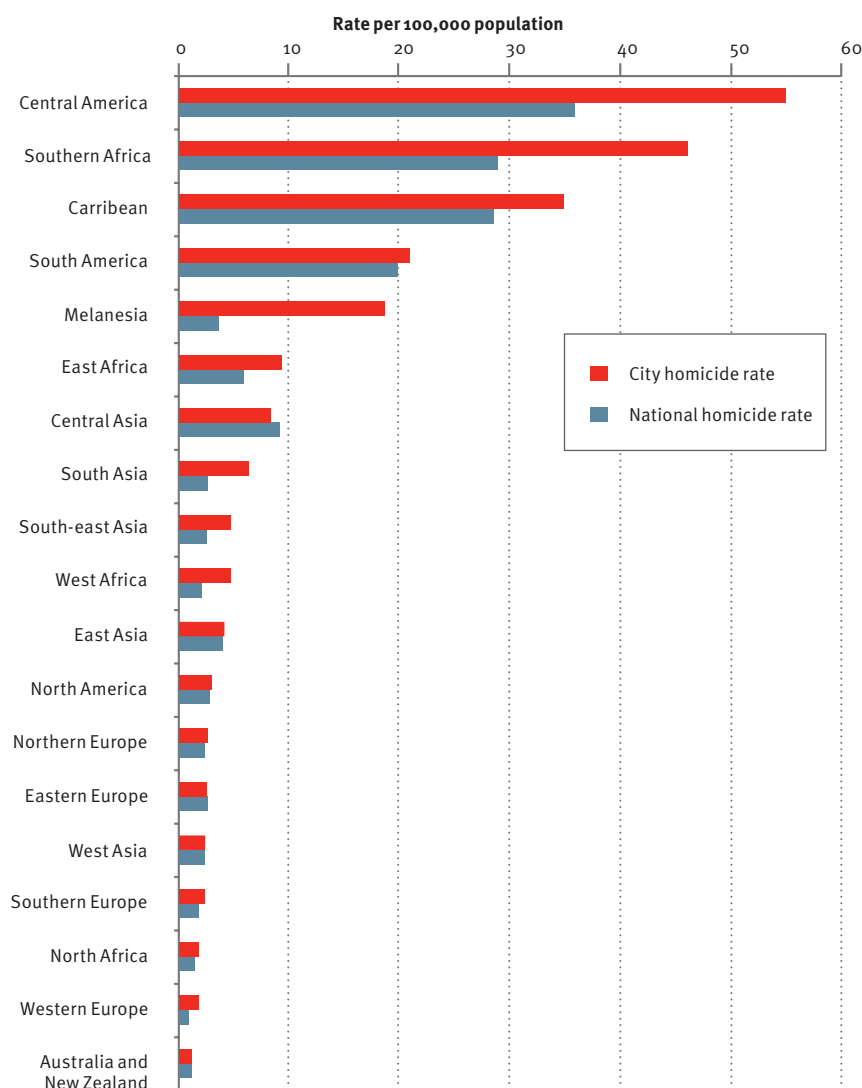
Research has suggested that the larger and denser a city, the more vulnerable its population is to armed violence and organized crime. This holds true in the Americas, for example, where population density and homicide rates seem to correlate; similarly, populations living in the urban centres of Europe experience more crime and violence than residents of less densely populated areas (UNODC, 2011, pp. 75–77). Yet important exceptions reflect a more complex reality and some megacities—such as Tokyo—are relatively safe compared to smaller, less densely populated cities (World Bank, 2011a, p. 15). In the case of Mexico, Mexico City shows lethal violence levels that are far lower than those of smaller cities located in areas highly affected by armed violence (Small Arms Survey, n.d.)

Regions with high violence rates also tend to experience higher rates of urban violence (see Figure 1). In Latin America, the Caribbean, and southern Africa, the homicide rate in the most populous cities tends to be above the national rate. In Central America, for example, it appears that lethal armed violence is highly concentrated in urban areas: cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants experience over 70 per cent of homicides in Costa Rica, 68 per cent in Guatemala, and 63 per cent in El Salvador (Nowak, 2012). It is worth noting that these sub-regions also exhibit the world's highest national and city homicide rates.

Heterogeneity is in evidence over time and space. Around the world young men between the ages of 15 and 29 who live in urban peripheries account for the great majority of both the victims (82 per cent) and the perpetrators (90 per cent) of armed violence (UNODC, 2011, pp. 63–64; UNDP, 2013, p. 53).

In contrast, the homicide rate for women does not vary significantly across age groups, confirming the theory that women are more likely to be killed in the context of domestic and sexual violence than high-risk activities such as gang membership (UNODC, 2011, p. 65; Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008, p. 109). The victimization of women seems to co-vary with the overall levels

FIGURE 1 National and city homicide rates, 2012 or latest



Source Small Arms Survey (n.d.); UNODC (n.d.a; n.d.b)

of violence in urban areas, with rates being higher in violence-affected environments such as El Salvador and Guatemala (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 7). Underreporting and a dearth of data prevent comparisons of urban and rural victimization trends.

In general, different sectors of a city are not equally affected by armed violence. Cities that suffer from high levels of armed violence are often characterized by very safe and very unsafe sectors. In Cape Town—which reported a homicide rate of 41 per 100,000 population in 2009—44 per cent of all homicides in 2009–10 took place in the neighbourhoods of Khayelitsha, Nyanga, and Guguletu, which are among the poorest in the city (UNODC, 2011, pp. 79–80).

While this heterogeneity must be taken into account in the design of policies to prevent and reduce armed violence in

urban areas, the potential ramifications of targeted interventions should also be considered. The focus on young men as the most likely victims and perpetrators, for example, has resulted in certain policies stigmatizing youths or even entire neighbourhoods that suffer from high levels of violence, such as gang-controlled areas. Heavy-handed policies, such as those implemented in several Latin American and African countries, are a case in point. In some cases they have criminalized aspects of a person's appearance, such as tattoos and certain types of clothes, or even the mere fact of being on the streets (Ribando Seelke, 2011, p. 10).

A development opportunity

Armed violence has a negative impact on various aspects of development. At the national level, limited progress in achieving the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs)—which seek to combat poverty and hunger, increase primary school enrolment, and decrease infant mortality and adolescent pregnancy/birth rates—tends to be accompanied by high levels of armed violence (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 146). While cities and urbanized countries have been found to progress more rapidly towards the MDGs than rural areas, urban violence remains a key concern. In terms of development costs, it erodes human and physical capital, entrenches inequalities, and reduces productivity and investment. Estimates of the costs of armed violence in countries such as Guatemala and Colombia show that more affluent, more densely populated areas see much larger losses than rural, less densely populated areas (Matute and Narciso, 2008; Villamarín, 2011).

The urban environment, while offering attractive socio-economic opportunities, also seems to provide a context in which violence can grow. Urbanization brings its own development challenges, because some countries are unable to respond to the demands of rapid urban growth. Migration from the countryside to cities can overstretch infrastructure, social services, and security providers. Meanwhile, informal arrangements can exacerbate inequalities in terms of access to social services and opportunities, while allowing for the emergence of parallel social, economic, and political orders. Such informal communities—termed the ‘fourth world’ by Manuel Castells (1999)—function as hotbeds for gangs, armed groups, radical religious movements, and criminal organizations (UNDP, 2013; Feldab-Brown, 2011).

In terms of development, cities can thus represent a dilemma. On the one hand, they offer the promise of a better life, not least through job opportunities and more effective security provision. On the other hand, rapid urbanization and frustrated hopes can have negative effects on a city's security situation, especially in the periphery (Jütersonke, Krause, and Muggah, 2007, p. 164). How to provide security in these conditions is among the key questions guiding the design of development strategies.

II. Urban risks: engaging local governments

Local governments are at the forefront of addressing development concerns arising from rapid, uncontrolled urbanization. Meanwhile, the extension of democracy to the local administrative level has led to growing demands for security, to which local authorities must increasingly respond.

Although cities offer a set of ‘protective’ factors that could reduce the impact of armed violence—such as increased police presence, vigilance through closed-circuit television surveillance, and better access to medical care—they can also be home to significant risk factors that sustain or facilitate armed violence, such as inequality, segregation, poverty, illicit markets, and drug trafficking (UNODC, 2011, p. 12). The engagement of local governments in matters of armed violence reduction and prevention is thus indispensable.

Once both the risk and the protective factors of the urban context have been identified, coping strategies and AVRP policies can be designed and implemented—often in cooperation with the residents whose needs are to be met. In this context, Lucía Dammert offers a three-pronged typology of risk reduction. The first axis—‘social prevention’—focuses on the prevention of violence through the reduction of social risk factors that might lead an individual to commit crimes. The second—‘situational prevention’—aims to minimize the opportunity to commit crimes through interventions in hot spots, formal and informal surveillance, and the enhancement of urban spaces and services. The third axis—‘community prevention’—combines social and situational prevention to promote initiatives such as neighbourhood watches (Dammert, 2009, pp. 127–28).

Inequalities and inclusion in the urban environment

Urban inequalities—whether vertical (between individuals) or horizontal (between sectors or groups)—cause frustration and provide perverse

incentives for risky behaviour (UN-HABITAT and UAH, 2010, p. 81). Inequality and exclusion are experienced in marginalized neighbourhoods, anywhere from a city’s centre to its periphery; they are often the result of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization or deterioration through urban stagnation. Urbanization may entail unequal access to common goods, resources, and economic and social opportunities (UN-HABITAT and UAH, 2010); in turn, these inequalities can exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals and families living in marginalized neighbourhoods, providing fertile ground for informal activities, precariousness, and crime (UN-HABITAT and UAH, 2009). Strong forms of horizontal inequality can give rise to group-based conflicts that can escalate into spirals of violence and insecurity (Stewart, 2008).

In view of the development agenda at the urban level, violence prevention and reduction efforts must consider the potential benefits of social, cultural, and economic integration for excluded populations. Using Dammert’s (2009) axis typology, interventions can be modelled along the following lines:

- **Social prevention axis.** Cities need to strengthen communities by fostering and activating networks that reduce the space for criminal action through the collective definition and application of norms. Furthermore, cities must ensure the safety of all people in both the public and the private spheres. Local governments should develop and guarantee the implementation of projects that protect vulnerable populations, e.g. domestic violence reduction programmes and school violence prevention initiatives (including safe havens, victim assistance, and educational programmes).
- **Situational prevention axis.** Cities may incorporate a territorial approach when formulating inclusive and participatory activities that foment civic responsibility and respect for public spaces (see Box 2). The protection, preservation, enhancement, and renewal of degraded urban areas are key to eradicating the stigmatization of vulnerable public spaces. A city must

Box 2 Urban environment and insecurity in Johannesburg

The growth of informal settlements has continued to outpace government capacity for urban planning and the provision of affordable housing to low-income South Africans. Survey respondents in Johannesburg indicate that this growth has also contributed to high levels of violence and crime in their communities. Perpetrators reportedly take advantage of the poor environmental design of informal settlements, whose lack of negotiable roads often prevents emergency vehicles and motorized police patrols from entering such settlements. Respondents also highlight the issue of access to services. The lack of electricity inside dwellings and in the streets of informal settlements exacerbates feelings of insecurity, especially at night.

Source: World Bank (2011a, pp. 196–97)

also ensure access to landmarks and places that carry a symbolic value to strengthen social cohesion among its inhabitants.

- **Community prevention axis.** AVRP programmes may include strategies for the enhancement of local ownership through the reconstruction of social tissue, including the mobilization of citizens for the active co-production of security and the adoption of a community-based approach to infrastructure development. Local governments should also promote the means of community mediation to allow residents to channel their specific demands or identify conflict areas.

The proliferation of firearms and organized crime

The easy accessibility of firearms—a recognized risk factor for violence—helps shape the dynamics of armed violence in cities around the globe. Together with the presence of organized crime and illicit markets, it affects both the level and the scope of armed violence. Indeed, a high prevalence of firearms-related violence is common in areas where the overall rates of violence are also high, as is the case in the Americas (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, p. 100).

Organized crime is manifest in urban areas in the form of territorial control and illicit trafficking by criminal networks (such as drug-trafficking organizations and corrupt officials). Organized crime may be defined as a social network with inter-city and inter-state connections formed by individuals who engage in illicit activities over an extended period of time for the purpose of self-enrichment. While organized crime usually does not have political pretensions, its activities do have political consequences because they undermine the effectiveness and legitimacy of state institutions (Flores and González, 2008, p. 52).

Gangs are present in cities around the world, and can be defined as youth groups that endure over time and whose members have street-oriented lifestyles and a recognizable identity (Klein and Maxson, 2006). They may resort to criminal activities and mostly comprise youths in their teens and early twenties. As noted above, some policies that target these groups criminalize everyday behaviour (such as spending time on the street), potentially stigmatizing collective identities (Young, 1999; Brotherton, 2007). Such policies can strengthen the sense of joint resistance that functions as the social glue of groups such as gangs (Castells, 1999, p. 26). It is worth highlighting that gangs often have ties with formal institutions and in some cases take on economic, political, cultural, religious, or military roles in their communities (Hagedorn, 2007, p. 309).

Community policing is a central aspect of arms control and the prevention and reduction of violence linked to gangs and organized crime. Police reform has led to a more community-oriented policing strategy based on the acknowledgement that ‘security is a task for all’ (Dammert, 2009, p. 122). This shift represents a departure from control-oriented policing towards the inclusion of prevention mechanisms in local security plans (Dammert, 2009, p. 139). On the one hand, this approach to policing promotes a rapprochement between the police and communities; on the other hand, it encourages associative relations with the broader community—including its business associations, local clubs, and unions



Kenya, Nairobi. A mural in the Kibera slum depicting urban violence. © Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures.

(Chalom et al., 2001, p. 8).

Several actions at the local government level can be taken to reduce and prevent armed violence linked to the accessibility of firearms and the presence of organized crime and gangs:

- **Social prevention axis.** Cities should focus on the promotion and development of pedagogical sensitization activities that take into account the particular characteristics and dynamics of various social groups (such as punks, skinheads, and politically motivated groups), concentrating their efforts on at-risk youths while avoiding the unnecessary stigmatization of this group.
- **Situational prevention axis.** ‘Disarmament networks’ that include several institutions (both local and national) have shown positive results.⁵ The establishment of gun-free zones is another option for the prevention and reduction of urban armed violence,⁶ while tackling school-related violence is also an essential aspect of AVR. Local governments must spearhead these programmes and should provide public space for alternative peaceful forms of social, political, and cultural interaction.
- **Community prevention axis.** At the community level the credibility of disarmament campaigns is based on residents’ confidence in the capacity and transparency of the police. Parallel to sensitization efforts, local

governments thus need to work on the professionalization of the police and the promotion of community policing.

Governance and governability

Institutional consolidation and governance are crucial to a city’s approach to AVR. The lack of government capacity to provide basic services, particularly security, causes a power vacuum that non-state actors may be able to exploit. In countries such as Brazil, Pakistan, and South Africa, for instance, some urban areas have fallen under the control of armed actors who use their power over both territory and the population for their own economic interests (OECD, 2011, p. 14).

High levels of armed violence undermine a state’s governance capacity as formal institutions lose control over certain areas (World Bank, 2011a, p. 2). Yet the presence of urban armed violence does not necessarily point to a failure of the state, nor would it be possible to prevent and reduce armed violence solely by strengthening the state. Nevertheless, urban armed violence does challenge the legitimacy and capacity of institutions, calling for effective solutions, because policies ‘that do not involve transforming institutions may postpone rather than solve problems’ (World Bank, 2011b, p. 86).

For AVR in urban areas, the provision of security is a collaborative process

between civil society and the government. Civil society organizations should thus legitimize all security-oriented interventions and programming, and their opinion regarding public action needs to be monitored closely (Petrella and Vanderschueren, 2003).

In this context, local governments can provide a space for articulating various policies and facilitating cooperation between actors such as civil society organizations and the central government (Appiolaza and Ávila, 2009, p. 9). Calling for such an approach, one guide to local prevention strategies finds that:

[i]t is crucial to develop capacities and commitments with the communities, the local government, and the state. This is only possible if local governments follow certain minimum standards of good governance in terms of transparency, responsibility and efficiency (UN-HABITAT and UAH, 2009, p. 72).

Indeed, violence is closely related to issues of residents' participation and local governance, since 'security should be seen both as a service delivered to citizens and an area of responsibility for citizen engagement' (World Bank, 2011a, p. 85). From an AVRP policy point

of view, local governments should:

- reform the institutional framework of security and AVRP with the aim of producing more efficient and comprehensive policies;
- create policies for peaceful coexistence and preventive security with the goal of promoting resident participation, in terms of which local governments need to legitimate and protect civil society organizations to facilitate their access to financial resources, information, and knowledge; and
- promote the greater participation and empowerment of all social actors in AVRP activities to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of local public policies.

For a synthesis of the various risk factors and the corresponding proposed interventions, see Table 1.

III. A road map for cities

The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development formulates a set of mechanisms and opportunities for AVRP interventions at the international, national, and local levels. States that endorse the Geneva Declaration commit themselves to supporting initiatives that

measure the human, social, and economic costs of armed violence; assessing particular risk factors and vulnerabilities; and evaluating the effectiveness of violence reduction programmes (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008, p. vii). However, measuring the problem has to be seen as only the first step towards dealing with the causes of armed violence, and a viable plan for linking local city initiatives to work at the national and international levels has yet to be agreed upon.

Addressing AVRP at the city level allows for a multidisciplinary approach, proximity to key issues and accountability, and great flexibility with regard to interventions. Indeed, promising, creative, and evidence-based initiatives to reduce and prevent armed violence are frequently developed by cities rather than central governments (ICPC, 2005). In short, cities themselves are important actors in counteracting the problem of armed violence.

The following points are designed as a road map to assist the further integration of local governments into the process initiated by the Geneva Declaration:

- Cities should diagnose not only the

TABLE 1 A typology of risks and intervention levels in urban areas

Risk factors	Social prevention	Situational prevention	Community prevention
Inequalities in the urban environment	Strengthen communities by fostering and activating networks that reduce the space for criminal action. Ensure the safety of women and children by developing and implementing domestic violence reduction programmes.	Incorporate a territorial approach when formulating inclusive and participatory activities that foment civic responsibility and respect for public spaces. Protect, preserve, enhance, and renew degraded urban areas. Ensure common access to places that carry a symbolic value.	Enhance local ownership of the reconstruction of social tissue. Mobilize residents for the active co-production of security. Adopt a community approach to infrastructure development. Promote the means of community mediation.
Firearms proliferation and organized crime	Promote and develop pedagogical sensitization activities that take into account the particular characteristics and dynamics of various social groups. Concentrate efforts on at-risk youths, but avoid stigmatization.	Promote and implement inter-institutional 'disarmament networks'. Establish gun-free zones. Prevent school-related violence. Ensure that local governments lead on policies, and provide public space for alternative, peaceful forms of social, political, and cultural interaction.	Promote residents' confidence in the capacity and transparency of security providers. Professionalize the police and promote 'localized police' (community policing).
Cross-cutting risk factors: governance and governability	Reform the institutional framework and produce more efficient and comprehensive policies. Legitimize and protect civil society organizations so as to facilitate their access to financial resources, information, and knowledge. Promote the greater participation and empowerment of social actors to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of local public policies.		

Source: based on Appiolaza (2010, p. 32); Dammert (2009, pp. 127–31)

symptoms, but also the multiple underlying factors that may cause violence, crime, and insecurity within their boundaries. A particular accent on developing common methodologies and capacities for measuring the human cost of armed violence is central to future AVRPP policy. Urban observatories of armed violence rather than crime per se are an indispensable tool for assessing armed violence and monitoring the impact of AVRPP programmes.

- Following the diagnosis, investments should be made in interventions aimed at preventing and reducing urban armed violence by building a holistic vision addressing not only its symptoms, but also its underlying causes. Policies and action plans that integrate security and development priorities such as urban planning, social crime prevention, security, and governance must be based on approaches proven successful elsewhere that ensure the inclusion of various partners (representing the state, civil society, and the private sector) and social groups, including the marginalized.⁷
- Public and private security providers such as police agencies are a key actor for AVRPP. They should exercise their authority in coordination with one another and in close cooperation with residents, whose needs should be identified through specific diagnostics and the promotion of a comprehensive and preventive approach.⁸
- Local governments and municipalities play a crucial role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of successful AVRPP approaches; their capacities to do so should be assessed and, where necessary, strengthened.
- Armed violence is transnational in nature and does not recognize national borders. Consequently, the development of a metropolitan coordination mechanism is essential for cities that are close to borders. Linking the national level to the local level is also crucial in terms of optimizing trans-border AVRPP assessments and strategies.
- Cities should promote the exchange

of best practices and inter-city collaborations for the development of innovative AVRPP initiatives through platforms such as city-to-city exchanges.

- Cities and local governments could assume a more prominent role in international processes that promote a sub-national consensus on AVRPP for peace and development. While gathering support for enhanced cooperation between local and national governments, these organisations could promote the integration of armed violence reduction and urban safety in the ‘new global urban agenda’ at the Habitat III conference in 2016, which will serve as the reference point for urban development policy for at least a decade.

Endnotes

- 1 This Policy Paper is based on a note presented at the 2nd Ministerial Review Conference of the Geneva Declaration, and builds on background research prepared by Franz Vanderschueren with Martin Appiolaza and Elkin Velásquez for the Geneva Declaration Secretariat (Appiolanza and Vanderschueren, 2011; Velásquez, 2011).
- 2 This paper uses the term ‘city’ to refer to a ‘built up or densely populated area containing the city proper, suburbs and continuously settled commuter areas’ (UN-HABITAT, 2008b, p. 10).
- 3 Armed violence, as defined by the Geneva Declaration Secretariat, is understood as ‘the intentional use of illegitimate force (actual or threatened) with arms or explosives, against a person, group, community, or state, that undermines people-centred security and/or sustainable development’ (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008, p. 2).
- 4 These Policy Papers deal with issues such as ‘controlling the instruments of violence’, ‘victims and survivors of armed violence’, ‘accessing security providers’, and ‘the role of the private sector in armed violence and prevention’.
- 5 See, for example, Red Argentina para el Desarme (n.d.).
- 6 In El Salvador, ‘gun free municipalities’ are an interesting example (UNDP, 2007).
- 7 See, for example, UNODC (2010).
- 8 Based on FESU (2006).

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List of abbreviations

AVRP Armed violence reduction and prevention

MDG Millennium Development Goal

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The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development



The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, endorsed by more than 100 countries, commits signatories to supporting initiatives intended to measure the human, social, and economic costs of armed violence, to assess risks and vulnerabilities, to evaluate the effectiveness of armed violence reduction programmes, and to disseminate knowledge of best practices.

The Declaration calls upon states to achieve measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security by 2015.

Affiliated organizations include the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO).

The Small Arms Survey hosts the Geneva Declaration Secretariat and provides research to enhance knowledge about the distribution, causes, and consequences of armed violence.

For more information about the Geneva Declaration, related activities, and publications, please visit www.genevadeclaration.org

