

Swedish Organization for Peace Technology (SOFT)

The following information sheet aims to give an insight into the newly formed non-profit association **Swedish Organization for Peace Technology** (SOFT). The expectation is to generate interest for possible collaborations, both work-related and financial.

Background

Peace technology relates to *technical devices and measures that can help to prevent violence and destruction and the removal of obstacles for the return to a functioning peaceful society*. Today there is a large global need of technical competence in the field, both in developed and developing countries.

Today's technological societies are remarkably vulnerable to breakdowns or sabotage that could generate great human suffering. Bombs or attacks that strike important industrial installations or communication nodes can be devastating. Electricity supplies may be paralyzed for a long periods of time, data viruses can disable communication networks and toxins in the central water supply may cause severe injuries or deaths of a large number of people. By working for decentralized and more energy-efficient technological systems these risks can be reduced.

In developing countries where conflicts are ongoing, the armed violence means great difficulty for aid from the outside world to reach out to those in need. High level of armed violence in an area reduces the respect for human life, prevent peaceful and economic development and result in people being forced to flee for their lives. Much of the problems are caused by uncontrolled flows of weapons and ammunition, which can be traced back to poor and unsafe storage. With the help of training and a supply of technical equipment, such as education in stockpile management and sustainable destruction facilities, this problem would be reduced.

In Sweden, there is a variety of great expertise in the field of peace technology spread among different stakeholders from industry, government agencies and organizations. Much of this is a unique heritage stemming from Alfred Nobel's efforts in the area of explosives and his establishment of the Nobel Peace Prize. However, this expertise is today under-utilized and not developed to any great extent. Swedish expertise and industrial resources could be utilized to transfer knowledge and develop equipment and materials to be delivered to concerned states as a part of the Swedish aid. Even in Sweden there are problems that require peace technology expertise to be handled.

The association

The non-profit association **Swedish Organization for Peace Technology** (SOFT) has been formed to raise awareness and promote peace technology expertise as a Swedish profile area. To support the United Nations and its SaferGuard Programme and IATG¹ is an important part of the association's work.

Members of SOFT can be (1) companies and organizations whose activities are related to the peace technology field, (2) individuals with an interest/expertise in peace technology, (3) government agencies whose activities are related to peace technology.

Contact

If interests or concerns about SOFT arise, contact the current chairman of the association:

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¹ The United Nations has produced SaferGuard Program and its associated international ammunition technical guidelines (IATG) in order to respond to the global problem of unsafe and poor managing of ammunition stockpiles.