Distinguished Panelists, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad to see a process end with this launch, which is also being given added luster because of the message from the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the only Government that has a Minister for Disarmament Affairs.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is well known that civil society peace groups, media campaigns, churches and schools and university campuses can heighten public awareness and rally public action to bring about national security policy change. We are seeing something of that happening right now. Witness also the ongoing moratoria on nuclear testing and the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty or the speedy adoption of the Mine-Ban Convention prohibiting anti-personnel landmines or the intense global interest in tackling the subject of small arms and light weapons, all a result of campaigns from civil society.
These efforts, however, are sporadic and short-term. Education in its more formal definition can be a long-term antidote to complacency and forgetfulness after an "issue is taken care of", so to speak. Though there is no guarantee that being taught or trained in disarmament and non-proliferation will make a student a supporter of disarmament, it has been my experience that a rational approach to security issues is created gradually and the dangers of the use of the more lethal weapons much more highly appreciated. Consider, for instance, the wide general acceptance there is today of environmental protection or preservation of endangered species or climate change as a global good. This is believed by students of all ages from primary school children to high school teens to university and post-graduate scholars. This has not always been the case. It was nurtured and grew.

Thus schools mirror as well as reflect the various strains of societal thought on the topics of the day, and schooling serves as a force of social change. This is one good reason to teach disarmament and non-proliferation. The twentieth century psychologist and educator, Jerome S. Bruner, suggested that "Education must, then, be not only a transmission of culture but also a provider of alternative views of the world and a strengthener of the will to explore them.

The Group of Experts who worked over the last two years had no intention of reinventing the wheel. The first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1978 initiated several long-term educational efforts on the part of the United Nations. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, UNIDIR, is one example. It is a vital element of the UN's contribution to discussion and intellectual reflection on topical issues of disarmament. Its research has been influential in the field of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and the control of small arms. It has been a pioneer in the debate on human security. Additionally, the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme is another highly successful long-term effort by the Organization, having trained in twenty years more than 600 mostly junior diplomats in the details of the negotiations and deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and the UN Disarmament Commission. That work has been rewarded with the active and informed participation of many of those trainees in these multilateral bodies. Finally the UN Disarmament Information Programme, with its publications, symposiums and panel discussions, has been contributing to general education since the launch of the World Disarmament Campaign in 1982.

In 1980, the World Congress on Disarmament Education was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, adopting a Final Document that summed up much of what the Group of Governmental Experts was to be dealing with during its two-year preparation. Though the Final Document is cast in cold war terms, it is surprising how many of its recommendations remain valid today.

So, you might ask, if the work of disarmament education is not novel or groundbreaking, what was the point of carrying out a Study? I have seven areas in which I think it has proved worthwhile.
First, it was clear that there was a need to examine new aspects of the multilateral disarmament debate. The Study adds emphasis to questions of non-proliferation, as it applies primarily to weapons of mass destruction, but no less to small arms and light weapons.

Second, the Study introduced a new element of small arms education in post-conflict situations. Disarmament has found a very important role in such situations, as a part of the consolidation of peace effort along with demobilization and reintegration of former combatants.

Third, awareness of the gender dimension of security issues has also increased dramatically over the last several decades, and that dimension is particularly important in the field of education. In many countries, women are the primary educators of the young. They also assume important roles in peace-making and reconciliation, and in the surrender of arms.

Fourth, the Study was meant to reinforce, support and give energy to current scholastic and academic efforts in such areas as research, curriculum development, classroom modules on disarmament and peace. For instance, the Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development has been a hub since 1970 for over 600 university degree programs in the study of peace and non-violence around the world, working to strengthen public school programs and networks. No one wants to replace it, but rather to join its efforts. For the United Nations, what is new in the field of disarmament is the promotion of active partnerships between Governments, international organizations and civil society, and Secretary-General Kofi Annan has been consistent in advocating this across the board.

Fifth, the Study points to the need to fill a gap in graduate and post-graduate programmes in disarmament and non-proliferation education. The Director of one of only two degree-oriented programmes in the field of non-proliferation is on today's panel, Professor William Potter.

Sixth, in the post-cold war period, there has been little in the way of cooperative effort among multilateral institutions such as UNESCO, which veered from a disarmament education mission, or among the new disarmament-related organizations, the OPCW and the PrepCom for the CTBTO. Little coordination was carried out between the research conducted by the United Nations University and the course work developed in the renewed University for Peace or in UNIDIR's research. The very process of producing this Study brought together representatives of these institutions for the first time in a collaborative effort.

Finally, the explosion in communication technology and its application to education and training seemed to be an untapped resource for wider dissemination and new forms and tools of education. A distance-learning university today can have literally tens of thousands of matriculated, career-seeking individuals. The web's reach is extending on a daily basis, making great inroads even into the developing world, and the amount of information and resources are multiplying. The CyberSchoolBus is one of the United Nations' efforts at reaching teachers and young students from around the world. The United Nations and other international organizations, usually behind compared to private companies and the IT marketplace, are doing their best to
exploit these modern means of communication for the dissemination of information and education tools, at no expense to the needs of the developing world.

I would like to conclude with a quote from another renowned psychologist and educator, Jean Piaget, which underlines one of the key recommendations of the Group of Experts, the notion of critical thinking. He said "The principal goal of education in schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers, who can be critical and verify, and not accept, everything they are offered."

I would like here to echo the hope of the Secretary-General expressed in the foreword of the Study that the new generation, from their early years of education to higher levels of learning, will experience disarmament and non-proliferation as an integral and natural part of their formation. For its part, DDA will actively participate in this process. Thank you.