

bulletin

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Base Redevelopment: A Challenge for regional Structural Policy in the 1990s

by Michael Deitmer

Over half a century after the end of World War II, the division of Europe is history. Today, Germany is surrounded by friendly nations—to the west as well as to the east. A united Europe is taking shape.

The changed security and political situation in Europe since the events of 1989–90 has led to radical military down-sizing in Germany. The number of soldiers stationed in Germany has fallen from roughly 1.3 million—from a total of nine countries—to under 600,000. Of 920,000 hectares land used for military purposes, roughly 384,000 hectares are available for civilian use. Although the new German *Länder* (states) have been particularly affected through the military reductions following the dissolution of the German Democratic Republic's national *Volksarmee* and the complete withdrawal of Soviet forces, the old states have also felt the impact of the overall military down-sizing of the *Bundeswehr* and the Allied forces.

While disarmament and troop reductions are positive from foreign policy and security perspectives, they confront state and local leaders and decision-makers in federal states with new challenges. Particularly in rural and structurally weak regions of North Rhine-Westphalia which have been hard hit by the reductions, the objective is to compensate for the loss of jobs and the fall in demand for goods and services. The civilian reuse of former military sites should be seen as an opportunity for regional development. However, before the long-term benefits of structural change can be recognized, complex planning and management tasks need to be conducted. Furthermore, the financing of site redevelopment is often problematic for many local governments. Creativity, flexibility, and the courage to attempt unconventional solutions are necessary in order to meet the multi-faceted challenge of conversion.

Many communities in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia have taken on the task of conversion with enthusiasm. The state government has provided support by expanding regional development programs and by making roughly DM 500 million available for conversion-related activities. As a result of the decades of experience with the clean-up and reuse of former industrial sites in parts of the state, a variety of support programs exist which can be used to hasten and facilitate the conversion process.

Financial support can only have its full effect if it is used effectively within a structured project management. Since local governments—particularly in smaller communities—are often overwhelmed by the implementation of complex redevelopment activities, they are assisted throughout the process by a technical support program and a network established by the state government. This includes representatives from almost all of the state ministries as well as the professional staff at regional government agencies. In addition, BICC has been commissioned to provide support at the local level (to communities within the regions eligible for financial support from the EU Community

***“...base conversion
requires enthusiasm,
creativity, and
flexibility...”***

Initiative KONVER) through practical technical aid free of charge.

During the early stages of the conversion process, the members of the network promoted technical support through regional workshops and meetings. The objective was to bring together local leaders and representatives of the federal government (as the owner of the site) to discuss the potential pitfalls in the transition from military to civilian use, and to solve problems. In addition, members of the networks became actively involved in regional steering committees (which are often created to facilitate the implementation of larger particularly complex conversion projects). State representatives also played a moderating role.

Taken together, the technical assistance and the financial support mechanisms have helped make the complex task of conversion more manageable, improve communication between the stakeholders, and promote new economic activities in the region. The

successful implementation of conversion projects in North Rhine-Westphalia is largely due to the high level of involvement shown by the local governments, which have taken on this complex task. The preparation and reuse of former military sites has been particularly efficient in cases where government officials, planners, and representatives from the regional economy have given this issue a high priority and have approached actual and potential problems determined to find solutions. Creativity and active involvement at the local level are key prerequisites for the conversion process.

Various forms of international exchange have demonstrated that the redevelopment of former military lands is a global challenge. Over the past few years, delegations from the United States, the European Union, the countries of the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe have visited North Rhine-Westphalia to exchange experiences and to gain insight into how conversion is conducted here. They discovered that many strategies for the successful reuse of military bases are transferable from one country or region to another. Through the extensive experience gained in structural transition as a result of industrial redevelopment and military down-sizing, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia has developed a competence in the reuse of industrial and military sites. In light of the grave situation in many of the countries of Eastern Europe, some of the measures and practices used here may provide constructive solutions for practitioners abroad.

Michael Deitmer directs structural development activities at the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of Economics, Technology and Transportation. He is also a member of BICC's Supervisory Board.

Staff Spotlight:



Sami Faltas

Sami Faltas was born in Cairo in 1950 and has Egyptian and Dutch nationality. Last September, he moved from Amsterdam to Bonn, where he took over the leadership of BICC's Surplus Weapons program. Since then, Sami has worked mainly on the collection and disposal of small arms, in a research project funded by the Ford Foundation and the United States Institute of Peace. In October, he reported on international experiences with micro-disarmament at a political conference in the Albanian capital Tirana. Besides generating and disseminating empirical information on conventional, nuclear, chemical, and biological disarmament, Sami also hopes to make a contribution to a better understanding of the interplay of public security, economic growth, and the development of civil society.

During his childhood in Egypt, Sami was mainly educated in English. After his family moved to Holland, he went to a German school and a Dutch university. He graduated as a political scientist and published widely on arms industries, the arms trade, foreign investment in the Third World, and sanctions against South Africa. During the eighties, he received a doctorate in economics for a major study on naval industries in NATO Europe and participated in a SIPRI research project on the consequences of a US military withdrawal from Western Europe.

From the late eighties onward, he taught courses on armaments and innovation, technology and security, defense policy, and political science. Furthermore, he developed educational programs on unfamiliar topics such as the creative process, industrial design, operations management, and museum anthropology. Most recently, Sami was the Academic Director of the Dutch branch of Webster University, a business-oriented school based in Saint Louis, Missouri, until his desire to return to peace research brought him to BICC.

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Integration of Military and Civilian High Technology: A Social Science Literature Overview

The German Bureau for Technology Assessment at the Federal Parliament (Büro für Technikfolgenabschätzung beim Deutschen Bundestag, TAB) is considering the possibility of conducting a study on the question of the integration of military and civilian high technology in Germany. BICC is involved in this investigation by way of conducting a preparatory study in cooperation with Jürgen Altmann, Ruhr Universität Bochum.

Compared to countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, Germany's high-tech research, development, and production are less military-oriented. Yet, almost 8 percent of all research and development is defense financed, provoking debate on issues such as the technology transfer to the civilian sector, (also called spin-off) and also the joint use of facilities in both sectors. The defense share has been declining for some time, raising questions such as to what extent the military sector can rely more on civilian technologies, (also called spin-on), but also the question of the conversion of facilities. The United States and Great Britain, with their large military high-tech sectors, have developed specific dual-use policies in order to better integrate civilian and military research, development, and production. However, it is uncertain whether such a policy would be necessary, beneficial or possible in Germany, with its quite different civil-military mix in high technology.

Three studies were commissioned by TAB, one to BICC, to investigate particular aspects of the issue in preparation for a possible larger study. BICC's task is to prepare an overview of the social science literature on the relation between civilian and military technology, with special emphasis on the aerospace sector. The BICC study is conducted in close cooperation with physicist Jürgen Altmann who is investigating technical aspects of the relation and interaction of civil and military research and development in the German aerospace sector. The two studies are brought together in a suggestion to the TAB to perform a larger study on the possibilities and limits for a civilian dominated dual-use policy in Germany.

For further information please contact

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Military Business and Military Expenditures

Measuring military expenditures remains difficult due to different national budgeting systems, the lack of transparency, hidden budgets and extra-budgetary spending. As regards the last item, BICC has begun a new project to learn about the extent of military business as an additional income provider. For this project, a data bank is being developed on businesses owned directly and indirectly by armies. Researchers will also work on case studies (China, Indonesia, Pakistan and Nigeria) to measure the extent of extra-budgetary income due to military business.

Another major feature of this new project (which is funded over a 2-year period by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation) will be the further development of the on-line MILEX newsletter (<http://bicc.uni-bonn/milex/>). Some new features are planned, the most important of which is the MILEX News Tracker where information on worldwide military expenditures will be summarized and evaluated. The evaluation will not be done by BICC staff alone but also by distinguished country experts who will be invited to comment on the MILEX news. This service should allow for a better understanding of military expenditures and an increase in real-time accessibility of information.

For further information please contact

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Upcoming Events

Workshop on small arms organized by the Swiss government, assembling the UN group of Governmental Experts on small arms as well as international experts active in the field, Geneva, 18 and 19 February 1999. Contact: stefano.toscano@eda.admin.ch

The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the National Defence college, will organize a seminar on the question of **Removal of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the context of Peace-Missions**, Täby, Sweden, 11 and 12 March 1999. Contact: andreas.asmundsson@fhs.mil.se

The Hague Appeal for Peace conference will discuss and plan the ways in which people working together, can delegitimize violent conflict and make the next century a peaceful one. The Hague, 11–15 May 1999. Contact: hap99@congres.net

BICC Publications

In addition to its annual *conversion survey* and other books, BICC publishes series such as *reports*, *briefs*, and *papers* which analyze the international conversion process, report on conversion projects and experiences, and offer scientific as well as practical know-how. Forthcoming publications include:

report 13: David DeClerq, *Destroying Small Arms: Survey of Methods and Practical Guide*, February 1999

brief 13: Ingo Cremer, Hartmut Kühle and Steven E. Sokol, *Integrierte Arbeitsmarktprojekte auf Konversionsflächen: Auswertung ausgewählter Beispiele verschiedener Bundesländer [Integrated Labor Market Projects on Former Military Land]*, January 1999

BICC Notes

The final meeting of the second phase of the **NATO-CCMS pilot study on the Reuse for Former Military Lands** took place in Tallinn, Estonia, from 4–7 October 1998. BICC has worked with the pilot study members to promote the international exchange of ideas concerning approaches to base redevelopment. At the final meeting, representatives from NATO member states and the Partnership in Peace countries finalized a handbook drafted by a core group from Canada, Germany, and the United States. The handbook is designed to help communities in Eastern Europe which are confronted with the challenges of base closure and redevelopment.

For further information please contact
→ Steven E. Sokol at sokol@bicc.uni-bonn.de

On 13 October, the International Conference on Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development, issued the **Brussels Call for Action**, appealing to states to take urgent action against the proliferation of small arms and to bring an end to the use of child soldiers. BICC researcher Sami Faltas gave a short workshop presentation on ways to tackle the international proliferation of small arms.

For further information please contact
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The 24–25 October conference in Tirana on **Alternatives for the Collection of Arms in Albania** succeeded in uniting the country's politicians in an effort to collect the many weapons held illegally by the population since depots were raided in 1997. Sami Faltas gave a paper on experiences with weapons collection in other parts of the world.

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The Graduate School for International Studies, Geneva plans to publish a **small arms and light weapons yearbook**. BICC director Herbert Wulf joined the first meeting of international experts on 19–21 November 1998 to discuss the feasibility and content of the yearbook.

For further information please contact
→ Herbert Wulf at wulf@bicc.uni-bonn.de

Under the European Union's TEMPUS/TACIS program, BICC is collaborating with technical universities in Cologne, Aachen, and Sittard (Holland) to support local and regional government officials and managers from former defense industries in the Russian Oblast of Nishny Novgorod. From 24–27 November, a seminar was conducted on **regional economic development** by representatives from the Rhine-Westphalian Institute for Economic Research. It covered the economic development regional framework, activities, and measures to promote regional development and incentive programs.

For further information please contact
→ Steven E. Sokol at sokol@bicc.uni-bonn.de

The Heinrich-Böll Foundation project *Cultural Dimensions of Sustainability—European City of Culture Weimar 1999* invited BICC to show parts of its **ConverArt and information exhibition** in the Jacobskirche in the center of Weimar. The exhibition will be shown from 4 December 1998 through 31 January 1999.

For further information please contact
→ Susanne Heinke at heinke@bicc.uni-bonn.de

On 1 November, **Natalie Pauwels joined BICC for two years as a junior researcher**. Natalie, a Canadian, assists the director of research, working mainly on BICC's yearbook, the Conversion Survey.

For further information please contact
→ Natalie Pauwels at pauwels@bicc.uni-bonn.de

Following a decision by the BICC supervisory board, the **two departments Public Relations and Documentation have been merged**. Michael Dedek heads the newly structured department now called PR & Documentation.

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BICC staff wish the readers of the bulletin all the best for 1999 !!