



NEWSLETTER

HISTORIC ARMS TRADE TREATY ADOPTED

Global Treaty at Last

The global trade in conventional arms will soon have international standards regulating the annual US\$70 billion business. After years of effort, the UN General Assembly adopted a historic Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 2 April 2013. This is the first-ever global treaty to establish international norms aiming to prevent conventional weapons from being used for war crimes and human rights abuses, or being diverted for illegal use. The intense nine-day Final Conference on the ATT ended without an agreed treaty on 28 March 2013 when a handful of states blocked consensus. The draft treaty text was then introduced in the General Assembly which approved the resolution by a vote of 154 in favour, 3 against and 23 abstentions.

Next Steps

The Treaty will open for signature on 3 June 2013 and will enter into force 90 days after 50 states have ratified it. The adoption of an ATT starts a new process of employing the Treaty as the global framework for the trade in arms. Fortunately, there are already a number of existing efforts and instruments to strengthen export, transfer and strategic trade controls relevant to conventional arms control, so most states do not need to start from scratch. International assistance for ATT ratification and implementation will be provided to states requesting it, for which new mechanisms will be launched, including a trust fund to which Australia and Germany have already pledged.

For more information on the Treaty and relevant documents, see www.unrcpd.org/np/asia_regional.html

UNRCPD ACTIVITIES

Asia Dialogue on the Arms Trade

Also the Regional Centre threw its weight to support the process to adopt a robust global Arms Trade Treaty. UNRCPD facilitated a Regional Meeting on the ATT in advance of the March 2013 UN Final Conference. The Meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur on 26-27 February 2013 and was hosted by the Government of Malaysia. The purpose of the two-day meeting was to create a forum for regional dialogue and to share views in advance of the Final negotiations. The meeting gathered together 50 senior-level participants from 19 Asian and Pacific countries to exchange ideas and discuss with their colleagues from countries in the region. External experts were also invited to provide insights and updates on key topics under discussion. Aside from the host Government of Malaysia, the Meeting was supported by the generous contributions of the Governments of New Zealand, Japan and Switzerland. More information on the Meeting and its Summary Report can be accessed online.





Celebrating Five Years in Asia!

This year UNRCPD marks the 5th anniversary of its presence in the Asia-Pacific region.¹ Since the relocation to our new home in Nepal, UNRCPD has been busy launching programmes and initiatives to address the needs of the region, as well as to stepping up our partnerships with stakeholders in the region.

In a region of 43 countries, with a vast and diverse array of security and disarmament issues, working from within the region we are able to better meet needs and target assistance. In the coming months and years we are planning new projects to meet requests from states in the region, for example on assistance to implement the Arms Trade Treaty and on UN Security Council Resolution 1540 implementation.

On behalf of UNRCPD, I would like to extend our warm gratitude in particular to our donors (list on back page), Member States, and various organisations for their financial and in-kind support over the past five years. I am especially pleased to see an ever increasing number of countries in the region actively engaging in our activities. We look forward to working with you all in the coming years and contributing to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. Join us!

 **Sharon Riggle**
UNRCPD Director

[¹The Centre was operational in 1989 but was located in New York].

EDITORIAL

Building on the Framework

The adoption of the ATT is benchmark in international disarmament and has the potential to bring relief to hundreds of thousands of victims every year. Arguably the toughest work now begins...**ratification and implementation.**

As the President of the Conference, Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia, stated, *'This is a very good framework to build on. But it is only a framework'*. The next treaty milestone, entry-into-force, will take many months meantime, it will be the responsibility of states to implement the ATT in good faith, which will soon take many months meantime, it will be the responsibility of states to implement the ATT in good faith, impact positively on suffering from armed violence.



When the treaty opens for signature on 3 June 2013, signatory states will start the process of applying the aims and provisions of the new treaty. While not all states will be able to sign in the first days or even months, the ATT establishes a new international norm for the trade in arms against which the behaviour of all states will be measured.

Assistance will be made available, from UNRCPD and others, to states that would like to access resources in support of national processes to adopt and implement this important new instrument. Working together, states, civil society and international organisations like the UN, will be able to keep the momentum going and jointly work towards the core aim of the treaty: reducing human suffering.

This is a rare moment in the history of global disarmament—a window of opportunity that the world cannot afford to waste.

EVENTS

CHILDREN'S ART COMPETITION AND 5TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

It is the time once again to launch the Children's Art Competition, this year themed 'Peace for Everyone' with Kathmandu Valley schoolchildren. The aim of the upcoming and expanding competition is to encourage children to examine through drawing the possibilities for peace within groups, appreciating and celebrating cultural diversity. The exercise is a part of pilot project on peace and disarmament education for schoolchildren in Nepal, with a view to expanding throughout the country and hopefully throughout the region. The competition culminates with an award ceremony on International Peace Day in 2013, which will be combined with celebrations for UNRCPD's 5th anniversary of opening offices in the region.

ARF MEETING on UNSCR 1540

Thailand hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 on 14-15 May. Delegates convened in Bangkok to discuss approaches to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1540. The resolution calls upon Member States to enact legislation criminalising the development, acquisition, manufacture, possession, transport or transfer of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery by non-state actors. ARF is made up of the ten ASEAN countries plus 17 other countries and stakeholders.



REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Asia-Pacific at NPT PrepCom: At the meeting in Geneva 22 April-3 May, states parties in Asia and the Pacific made statements regarding regional confidence-building measures and around one-third of the states parties supported the Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Disappointment was expressed on the postponement of the international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. However, the five nuclear-weapon states reaffirmed their readiness to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone soon.

Day of Action on Military Spending: Citizens took to the streets in cities around the world to protest rising global military expenditures for the annual Day of Action on 15 April. They advocated shifting military budgets to humanitarian, social, environmental and health issues. Gatherings in Asia-Pacific were organised in Tokyo, Wellington, Kuala Lumpur, New Delhi, Sydney and Seoul.

UN Security Council and DPRK: Following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's third nuclear test in seven years in February, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved a tightening of sanctions against the country's trade and banking on 7 March 2013.

Peace and Disarmament in the Shadow of Mount Fuji

For the 24th year, the UN Conference on Disarmament Issues brought together experts, citizens and governments from around the world, held this year in Shizuoka, Japan, to discuss topics high on the disarmament agenda. From 30 January to 1 February 2013, and under the theme 'Creating a Peaceful and Safe Future: Pressing Issues and Potential Solutions', frank and open discussions were had with over 70 representatives from government, academia, international organisations, nuclear industry and civil society.

Topics included humanitarian issues and nuclear weapons, missile proliferation, nuclear safety and security, nuclear-weapon-free zones, role of civil society, the Arms Trade Treaty and conventional weapons control, disarmament and non-proliferation education and many more. It proved to be one of the most inclusive and engaging conferences to date.

The conference received media attention from across Japan, and many journalists were in attendance throughout the three days. The conference had a strong digital presence as well, as it was available for live streaming online as well as through social media and the UNRCPD and City of Shizuoka webpages. The students of Shizuoka also published a conference blog in both Japanese and English in partnership with UNRCPD.

One of the most memorable aspects was the high level of engagement of the host city, Shizuoka, who rallied thousands of citizens and volunteers to not only attend the event, but to plan side events in the week leading up to the conference. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan is the generous annual supporter of the event.

A special session organised by university and high school students was a highlight of the conference. Young people gave insightful presentations and engaged the panelists and audience. The bar has been set high for next year's 25th Conference on Disarmament Issues!



Conference Goes Social for First Time



'UN Conference on Disarmament Issues' **Facebook page** in weeks leading up to the conference - in Japanese and English



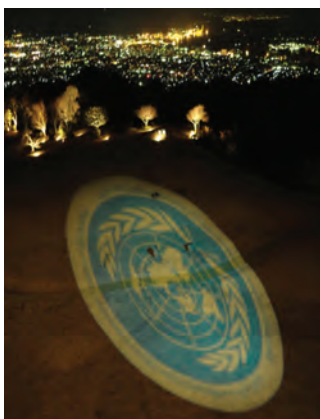
Website materials in Japanese and English

www.unrcpd.org.np/pdf/UN-RCPD_leafle_Japanese.pdf

Conference blog by students in Japanese and English with their impressions of the discussions

disarmamentissues.wordpress.com

Live internet streaming of the proceedings





Quote of the Quarter

We owe it to those millions--often the most vulnerable in society--whose lives have been overshadowed by the irresponsible and illicit international trade in arms.

Ambassador Peter Woolcott
President of the Final Conference on the ATT

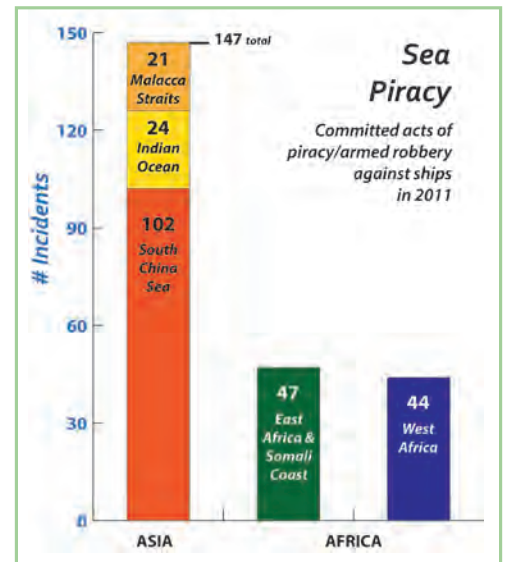
DID YOU KNOW...?

...That piracy/armed robbery of ships is 3x higher in Asia-Pacific than in East Africa

Asia-Pacific has the most active piracy areas in the world. In the South China Sea alone, there were 102 acts, 84 committed in territorial waters or in the port. (Source: International Maritime Org.)

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

- ❁ **SIPRI Military Expenditures Database**, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, April 2013.
www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database/milex_database
- ❁ **The Arms Trade Treaty: A Step Forward in Small Arms Control?**, Research Note, Sarah Parker, Small Arms Survey, June 2013.
<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/?highlight-rn30s>
- ❁ **A New START Model for Transparency in Nuclear Disarmament**, Tamara Patton, Pavel Podvig, and Phillip Schell, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), April 2013.
www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/a-new-start-model-for-transparency-in-nuclear-disarmament-en-409.pdf
- ❁ **The Impact of Poorly Regulated Arms Transfers on the Work of the United Nations**, UNODA, March 2013.
www.un.org/disarmament/HomePage/ODAPublications/OccasionalPapers/PDF/OP23.pdf
- ❁ **Trends in Militancy across South Asia: A Region on the Brink**, Thomas M. Sanderson, Rick Nelson, Stephanie Sanok, Zachary I. Fellman and Rob Wise, Center for Strategic & International Studies.
cis.org/files/publication/130408_Sanderson_TrendsMilitancySouthAsia_Web.pdf



ABOUT UNRCPD

The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific assists countries in the Asia-Pacific region in achieving their peace, security and disarmament goals, through provision of substantive support; coordination of activities at the subregional, regional and international levels, and information sharing on global and regional activities. The Regional Centre is part of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Contributors to this issue include: **Quintin Chou, Brad Halt, Essi Hynninen, Haruka Katarao, Nathan Martin, Sharon Riggle and Mohit Shrestha**

UNRCPD extends its appreciation to the following countries and organisations for their generous contributions:
Austria, China, Finland, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and Risho Kosei-kai

May 2013

The 43 countries covered by the UNRCPD mandate

▶ Australia ▶ Afghanistan ▶ Bangladesh ▶ Bhutan ▶ Brunei
 Darussalam ▶ Cambodia ▶ China ▶ Democratic People's Republic
 of Korea ▶ Fiji ▶ India ▶ Indonesia ▶ Japan ▶ Kazakhstan ▶ Kiribati ▶
 Kyrgyzstan ▶ Lao People's Democratic Republic ▶ Malaysia ▶ Maldives ▶
 Marshall Islands ▶ Micronesia, Federated States of ▶ Mongolia ▶ Myanmar
 ▶ Nauru ▶ Nepal ▶ New Zealand ▶ Pakistan ▶ Palau ▶ Papua New Guinea ▶
 Philippines ▶ Republic of Korea ▶ Samoa ▶ Singapore ▶ Solomon Islands ▶ Sri
 Lanka ▶ Tajikistan ▶ Thailand ▶ Timor-Leste ▶ Tonga ▶ Turkmenistan ▶ Tuvalu ▶
 Uzbekistan ▶ Vanuatu ▶ Viet Nam



UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

UN House, P.O. Box 107, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: +977-1-5010257, Fax: +977-1-5010223, subscriptions@unrcpd.org, www.unrcpd.org.np