Joint Efforts for Peace and Disarmament Education in Nepal

In 2014, UNRCPD accomplished Phase I of the Peace and Disarmament Education (PDE) Project in post-conflict Nepal. Through existing structures of the Ministry of Education of Nepal, UNRCPD has provided support to incorporate peace and disarmament objectives into the national curriculum and adding lessons and activities to Government textbooks. Phase I of the project made it possible to reach more than 300,000 children per year for the next 10 years, created enthusiasm for peace and disarmament education in the Ministry of Education and led to its request for continued assistance.

Thanks to the support of the Switzerland, UNRCPD was able to continue the Project in December 2014 and to take it to the next level. For Phase II, UNRCPD is partnering with UNESCO, which brings with it a wealth of knowledge and expertise on peace education. In addition to the inclusion of PDE elements in relevant teaching tools, Phase II of the Project builds teachers’ capacities to use peace and disarmament education materials that are now available to them.

Read more at bit.ly/NUIvPu
**Regional training on ISACS Assessment Tool in the Pacific**

To help build a cadre of professionals proficient in using the ISACS Assessment Tool — and in training others how to use it — UNIDIR, in cooperation with the ISACS Inter-Agency Support Unit, organized a trainers’ workshop on 2-5 December in New Zealand. The Tool facilitates the application of the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) in the design, monitoring and evaluation of small arms control policies, programmes and practices. UNRCPD contributed with a presentation on the UN Programme of Action (UN PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI). Other participating agencies included Police Forces of Samoa and Tonga, the secretariats of the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Oceania Customs Organization, the UNDP Pacific Centre, the Pacific Small Arms Action Group and Peace Foundation Melanesia. The workshop also supported the PIFS and its member countries, present at the workshop, to prepare national reports on the implementation of UN PoA and ITI.


**Commemoration connects memories of tragic past with vision of future free of nuclear weapons**

On 6 August 2014, UNRCPD attended the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony where the atrocious bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were remembered. Hiroshima’s and hibakusha messages of peace and hope have educated the world about the devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

Read more at [unrcpd.org/wmd/1540-2/](http://unrcpd.org/wmd/1540-2/)

**Regional highlights**

**Myanmar became Party to the Biological Weapons Convention** on 9 December 2014. Myanmar signed the Convention in 1972 and now ratified it. With Myanmar’s accession, all members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are States Parties to the Convention. See [bit.ly/1zsP4mQ](http://bit.ly/1zsP4mQ)

**Regional training course for customs authorities on transfers related to the Chemical Weapons Convention** was jointly organized by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Government of Singapore on 14-17 October 2014, in Singapore. The course was intended for officials engaged in training the officials of the customs authorities who are involved in implementing the Convention. See [bit.ly/1yOHcb1](http://bit.ly/1yOHcb1)

**The Regional School on Nuclear Security for the Asia-Pacific region**

The International Atomic Energy Agency in cooperation with the national Nuclear Energy Agency of Indonesia ran the Regional School on Nuclear Security on 23-24 October 2014, in Jakarta, Indonesia, to provide young professionals from Asia and the Pacific with a basic understanding of nuclear safety. See [bit.ly/1ndGwXu](http://bit.ly/1ndGwXu)

**Concerted efforts to advance implementation of UNSCR 1540**

Regionally, there are significant capacity differences between States in their ability to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540), reflected in the number of outstanding requests for assistance. In the last months, UNRCPD has actively supported States in their implementation efforts by providing expert advice and sharing experiences at two major regional workshops. On 24-25 July 2014, in Manila, the Philippines, UNRCPD contributed to the discussion on the establishment of regional coordination mechanisms. The meeting served as a platform to share effective practices on strengthening implementation of UNSCR 1540 in the region and to facilitate the identification of capacity-building measures that would be responsive to regional and specific national requirements. The key objective of the workshop was to discuss the steps and tools required for States to develop their national implementation action plans. UNRCPD also participated in and presented at a regional workshop on “Accounting and Physical Protection: the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540” organized by UNODA on 15-17 October 2014 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The resolution requires all States to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their means of delivery, and establish domestic controls over their related materials to prevent their illicit trafficking. UNRCPD stands ready to assist States of the Asia-Pacific region in addressing these issues.

Read more at [unrcpd.org/wmd/1540-2/](http://unrcpd.org/wmd/1540-2/)

**Controlling the tools of violence**

Mindful of the link between armed violence and development and the need to control the tools of violence, representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, think tanks, academia and NGOs gathered to strengthen the engagement and assess the implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, and to build support for including armed violence reduction in the post-2015 development agenda. UNRCPD contributed with a presentation on the nature and relevance of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), and on how the Centre can assist States in signing, ratifying and implementation it. The ATT is the first and only global treaty that seeks to prevent illicit transfers of conventional arms. Held in Manila, the Philippines, on 8-9 October 2014, the Conference was organized by the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the governments of Switzerland and the Philippines, and UNDP.

Not just a “gentleman’s agreement”: Addressing the legislative challenges of the Arms Trade Treaty

Responding to the interest of States in the Asia-Pacific region, UNRCPD co-hosted a workshop with the Ministry of Interior of Cambodia to address the legal questions related to the implementation on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Held on 18-19 November 2014 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, the workshop was attended by representatives of 23 States of the Asia-Pacific region, as well as of PIFS, UNODA, ICRC, NGOs, and academia.

The entry-into-force on 24 December 2014 and dynamic developments on the preparation for the First Conference of States Parties (CSPs) of the Treaty have made countries in the region consider their possible participation in this process. After entry-into-force, a country can accede to the ATT and fully participate in the CSPs, which is to be held in between mid-July and mid-September 2015.

The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to discuss issues of the practical Treaty application and implementation at the national level. The workshop’s discussions were open and constructive and participants from different countries exchanged questions, answers and insights. In addition, a variety of available tools for assistance were presented and discussed at the workshop, including the ATT Model Law developed by the New Zealand Government and Small Arms Survey, the UNODA ATT Implementation Toolkit, as well as the UNSCAR funding mechanism. Furthermore, ways for UNRCPD to assist the requesting States in the region in their efforts to implement the ATT were presented.

As a legally binding agreement, participants lauded the ATT for being more than simply a “gentleman’s agreement”. There was optimism that the ATT will be an effective tool to reduce the diversion and misuse of conventional arms. Participants commended the proactive nature of the workshop, many noting that it is best to address challenges of implementation before – and not during – the implementation process.

The meeting was supported by the generous contributions of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand. For more information, visit: unrcpd.org/event/regional-legal-assistance-workshop-att/

A historic moment of the Arms Trade Treaty

“The upcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty [...] provides a tangible example of how the multilateral treaty framework can be harnessed by States to collectively combat global threats to peace, security and the rule of law.”

Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel

The 24 December 2014 marked a milestone in the history of the ATT. Reaching the critical number of 50 ratifications on 25 September triggered the entry-into-force of this landmark agreement 90 days later and commenced a new chapter in collective efforts to bring responsible trade, accountability and transparency to the global arms trade. To date, among the States in the Asia-Pacific region, the latest to ratify was New Zealand, which brings the total number of ratifications in the region to four. Thailand and Singapore signed the ATT on 25 November and 5 December respectively.

By ratifying the Treaty, States of the Asia-Pacific region can demonstrate a commitment to prevent the illicit trade in conventional arms from undermining peace, security, development, and human rights. This, in turn, would strengthen regional stability by promoting transparency in the legal arms trade. UNRCPD remains committed to support requesting States with ATT-related assistance, inter alia through regional and national workshops, capacity-building activities and facilitation of technical support.

Read more at bit.ly/16M2nOx
ABOUT UNRCPD

The United Nations 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.

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- Federated States of
- Mongolia
- Myanmar
- Nauru
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Republic of Korea
- Samoa
- Singapore
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- Sri Lanka
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Tonga
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