United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

...strengthening peace and security through disarmament

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NEWSLETTER

Opportunities and Challenges on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation - International Conference in Korea

The 13th Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues provided a good opportunity to discuss a variety of issues related to the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and thus, built momentum for better preparation for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, on 4-5 December 2014, this annual event focused on issues that would constitute a basis for the Review Conference.

The participants addressed challenges the 2015 Review Conference might face, including divergent views on disarmament, in particular on the interpretation of the step-by-step approach in nuclear arms reduction and the possibility of reaching an agreement on a concrete deadline for their elimination; the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction; the reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in national security concepts and military doctrines of NWS; addressing withdrawal from the NPT; and tension over Ukraine between inter alia the USA and the Russian Federation and its impact on further nuclear weapons reduction efforts.

Furthermore, the Jeju Conference addressed regional non-proliferation issues in the context of nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The history, capabilities and proliferation aspects of both programmes were examined, and the threats and potential responses were considered. Invited experts asserted that solutions to these challenges should be sought through diplomacy efforts.

For the first time in the Jeju process, the potential danger of the development and use of fully autonomous lethal weapons systems was discussed and views were exchanged on how to regulate their development. The discussion highlighted that the complexity of the issue requires further efforts with a view to agree definitions, criteria for development of such type of weapon and its possible use in the future.

Read more at bit.ly/1yTzjQF

UNRCPD ACTIVITIES

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

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/

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.

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.

Read more at bit.ly/13epjUE

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 .

Read more at bit.ly/12SQmoj

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

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

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 13-24 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

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 13 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 (CSP1) 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 CSP1, 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."-

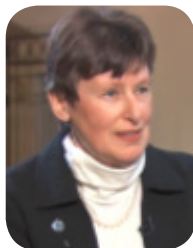Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel

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 golbal 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.

Towards entry into force	Valid as of 14 January 2015
Number of Signatory States	130
Number of Asia-Pacific Signatory States	17
Number of Ratifying States	61
Number of Asia-Pacific Ratifying States	4
General Assembly vote to adopt the treaty: 154-3-23	

Read more at bit.ly/16M2nOx

Quotes of the Quarter

Let us dream of a peaceful and just world. But let us do more than dream. Let us resolve to pursue it relentlessly until it is finally achieved - a peaceful and just world free of all nuclear weapons. What a great dream to ponder - but a far greater one to fulfil.
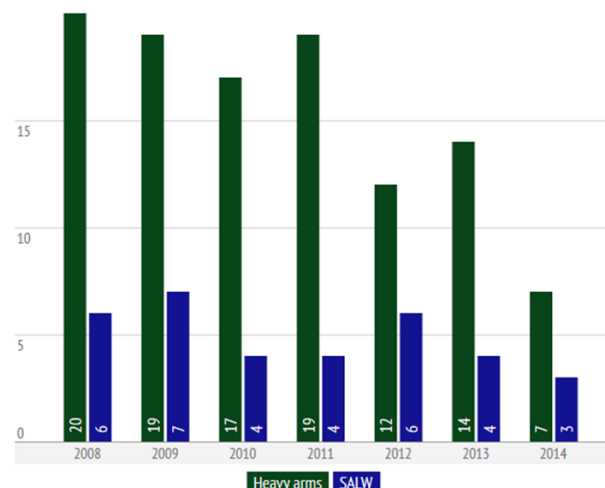
Angela Kane
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, UNODA, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony, 6 August 2014.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

✿ **Disarmament and Related Treaties**, Center for International Trade and Security (CITS) and United UNODA, December 2014. www.un.org/disarmament/publications/more/treaties/

✿ **Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons**, CCW Implementation Support Unit, UNODA, December 2014. www.un.org/disarmament/publications/more/ccw/ccw-booklet.pdf

✿ **The New Zealand Lectures on Disarmament** by High Representative Angela Kane, UNODA, Occasional Papers, No. 26. www.un.org/disarmament/publications/occasionalpapers/26/

✿ **Nuclear Safety Review 2014**, IAEA, July 2014. www.iaea.org/About/Policy/GC/GC58/Gc58InfDocuments/English/gc58inf-3_en.pdf

✿ **Small Arms Survey 2014:Women and Guns,** Small Arms Survey, 2014. www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/yearbook/small-arms-survey-2014.html

DID YOU KNOW...?

... that 40 States of the Asia-Pacific region reported to the UN Register of Conventional Arms at least once, since the Register's inception?

Heavy arms | SALW

The UN Register of Conventional Arms captures the vast majority of official transfers and is an important tool to build confidence among States. It is particularly crucial as the provisions of the ATT are becoming reality. Since its inception in 1991, the UN Register has received reports from more than 170 States. (Source: UNODA)

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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The 43 countries covered by the UNRCPD mandate

▶▶Afghanistan ▶▶ Australia ▶▶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

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