



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 July 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session

Item 98 (f) of the preliminary list*

Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

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

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to promote dialogue and confidence-building in the region and beyond by organizing conferences on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. The fourteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held in Seoul in December 2015, addressed global and regional nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament challenges, outer space security and nuclear security in the context of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit. The twenty-fifth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Hiroshima, Japan, in August 2015, addressed the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the role of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons; and the role of civil society and disarmament education in efforts towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

* [A/71/50](#).



The Centre promoted the universalization and implementation of multilateral arms control and non-proliferation instruments through technical assistance and capacity-building programmes provided to Member States upon their request. The programmes included a focus on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Arms Trade Treaty and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and were implemented through the organization of subregional and national workshops. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/65, the Centre has, in coordination with its host country, Nepal, started preparations for the resumption of its operations from Kathmandu, following its temporary relocation to Bangkok after strong earthquakes in April and May 2015.

The Regional Centre depends solely upon voluntary financial contributions to implement its programmatic activities. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to Member States, in particular the host country, Nepal, and other partners that have provided support for the Centre's operations and programmes with financial and in-kind assistance. He also wishes to thank Thailand for its support for the temporary operation of the Centre in Bangkok. The Secretary-General calls upon countries in the region and beyond to make voluntary contributions to the Centre to ensure the sustainability of its activities and operations and to enable it to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/39 D, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by Member States in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament through the appropriate utilization of available resources. The Regional Centre facilitates and coordinates the implementation of regional activities of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in Asia and the Pacific.

2. In its resolution 70/65, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction at the activities carried out in the past year by the Regional Centre and reaffirmed its strong support for the role of the Centre in the promotion of activities of the United Nations at the regional level to strengthen peace, stability and security among the Member States in Asia and the Pacific. It also expressed its gratitude to the Government of the host country, Nepal, for its cooperation and financial support. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The present report is submitted in compliance with the above-mentioned request and covers the activities of the Regional Centre during the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre for the second year of the biennium 2014-2015 is contained in the annex to the present report.

II. Activities of the Regional Centre

4. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre focused its programmatic activities on the following areas: promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments, including by providing assistance to Member States in the region, upon their request, in national capacity-building; enhancing dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security; and taking outreach and advocacy initiatives.

A. Promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments

5. The Regional Centre organized a South-East Asia regional capacity-building workshop in Bangkok on 4 and 5 April 2016 to foster dialogue towards enhancing national capacity to meet the requirements of the Arms Trade Treaty. The event, hosted by the Government of Thailand, brought together representatives from eight Member States to discuss issues related to national control systems for conventional arms transfers, as well as the Arms Trade Treaty requirements on reporting. Participants exchanged experiences in the preparation for ratification of the Treaty and identified potential opportunities for future assistance and cooperation. The workshop was funded by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation. A side event on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) supplemented the workshop.

6. The Regional Centre, at the request of Maldives, provided technical and legal assistance to facilitate the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and to help build capacity towards accession to the Arms Trade Treaty in August and September 2015. Under this assistance project, international legal and technical experts, together with representatives of the Centre, held consultations with Maldivian national authorities to identify areas for assistance. The experts subsequently submitted practical recommendations for the development of national laws and measures, as well as technical guidelines on developing regulations necessary for the effective control of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the Programme of Action, and for the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, with a particular focus on maritime aspects. The project was funded by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation.

7. In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the Regional Centre organized a national inter-agency round table to familiarize government officials with the main provisions of and the requirements for joining the Arms Trade Treaty. International experts and representatives of the Office for Disarmament Affairs shared their knowledge and expertise with the 32 representatives from various government agencies, the army, police and the defence industry in attendance. The workshop provided a forum for discussion among international experts and national representatives regarding the national security and defence policy interests that would be served by joining the Treaty, and the ways in which national legislation could be adapted for implementing the Treaty's provisions. The project was funded by the Government of Germany.

8. In response to a request by the Philippines, contained in its national report on the Programme of Action, the Regional Centre organized a two-day national capacity-building workshop on the control of small arms and light weapons, in cooperation with the Office of the Special Envoy on Transnational Crime of the Philippines, in Manila in November 2015. Participation included over 40 officials from the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs, and the National Police. The workshop addressed legal and technical issues related to small arms control, including the national status of the implementation of the Programme of Action and assistance needs; existing small arms control provisions contained in global instruments and national implementation, including through the national action plan; and physical security and stockpile management issues. The project was funded by the Government of Germany.

9. In cooperation with the Government of Myanmar, the Regional Centre organized a two-day national capacity-building workshop on the control of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, in February 2016. The event brought together more than 40 government officials and experts from relevant ministries and agencies, as well as international and United Nations experts, to discuss major international agreements, in particular the Programme of Action. The workshop focused on concrete measures to strengthen control of such weapons, including a national coordinating mechanism and a national action plan. The workshop was funded by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

10. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, held a two-day capacity-building national workshop on the Programme of

Action and the Arms Trade Treaty in Bangkok in March 2016. The workshop aimed to provide assistance in enhancing national capacity to implement the Programme of Action and to meet the import, export and transfer standards of conventional arms under the Treaty. The workshop also included discussions on practical issues of reporting to the relevant international instruments. The project was funded by the Government of Germany.

B. Promoting dialogue and confidence in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and security

11. The Regional Centre organized two annual international conferences on disarmament, non-proliferation and security issues, in collaboration with the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea. The conferences served as important forums for engaging Member States, intergovernmental organizations, academia, civil society and other stakeholders in frank discussions on major challenges in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, as well as regional security, contributing to confidence-building and to efforts to seek solutions to complex issues in these areas.

12. In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and with support provided by the prefecture and city of Hiroshima, the Regional Centre organized the twenty-fifth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, “Towards the Realization of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons following the 2015 NPT Review Conference”, held in Hiroshima in August 2015. More than 80 participants took part in the Conference, which addressed ways towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and the role of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with the participation of members of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Treaty. Participants also discussed the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the future review cycle; the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons; nuclear-weapon-free zones and transparency and confidence-building measures; as well as the role of civil society and public disarmament education. In addition, a special session was held with high school and university students who presented their perspectives and discussed peace and disarmament issues with Conference participants, highlighting the significance of peace and disarmament education and public support.

13. In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, the Regional Centre organized the fourteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues on the theme “Unfinished Business of Building a More Secure World”, in Seoul on 7 and 8 December 2015. More than 120 representatives from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, policy institutes, academia and civil society organizations participated in the Conference, which addressed outer space security in the context of ongoing deliberations regarding ensuring the sustainable and secure exploration of and use of outer space, including an international code of conduct. Participants had an in-depth exchange of views on the issue of nuclear security in relation to the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit and the strengthening of the nuclear security architecture. Regional issues were also discussed, including the implications of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with the Islamic Republic

of Iran. In addition, the Conference discussed the relevance of the Iranian negotiation process to reviving the Six-Party Talks on the Korean nuclear issues.

C. Partnership, outreach and advocacy

14. The Regional Centre continued its efforts to strengthen partnerships with major stakeholders in the region, including Member States, subregional organizations, other United Nations entities and civil society, through its concerted communications and outreach activities and through joint initiatives and collaborative projects. In this context, the Centre established contact with the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation and enhanced its partnerships with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Pacific Islands Forum through, inter alia, information exchange and mutual invitations to events organized by the Centre and these organizations.

15. The Regional Centre contributed substantively to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research Hiroshima Training Programme on Nuclear Disarmament for South-East Asia for young diplomats from Asian States in May and June 2016. The Programme enriched participants' knowledge of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues, and provided an opportunity for them to improve their negotiation skills.

16. The Regional Centre participated in a regional workshop organized by the Parliamentarians for Global Action on armed violence and the regulation of small arms and light weapons, held in Dhaka in August 2015, and made a presentation on the Centre's activities regarding the Programme of Action and the Arms Trade Treaty.

17. The Regional Centre contributed to a national round table on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, in January 2016. The event focused on Myanmar's efforts in implementing the resolution to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors and possible assistance needed to strengthen the implementation of the resolution.

18. The Regional Centre continued its efforts to ensure the regular provision of accurate and timely information about its work and about disarmament issues in general, in particular through its website, the publication of fact sheets and newsletters, and through social media.

D. Future activities

19. The Regional Centre plans to expand the scope of its work programme to provide practical assistance to Member States in the region, at their request, especially in the areas of training, technical assistance and capacity-building, in order to contribute to national and regional disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control implementation efforts, as well as peace and disarmament education.

III. Staffing and financing

20. Three posts of the Regional Centre are funded from the regular budget: the Director (P-5), one Professional (P-3) and one General Service (Local level) staff member. The host country, Nepal, through its voluntary contribution, funded two local staff. In addition, Switzerland provided the Centre with one United Nations Youth Volunteer and one Junior Professional Officer. Japan provided the Centre with one United Nations Volunteer.

21. The Regional Centre relies on voluntary contributions for all of its substantive programmes and for a portion of its operating costs. The Secretary-General encourages other Member States to consider providing financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre.

22. In 2015, voluntary contributions in the total amount of \$333,406 were received from Member States. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Member States that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Regional Centre, including Canada, China, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom. Such financial and in-kind contributions remain essential to ensuring the sustainability of the operations, core activities and programmes of the Centre. The Secretary-General urges all Member States, in particular those from the region, as well as other donors, to provide financial resources in support of the Centre's programmes, which benefit Asia and the Pacific.

IV. Conclusion

23. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre engaged in and provided support for disarmament initiatives in Asia and the Pacific. Working in partnership with Member States and other stakeholders, it continued to fulfil its mandate to provide assistance, upon request, to Member States and to carry out outreach and advocacy activities. The annual conferences held in Japan and the Republic of Korea continue to provide important forums for promoting dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security. The Centre stands ready to expand its technical assistance to Member States in addressing the challenges they face in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control as part of the efforts of the United Nations to promote peace, security and disarmament in the region and the world.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for 2015

(United States dollars)

Reserves and fund balance, 1 January 2015	785 964
Prior-year adjustment	31 978 ^a
Accumulated surplus/deficit	817 942
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions	315 984 ^b
Investment revenue	4 146
Other exchange revenue	(12 127)
Total revenue	308 003
Expenses	
Operating expenses	179 107
Depreciation and amortization	843
Total expenses	179 950
Surplus/deficit	128 053
Accumulated surplus	945 955^c

^a Consists of the 2015 net contribution of \$22,725 from Switzerland.

^b Consists of the accumulated surplus received from donors, less refunds, in accordance with IPSAS reporting standards: Canada, \$15,572; China, \$50,000; Germany, \$105,659; Japan, \$102,818; Republic of Korea, \$43,900; Thailand, \$3,000; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, \$12,457; DEZA (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) (refund), (\$17,422).

^c Consists of the accumulated surplus as at 1 January 2015 plus revenue received, less expenses during the year.