

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

...strengthening peace and security through disarmament

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NEWSLETTER

Workshops for South and Southeast Asia on Gender and Gun Violence



As part of its regional project on women, peace and security (WPS), UNRCPD organized two sub-regional workshops, in July in Thailand and in September 2018 in Nepal, to address illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) from a gender perspective. Supported by the UNSCAR fund, the workshops brought together representatives of NGOs focused on women's empowerment and members of parliaments (MPs) interested in arms-control and women's issues from South and Southeast Asia. Also participating were UN officials, WPS trainers from the International Action Network

on Small Arms, as well as international expert speakers, inter alia, from the Parliamentary Forum on SALW and from Small Arms Survey.

By applying a gender perspective, the workshops aimed to strengthen national control of illicit SALW and empower women in the region to take part in such efforts. Besides expanding their knowledge of SALW and the gendered impact of gun violence, the NGOs were trained through practical exercises to initiate advocacy for better SALW control, and to promote key arms-control instruments, such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Programme of Action on SALW.



Importantly, the events also provided opportunities for NGOs and MPs from the two regions to exchange ideas, discuss strategies, and consider possibilities for joint initiatives to address the challenges posed by illicit trade in small arms and its distinct impact on women. Following facilitated group sessions, the representatives from civil society and parliaments identified a number of ideas for possible initiatives that they could further develop in the future.

The UN General Assembly and Security Council have repeatedly called for full and meaningful participation of women in peace, disarmament and arms control efforts, which the workshops promoted. The workshops also contributed to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. The workshop for South Asia was held in the framework of the "Kathmandu Process" also with participation of the Nepal Government.



UNRCPD ACTIVITIES

Peace and Disarmament Education Discussion “Creating Safe Spaces for Youth”



On 17 August 2018, UNRCPD organized an event for youth on Peace and Disarmament Education (PDE) - “Creating Safe Spaces for Youth”. This was held as part of UNRCPD’s 10th anniversary activities. Participants from three high schools, four university colleges and three youth organizations from Kathmandu, as well as officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and youth representatives from UN agencies like UNDP, UN WOMEN, UNESCO and UNFPA discussed creating safe spaces for youth through PDE and what youth can do for securing peace and disarmament. The youth participants had a chance to analyze and talk about the three priorities of the UN Secretary-General’s “Agenda for Disarmament”, *Securing Our Common Future* – disarmament to save humanity, disarmament that saves lives, and disarmament for future generations

— as well as the interdependence between disarmament and sustainable development. The youth agreed disarmament discussions need to be disseminated to local levels. They also suggested that they themselves can lead by example to motivate others to help change the mindsets of people to be vigilant against violence. They pointed out the need for more peace and disarmament training opportunities for youth and a need for financial resources allocated to PDE programmes, activities and innovations. They highlighted the importance of both unity among youth, between youth and society and between youth and government. Participants pointed out the young generation should work with the government to support its work on disarmament and arms control and promote the implementation of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015), which, inter alia, urges Member States to increase the representation of youth in decision-making by developing national plans of action that envisages the role of youth in disarmament. This event placed Nepalese youth at centre stage with dynamic discussions on peace and disarmament issues and on practical approaches, ideas and actions on how they can be agents of change in their communities, promoting a culture of peace and non-violence. As one of the participants noted, “a better informed generation is a well prepared generation for the future.”



Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of UNRCPD in Nepal



On 17 August 2008, UNRCPD relocated to Nepal and commenced its operations from Kathmandu. To celebrate this 10th anniversary, the Centre organized three events to promote its visibility and strengthen its engagement with the Government of Nepal. The first activity held was the Peace and Disarmament Education day on 17 August 2018 as described in the above article. Next, the Centre hosted a one-day briefing at its office for Nepal Government officials on 7 September. This briefing included presentations on UNRCPD’s main activities and discussions on ways to foster closer collaboration with the Government to highlight its contribution to maintaining peace and security in the region, including through the “Kathmandu Process”.

The final event organized as part of the anniversary commemorations was a formal ceremony and reception on 21 September that included invitees from the Nepal Government, local UN agencies, regional organizations, the diplomatic community and civil society. The event started with a video message by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu.

Workshop on Fissile Material for Central, South and Southeast Asian States



UNRCPD organized a two-day regional workshop to engage Member States of Central, South and Southeast Asia in consultations on the outcome of the High-Level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) Expert Preparatory Group. The workshop was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 17 to 18 September 2018, and funded by the European Union. Fissile material is a key component for the production of nuclear weapons. An international treaty banning the production of such materials would strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and facilitate further nuclear disarmament. Pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 71/259, the Secretary-General established in 2017 a High-Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group “to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of a

future non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.” The workshop aimed to facilitate dialogue at the sub-regional level among Member States on the implications of a future treaty, develop a sense of ownership of the issue and its relationship with already existing global and regional instruments. Fourteen officials from seven Asian States and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), representatives from the UNODA Geneva Branch and UNRCPD, and two international experts presented and discussed on various issues related to FMCT, including:

- Overview of the process towards a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;
- The outcome of the High-Level Expert Preparatory Group;
- Elaboration of the scope, definition, verification and institutional arrangements needed to be negotiated for the FMCT.

Moreover, participants exchanged views and discussed challenges and ways ahead in relation to a future treaty.



UNRCPD Engages in Workshops on Maritime Security and Counter-Terrorism



The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) hosted two National Legislative Workshops on Maritime Security and Counter-Terrorism in July 2018 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and in August 2018 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Participants included stakeholders from national ministries of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the 1540 Committee’s group of experts, IMO, UNODC and UNRCPD. The Centre’s participation in the workshops aimed to promote the role of UNSCR 1540 in the discussion on maritime security and counter-terrorism to address the global linkages and synergies between international disarmament instruments and counter-terrorism efforts. It also sought to engage in outreach among the wider counter-terrorism community; raise visibility and increase understanding

of disarmament in relation to the counter-terrorism agenda; and to encourage the incorporation of disarmament into the maritime counter-terrorism narrative. At both events, special attention was paid to the linkages between the resolution and maritime security. During the discussion segments, participants compared their respective national legal frameworks against maritime terrorism threats and the international legal framework related to transport-maritime related instruments. The discussions also addressed the possible methods and approaches to increase cooperation at the international, regional and sub-regional levels, where such initiative could potentially be led by the IMO, SAARC, BIMSTEC, INTERPOL and the UN to help identify gaps in national legislation.



QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

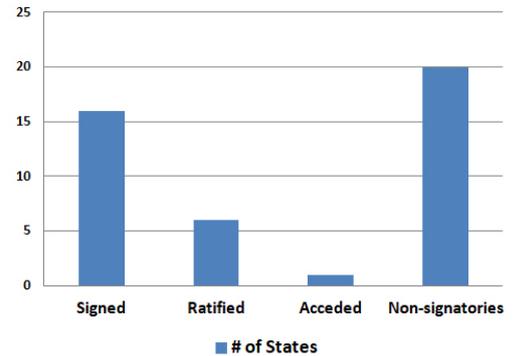


Disarmament is a driving force for maintaining international peace and security. It is a tool for ensuring national security. It helps to uphold the principles of humanity, promote sustainable development and protect civilians.

Mr. António Guterres,
Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony, August 2018

DID YOU KNOW...?

TPNW Status in Asia and the Pacific



...More than half of Member States in Asia and the Pacific have signed, or are party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Three new countries signed the TPNW: Timor-Leste, Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar (26 September). Three new countries ratified: New Zealand (31 July), Samoa (26 September) and Vanuatu (26 September) See: <https://bit.ly/10sAsnz>
- Thailand ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: (25 September) See: <https://bit.ly/2Nn4bm3>
- The 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly opened on 18 Sep. 2018: See: <https://bit.ly/2LxR152>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Regional Outreach Event and Training Course on the International Ammunition Technical Guideline, in Nepal
- Regional Workshop on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, in Fiji

ABOUT UNRCPD

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) 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 UNRCPD's 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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