
UNITED NATIONS (UN)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA)

Membership: All 192 UN Member States.

Functions: Under Article 11 of the [UN Charter](#), the General Assembly (UNGA) considers general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and makes recommendations to UN Member States or to the Security Council. The UNGA is the only truly representative body discussing disarmament and international security issues, and its decisions have led to significant developments.

The UNGA has two subsidiary bodies dedicated to disarmament issues: the [Disarmament and International Security Committee \(First Committee\)](#) and the [United Nations Disarmament Commission \(UNDC\)](#). While not subsidiary to the UNGA, the [United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research \(UNIDIR\)](#) and the [Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters](#) are also discussed in this section. Additionally, the UNGA receives input through numerous Reporting Mechanisms and [Groups of Government Experts](#). Comprehensive updates on all of these bodies and organs can be found below.

Some major achievements of the UNGA in the field of arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament include endorsement of the [NPT](#) (1968), endorsement of the [Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons \(BTWC, 1972\)](#), adoption of the Final Document of the First Special Session on Disarmament (1978), endorsement of the [Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons \(CWC, 1992\)](#), adoption of the [CTBT](#) (1996), and adoption of the Program of Action agreed at the Conference on the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW, 2001).

The General Assembly has held three special sessions on disarmament — in 1978 (resulting in adoption of a consensus report), 1982, and 1988. A fourth special session has been under consideration since 1994, but States have so far been unable to agree on a final

agenda for the meeting. Whether or not the total elimination of nuclear weapons, set as a priority at the 1978 special session, should remain the priority goal has repeatedly led to disagreement. (Resolutions/decisions calling for the “Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament”: [49/75I](#), [50/70F](#), [51/45C](#), [52/38F](#), [53/77AA](#), [54/54U](#), [55/33M](#), [56/24D](#), [57/61](#), decision 58/521, [59/71](#), decision 60/518, [61/60](#), [62/29](#), and decision 63/519).

Under the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#) and under the IAEA Statute, the IAEA annually submits reports to the UN, which are considered at the UNGA plenary meetings.

On an annual basis, the UNGA adopts resolutions and decisions related to nonproliferation, disarmament, arms control, and international security upon recommendation by its First Committee.

Compliance: While the decisions of the UNGA have no legally binding force for governments, they carry the weight of world opinion on major international issues, as well as the moral authority of the world community. The Security Council may recommend the suspension from exercising rights and privileges of General Assembly Membership when the Council is repetitively taking preventive or enforcement action for conflicts. Though all nations are treated as equals within the UNGA structure, the body can, with the advice of the credentials committee, agree to suspend the voting rights of a member nation’s representative. The UNGA can expel a member state, with the council’s recommendation, for repeatedly violating the principles of the United Nations Charter. A number of countries have had their voting rights temporarily suspended for falling too far behind in their dues.

Sections in the UNGA File:

[UNGA Recent Developments](#)[Disarmament and International Security Committee \(First Committee\)](#)[UN Disarmament Commission \(UNDC\)](#)[UN Institute for Disarmament Research \(UNIDIR\)](#)[Advisory Board of Disarmament Matters](#)[UN Register of Conventional Arms](#)[Groups of Governmental Experts \(GGE\)](#)**Recent Developments:**

2010: The 65th session of the General Assembly opened on 23 September 2010 under the presidency of Ambassador Joseph Deiss of Switzerland. The general debate was held from 23 September to 1 October 2010.

In his opening remarks, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed the importance of reducing tensions on the Korean Peninsula and called on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to return to the [Six-Party talks](#). In addition, he urged the Iranian government to engage constructively with the international community and comply fully with Security Council resolutions.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted the "new momentum" toward nuclear disarmament signified by the New START treaty, the Nuclear Security Summit, and the successful NPT Review Conference. At the same time, he emphasized the UN's crucial role in finding a path to bringing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty into force and to realizing agreements on fissile materials and securing nuclear materials and facilities.

In his opening remarks, acting President Deiss stressed the importance of multilateralism and the need for "genuine global partnership." In addition, the Assembly agreed on the importance of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation as a key agenda item, in the effort toward general and complete disarmament.

On 24 September 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened and chaired the High-Level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the [Conference on Disarmament \(CD\) and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations](#). During this event, representatives from 68 states discussed ways to improve current multilateral disarmament machinery. Issues within the CD that were addressed included state participation, failure of implementation of the 2009 programme of work (CD/1864), the necessity of addressing procedural matters by consensus, and the decreasing relevancy of the CD due to lack of progress on disarmament issues. The Secretary-General suggested that at its first plenary meeting in 2011, the CD adopt the 2009 programme of work or any similar proposal submitted during the 2010 session. A number of delegates proposed convening a fourth special session of the General Assembly specifically devoted to revitalizing the work of the CD and reviewing the larger makeup of the disarmament machinery. In addition, it was proposed that the General Assembly include in the agenda of its sixty-sixth session an item entitled "Follow-up to the high-level meeting held on 24 September 2010; revitalizing the work of the CD and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations," to be considered directly in the plenary and the First Committee.

On 2 December, the General Assembly adopted 52 resolutions and 6 decisions on the recommendation of its [First Committee \(Disarmament and International Security\)](#).

2009: The 64th session of the General Assembly opened for session on 15 September. On 18 September the UNGA adopted the work program and agenda, which contained more than 160 items. Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki was elected as President for the 64th session. The general debate was held at the UN Headquarters in New York from 23-26 and 28-30 September.

On 2 November, the General Assembly adopted the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) without a vote. The resolution ([64/8](#)) expresses gratitude for Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei's 12 years of service and appeals to Member States to continue their support of the Agency's activities. This marks the third year the States were able to reach a consensus and adopt the resolution without a vote.

On 2 December, the General Assembly adopted 50 resolutions and 4 decisions on the recommendation of its [First Committee \(Disarmament and International Security\)](#).

2008: On 27 October, the General Assembly adopted the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) without a vote. The resolution ([63/6](#)) appealed to member states to support the activities of the Agency. This was the second year in a row that States had reached consensus and were able to adopt the resolution without a vote.

On 3 November, the General Assembly heard presentations from Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and Rogelio Pfirter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the work of their respective organizations. Resolution ([63/13](#)) was adopted by a vote of 64-1-0 (United States against) which placed “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO” on the provisional agenda of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly.

On 2 December, the General Assembly adopted 53 resolutions and 4 decisions on the recommendation of its First Committee (Disarmament and International Security).

2007: On 29 October, the General Assembly adopted the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) without a vote. The resolution ([62/2](#)) appealed to Member States to support the activities of the agency. Similar resolutions had required votes in each of the previous three years.

On 5 December, the General Assembly adopted 49 resolutions and 3 decisions on the recommendation of its First Committee.

2006: On 27 April, the secretary-general released his report, “[Uniting against terrorism: recommendations for a global counter-terrorism strategy](#).” The report is a follow-up document to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, which calls for member states to reach a universal agreement on a counter-terrorism strategy. The report contains recommendations for building the global counter-terrorism strategy, with an emphasis on specific proposals for strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to combat terrorism.

The recommendations for a strategy seek to both guide and unite member states by emphasizing five operational elements:

- Dissuading groups from resorting to terrorism or supporting it: The first element emphasizes the important principle that terrorism is unacceptable and recognizes the need to address conditions conducive to exploita-

tion by terrorist are essential foundations for building an effective strategy.

- Denying terrorists the means to carry out an attack: This element includes several important measures such as denying financial support; denying access to weapons, including weapons of mass destruction; denying access to recruits and communication lines by countering terrorist use of the Internet; denying terrorist access to travel; denying terrorist access to targets and the desired impact of their targets
- Deterring states from supporting terrorists groups: In its third element, the report calls on all member states to become parties to and implement the 13 universal instruments related to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism and advises states to fully implement Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, in particular [resolution 1267](#) (1999) and its successor resolutions, [resolution 1373](#) (2001) and [1540](#) (2004).
- Developing a state capacity to prevent terrorism: The fourth element identifies several priority areas on which to focus such as promoting the rule of law, respect for human rights, and effective criminal justice systems, promoting quality education and religious and cultural tolerance, countering the financing of terrorism, ensuring transport security, strengthening state capacity to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological materials, ensuring better preparedness for an attack with such materials, and institutionalizing the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. It also praises the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate that reinforces the committee's efforts towards more effective collaboration and state capacity-building. It also emphasizes providing the proper resources to counter terrorism and urges the promotion of a United Nations system-wide coherence in countering terrorism. Member states are urged to conclude, as soon as possible, a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, intended to send a strong signal of international unity and strengthen the moral authority of the United Nations.

- Defending human rights in the context of terrorism and counter-terrorism: The final element stresses the importance of upholding and defending human rights, not only of those suspected of terrorism, but also of those victimized by terrorism and those affected by the consequences of terrorism as essential to all components of an effective counter-terrorism strategy.

2005: On 13 April, the General Assembly unanimously approved the [International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism](#), the first anti-terrorism treaty adopted since the September 11th attacks. The treaty, which places no new restrictions on the use of nuclear weapons by states, will become effective after it is ratified by 22 states.

The secretary-general pressed UN members to adopt another convention during the 60th General Assembly that would provide a simple, universal definition of terrorism and outlaw all forms of terrorism against civilians. That treaty should define a wide range of acts of nuclear terrorism, against a broad set of targets, and require those who plan, threaten, or commit such crimes to be extradited or prosecuted. As yet no agreement exists on the scope or content of such a treaty.

The Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution [51/210](#) of 17 December 1996, entitled “Measures to eliminate international terrorism” completed seven years’ drafting work by adopting the draft convention, by consensus, without amendment. The committee, chaired by the Russian Federation, requested the secretary-general to open the convention for signature at UN headquarters from 14 September 2005 to 31 December 2006. Distinct from prior years, the political will and momentum to conclude the draft texts of the convention was, in part, due to the impetus of the December 2004 High Level Panel Report on *Threats, Challenges and Change* and the secretary-general’s March 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom*. An agreement on the text was struck after it was assured that the treaty would not be used to impose a generic definition on terrorism, a highly controversial issue.

The nuclear terrorism convention will join the 12 existing universal anti-terrorism conventions, strengthening the international legal framework in connection with terrorist acts and further promoting the rule of law.

Key provisions of the convention include:

- A wider definition (than the Convention on

the Protection of Nuclear Materials) on materials and facilities covering both military and peaceful applications

- The criminalization of those planning, threatening, or carrying out acts of nuclear terrorism; it also requires states to criminalize these offenses via national legislation and to establish penalties in line with the gravity of such crimes
- Conditions under which states may establish jurisdiction for offenses
- Guidelines for extradition and other measures of punishment
- The requirement for states to take all practicable measures to prevent and counter preparations for offenses to take place inside or outside of their territories
- The distinction that the convention does not cover the activities of armed forces during an armed conflict or military exercise.

From 14-16 September, under the presidency of H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson of Sweden, world leaders met in New York for the World Summit 2005—a special High-Level Plenary Meeting of the UNGA. The summit aimed to review progress toward the Millennium Development Goals that governments agreed to in 2000, as well as find consensus toward a shared vision of collective security within the context of the current international peace and security landscape.

Despite intense negotiations, the Peace and Security section of the Summit’s [Final Outcome Document](#) made no mention of disarmament or the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The preamble to the section recognized “that many threats are interlinked, that development, peace, security and human rights are mutually reinforcing, that no State can best protect itself by acting entirely alone and that all States need an effective and efficient collective security system pursuant to the purposes and principles of the Charter.”

Upon conclusion of the 2005 World Summit, the 60th UNGA began its regular general debate led by President Jan Eliasson of Sweden on 17 September. In his opening remarks to the debate, Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged the international community to begin to remedy “distressing failures” on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. During the plenary, states parties made repeated references to arms

control, disarmament, multilateralism, nuclear energy, nuclear weapon free zones, proliferation, and terrorism.

Subsidiary Organs and Bodies

Established by the General Assembly:

Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

See above link.

UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Originally established in 1952, the UNDC was later re-established and strengthened in 1978. It is a specialized deliberative body of universal membership mandated to submit concrete recommendations on specific disarmament issues and to follow up on the decisions of the UNGA's special sessions on disarmament.

Developments:

2011: The UNDC Session for 2011, the last in the three-year cycle, was held from 4 to 22 April in New York. Ambassador Hamid Al-Bayati (Iraq) was the chairman, while Gheorghe Leucă (Republic of Moldova) and Miloš Nikolić (Montenegro) served as vice-chairs. The first two days of meetings were open, but then closed sessions were held until April 22.

Continuing from last year, the program of work included three agenda items: recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The first two items were taken up by Working Groups I and II. To address practical confidence-building measures in conventional arms, the Commission decided to create a third working group to convene at the end of the substantive session.

Debate during the first two plenary sessions covered all three topics, though most comments focused on nuclear related issues. Subjects discussed included strengthening the [NPT](#), negotiation of a [fissile material cut off treaty](#), [negative security assurances](#), and

the entry into force of the [CTBT](#). Conventional weapons were also mentioned, particularly statements in support of an arms trade treaty and the full implementation of the [UN Program of Action](#) on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Working Group II was chaired by Kayode Laro (Nigeria) and addressed "elements of the draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade." It was the only group able to meet at the end of the first week, as the other vice-chairs had not been elected. On 7 April the chair circulated a [non-paper](#) containing proposed elements of a draft declaration based on the discussions and proposals of the 2009 and 2010 sessions. From 7 to 13 April, delegates worked on finalizing the wording of a draft declaration. They also considered new proposals, additions and amendments to the draft text. However, significant substantive differences emerged over specific references to nuclear disarmament and a world free nuclear weapons in the context of commitments under the NPT. The group was unable to approve the text of the declaration, and the revised draft was not issued as a chair's paper. At its last meeting on 14 April, the Working Group adopted a [draft procedural report](#) by consensus.

Working Group I discussed "recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". Knut Lange-land (Norway) was elected chair on 7 April. An open ended discussion of issues related to nuclear disarmament took place on 7 and 8 April, but member states could not achieve consensus. Deliberations continued on 11-13 April and resulted in the adoption of a [draft procedural report](#) on 14 April.

Working Group III focused on "practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms." On 15 April, Liseth Ancidey (Venezuela) was elected to chair Working Group III, which met from 15 to 20 April. On 18 April the chair circulated a non-paper presenting possible subjects of discussion. Delegates debated the non-paper and proposed revisions that were included in a subsequent version of the non-paper. On April 20 the Working Group adopted a [draft report](#).

The Plenary session took place on 21 April, where the Commission adopted by consensus its [draft report](#). The report was purely procedural, however, as the delegates were unable to come to a consensus on substantive issues for the twelfth year in a row.

2010: The UNDC 2010 Session took place from 29 March-16 April in New York. Ambassador Jean-

UNGA-5

Francis Regis Zinsou (Benin) served as the chairperson, Lachezara Stoeva (Bulgaria) served as rapporteur, and Attila Zimonyi (Hungary), Raphael Hermoso (Philippines), Youn Jong Kwon (Republic of Korea), Hassan Hamid Hassan (Sudan), Juan Ignacio Morro (Spain), and Penny Douli (Greece) served as vice-chairs.

The Committee delegated work for the second year of its current three-year cycle to the two working groups that had been formed in 2009. The items tasked to working groups I and II, respectively, consisted of “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation” and “Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade.” Working Group I continued with Paolo Cuculi of Italy as chair, and Working Group II with Johan Paschalis of South Africa.

It was agreed that the third agenda item, “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons,” would be taken up upon the conclusion of the preparation of the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, preferably by the end of 2011.

2009: The Disarmament Commission held its annual session in New York 13 April – 1 May. The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Andrzej Towpik of Poland and produced routine documents for consideration and revision at the 2010 meeting.

After overcoming substantial difficulties related to the order of the agenda topics, the Commission established two working groups. Working Group I considered “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons,” although no recommendations were agreed upon. After a few days of difficulty in selecting a chair for the working group, Paolo Cuculi of Italy was elected to the chairmanship. Due to limited time, the working group focused on thematic debates, leaving substantive discussions and recommendations for next year.

Working Group II discussed [“Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade,”](#) and the chair, Johan Paschalis of South Africa, submitted a [draft non-paper](#), which will require further revisions at next year’s meeting.

The reports for [Working Group I](#) and [Working Group II](#), as well as the [report of the Commission](#), were adopted at the final plenary meeting. The Commission considered the inclusion of an amendment but ultimately rejected the idea after Pakistan declared it

thought it would confuse the agenda for the following year and India suggested its removal. The amendment consisted of a paragraph that stated the UNDC consider the elements presented in the draft declaration in the 2010 substantive session.

2008: The 2008 UNDC Session held from 7 - 25 April, failed to adopt recommendations in both of its working groups: nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation and practical confidence-building measures in conventional weapons, though these topics have been on the UNDC agenda for the previous eight years.

Within the working group on disarmament and non-proliferation, participants were unable to reach agreement on the chair’s working paper pertaining to the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East and negative security assurances. However, the majority of working group participants declared their support for the entry into force of the CTBT, negotiations for a ban on fissile material, and the irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons. Additionally, the full implementation of the NPT was also discussed by participants. Representing the Non-Aligned Movement, Dr. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa of Indonesia suggested an international conference to establish a “phased program for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.”

Within the working group, delegations also expressed concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear energy program. The representative of the EU, Ambassador Sanja Štiglic of Slovenia remarked that, [“Iran’s nuclear programme poses a major challenge to the non-proliferation regime.”](#) In response, the delegation from Iran noted its country’s extensive cooperation with the IAEA.

In the working group on confidence-building measures (CBMs), participants reached consensus on several points on the chair’s paper though they were not able to make any recommendations. The United States, Russia, and China were also able to agree on language pertaining to outer space. However, participants were not able to support the Mine Ban Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, and though participants agreed to language on negotiations for a cluster munitions ban, it was extremely weak.

Throughout the session, participants also stressed the utility of CBMs, but also noted that CBMs, due to their voluntary nature, should not replace actual disarmament measures.

Finally, many participants stressed the importance of military spending transparency. In particular, the delegations from the [Republic of South Korea](#) and [Japan](#)

UNGA-6

noted the success of the UN Register of Conventional Arms in achieving transparency. Furthermore, numerous delegations voiced their support for a general reduction in military spending.

Though the final plenary meeting of the 2008 session was cancelled, delegations had the opportunity to state their closing remarks in an earlier session. Most delegations noted the stagnation of the disarmament and nonproliferation regimes and were particularly frustrated by the lack of representation at the UNDC Session, including a lack of participation by disarmament experts. In response, the UNDC Chair, Ambassador Piet de Klerk of the Netherlands suggested that one of the plenary meetings or a new plenary meeting be reserved for presentations and panel discussions by experts in order to facilitate discussion and momentum. However, this suggestion was met with hesitation by a number of states that maintained that experts would not be able to bridge states' policy differences.

2007: The Disarmament Commission held its annual session from 9 - 27 April and adopted its draft report, as well as those of two subsidiary bodies. The commission addressed two substantive issues: nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

Chairman Elbio Rosselli of Uruguay noted that 29 April marked the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and that the convention had been the first disarmament agreement negotiated within a multilateral framework.

The commission heard closing remarks from the Russian and Cuban delegations. The Cuban representative expressed regret over the lack of political will towards drafting concrete recommendations on nuclear disarmament. The representative of the Russian Federation noted that violations of the Treaty on Conventional Use of Armed Forces and the pursuit of anti-ballistic missile defense in Europe had impacted the commission's work.

2006: As the Disarmament Commission opened for its annual session in New York in April, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Nobuaki Tanaka addressed the commission calling for urgent, new momentum, especially with regard to nuclear arms. Despite heightened global concern over the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the risk of acquisition by terrorists, there has been virtual stagnation on the disarmament front.

Tanaka reminded the commission that in 2003, the session concluded without reaching consensus on concrete proposals to advance nuclear disarmament or confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, and no consensus was achieved on agenda items for its 2004 and 2005 sessions with no substantive meetings held in 2005. He urged the body to strive to do better and provide fresh momentum on the disarmament front.

2005: The Disarmament Commission did not hold any substantive meetings in 2005.

In June and July, the commission, led by the chair-designate for the 2005 substantive session, held five informal meetings. Chair Vohidov of Uzbekistan proposed the following two items on nuclear and conventional disarmament for inclusion in the provisional agenda of its substantive session:

- 1) "Recommendations for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, in particular for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament"
- 2) "Practical confidence building measures, including verification mechanisms, in the field of conventional weapons."

On 20 July, the commission agreed, ad referendum, to include the following text in its report: "the issue of measures for improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the Disarmament Commission will be considered in plenary meetings at its 2006 substantive session, with equitable time allocated to it."

On 19 and 22 July, the commission agreed, ad referendum, to the inclusion of the two items above on the provisional agenda of its substantive session. The second item, "Practical confidence building measures, including verification mechanisms, in the field of conventional weapons" was amended to "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons."

On 22 July, one delegation proposed an oral amendment to the item on nuclear disarmament, halting further talks for the time being, and leaving the commission without an agreed agenda for its 2006 substantive session.

On 26 July, the commission decided to close its 2005 organizational session and meet at its organizational session for 2006 in November-December 2005. The commission also decided to hold the 2006 substantive session during a period of three weeks in April 2006.

2004: On Monday, 5 April, the United Nations Disarmament Commission convened in New York, as scheduled. Yet despite months of diplomatic wrangling over the substantive agenda items, the major players – the US, the UK, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) – remained deadlocked and the session was postponed. In his opening statement as Chair, Georgia’s Ambassador Revaz Adamia urged Members to “seek inspiration” from past achievements of the Commission, such as Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and conventional arms control measures. He stressed the need for revitalized efforts in the face of new challenges to the international disarmament regime, including “new concepts of deadly weaponry,” threats of terrorism, and “the readiness or willingness of some Member States to comply” with existing obligations.

Under-Secretary-General Nobuyasu Abe, too, delivered a short intervention, in which he reminded States that, “the work of this Commission has been shaped by the political will of its members” and called for “increased joint efforts to strengthen the multilateral system of international peace and security.”

For the 2004 session, the NAM States wished to continue deliberations on the issues of nuclear disarmament and confidence building measures (CBMs). The United States, which drafted a 2003 GA resolution (58/126) on the issue of First committee reform, wished for the Commission to deliberate the non-substantive issue of UNDC reform. Finally, the United Kingdom proposed an agenda that would cover nuclear verification and best practices in SALW. The informal consultations on the agenda continued immediately after the Chair suspended the session on 5 April and continued throughout the next three weeks of the 2004 annual session.

On 22 December, the first part of the organizational meeting was held to consider questions related to the organization of work and substantive agenda items for the 2005 substantive session in accordance with the adopted “Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission” (A/CN.10/137) and in the light of General Assembly resolution 59/105. The commission appointed Vice-Chair Alisher Vohidov of Uzbekistan as acting chair of the commission to perform duties of the chair until such time when the commission completed its consultation on the composition of the Bureau for 2005.

2003: On 31 March - 17 April, the Disarmament Commission met for the third year of deliberations on two items: ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament, and practical confidence-building measures

in the field of conventional arms. Chaired by Mario Maiolini of Italy, the commission assembled amid a troubled international environment as well as persisting concerns over the future of multilateral disarmament efforts. The commission was, however, unable to adopt concrete proposals to advance either nuclear disarmament or confidence-building in the field of conventional arms, mainly due to the lack of political will by some Members states, the delay in disarmament tactics and the broadness of the disarmament issue. The commission did adopt a procedural report that included the factual reports by both working groups.

The first item, “Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament” was considered by Working Group I chaired by Mr. Alaa Isaa (Egypt). One of the main reasons why agreement could not be reached on this topic was India’s objection to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) being referenced in the Chairman’s draft report. The United States also raised concerns over the inclusion of a number of principles on possible ways to advance nuclear disarmament.

Working group II, chaired by Mr. Santiago Irzabal Mourao (Brazil) considered “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms.” Although most States were supportive of the draft text introduced by the chairman at the start of the Commission’s session, agreement was at the end impossible due to the failure of confidence-building measures necessary to reduce tension and prevent conflict over disarmament matters. Strong disagreement existed over matters such as the use of force in international relations, military expenditures, the inclusion of pre-emptive strikes in nuclear deterrence policies, the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and the deadlocked state of the Conference on Disarmament.

As the commission normally completes its consideration of two items in three years, with the consensus adoption of guidelines and recommendations, member states will have to identify and agree on two new items prior to the commission’s next session in 2004. In this regard, the 52nd General Assembly session decided (52/492) that as of the 2000 substantive session, the substantive agenda of the commission should normally comprise two agenda items per year from the whole range of disarmament issues, including one on nuclear disarmament, and that the possibility of a third agenda item would be retained if there was a consensus to adopt such an item.

2002: The 2002 session of the UNDC was cancelled. As a result of postponements and changes to the UN

calendar, caused by the disruption of activities in September 2001, participants at UNDC organizational meetings were unable to decide upon an appropriate date for the 2002 substantive session. This decision was taken with the understanding that it would be without prejudice to the future work of the UNDC.

2001: The Disarmament Commission held its 2001 substantive session from 9-27 April 2001, under the chairmanship of Diane Quarless (Jamaica). The commission adopted by consensus reports of its two working groups and conclusions and recommendations contained therein on ways to achieve nuclear disarmament and practical CBMs in the field of conventional arms. While the UNDC Working Groups convened to consider these issues, no consensus was reached regarding how to treat these issues. The commission adopted these reports, which were presented to the General Assembly at its 56th session.

2000: The 2000 substantive session, held from 26 June-7 July, was chaired by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Javad Zarif. The Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus a draft report, as well as the draft reports of its two working groups on nuclear disarmament and on practical CBMs in the field of conventional arms. While the UNDC Working Groups convened to consider these issues, no consensus was reached regarding how to treat these issues. All three reports were submitted to the General Assembly at its 55th session.

1999: The 1999 substantive session of the UNDC was held from 12-30 April in New York, and was chaired by Maged Abdelaziz (Egypt). The Disarmament Commission concluded its deliberations in the three working groups, reaching agreement on guidelines for the establishment of NWFZs and conventional arms control for the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations. The commission could not, however, reach consensus on the objectives and agenda for the UNGA's Fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD IV).

The guidelines for the establishment of NWFZs stipulate that the initiative to establish a NWFZ must emanate exclusively from States within the region concerned and be pursued by all the States in that region. The NWS and any other States responsible for territory within the zone should be consulted during negotiations.

The guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament with particular em-

phasis on consolidation of peace in the context of UNGA Resolution 51/45N, apply to the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations and call for transparency in armaments and confidence building to stem the increasing flow and accumulation of conventional weapons.

The paper presented by the Chairman on the fourth special session of the UNGA devoted to disarmament highlighted possible agenda items that had been identified by the 1998 substantive session of the UNDC. No consensus was reached on this matter.

1998: The 1998 substantive session of the UNDC was held from 6-28 April in New York. The commission, chaired by Sergey Martynov (Belarus), addressed and established three working groups for the following disarmament areas: the establishment of NWFZs, the development of guidelines on conventional arms control, limitation and disarmament, and the preparations for the SSOD IV.

The commission concluded its third and last year's work on the SSOD IV having failed to reach an agreement on its objectives and agenda. However, a resolution (A/RES/53/77AA) was passed in the 53rd session of the UNGA that recommended that the item be included in the 1999 session of the Committee for an unprecedented fourth year in order to "promote agreement on the agenda and timing of the special session." Thus, work on all three items continued in 1999.

Other UN Disarmament Bodies:

[UN Institute for Disarmament Research \(UNIDIR\)](#)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

UNIDIR is an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations. It was established by the General Assembly for the purpose of undertaking independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. UNIDIR was established in October 1980 on the basis of UNGA Resolution 37/99K. The Statute of UNIDIR was approved by the UNGA in 1984 (Resolution 39/148H). The Director of UNIDIR reports annually to the UNGA on the activities of the Institute. The UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters functions as UNIDIR's Board of Trustees.

The work of the Institute aims to:

- provide the international community with more diversified and complete data on problems relating to international security, the armaments race, and disarmament in all fields;
- promote informed participation by all States in disarmament efforts;
- assist ongoing negotiations on disarmament and continuing efforts to ensure greater international security at progressively lower levels of armaments by means of objective and factual studies and analyses; and
- carry out more in-depth, forward-looking, and long-term research on disarmament so as to provide general insight into the problems involved and to stimulate new initiatives for new negotiations.

UNIDIR cooperates with research institutes, develops and maintains a computerized information and documentation database service, publishes research papers, reports, and a quarterly journal, *Disarmament Forum*, and organizes regional conferences. It also has a fellowship program to enable scholars from both developed and developing countries to conduct research at the Institute.

The Institute's activities are grouped into three areas:

- Global Security and Disarmament – covers international arms control agreements and their implementation as well as questions on international security, missiles and weapons of mass destruction
- Regional Security and Disarmament - develops themes linked to conflict concentrated in specific areas of the globe, such as promoting civil society participation in West African disarmament dialogues
- Human Security and Disarmament - explores the complex interrelations between disarmament, human rights, and development; anti-personnel mines, small arms, and peace-building issues feature prominently in this area

The Institute's budget is financed mainly by voluntary contributions from governments and public or private organizations. A contribution to the costs of the Director and staff may be provided from the UN regular budget.

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The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

[\[Back to top\]](#)

The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters was established in 1978 pursuant to paragraph 124 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, and received its current mandate pursuant to General Assembly Decision 54/418 of 1 December, 1999. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters has the following functions:

- to advise the Secretary-General on matters within the area of arms limitation and disarmament, including on studies and research under the auspices of the United Nations or institutions within the United Nations system;
- to serve as the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR); and
- to advise the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Disarmament Information Program.

The Secretary-General chooses the members of the Board from all regions of the world for their knowledge and experience in the field of disarmament and international security. Members serve an initial two-year term. There were 15 members in 2010. The Director of UNIDIR is an *ex officio* member.

The Advisory Board holds two sessions a year, alternating between New York and Geneva. The Board adopts its agenda based on requests from the Secretary-General for advice on specific disarmament issues and upon its own recommendations of items to be considered. The chairman of the Board rotates by region on a yearly basis, and is responsible for submission of a private report on the session to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General reports annu-

ally to the General Assembly on the activities of the Advisory Board.

In its role as Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Advisory Board reviews reports of the work of the Institute, including completed and on going projects, personnel and financial matters, and future plans.

2010: The Board held its 53rd session from 24-26 February in New York. During the session, the two primary issues addressed included: “Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference” and “Follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education.”

The 54th Session of the Board took place from 7-9 July in Geneva. Issues discussed during this meeting were “Follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education” and the “Exchange of views on the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.”

2009: The three chief items on the Board’s agenda for this year were “cyberwarfare and its impact on international security,” “ways to strengthen the field of verification, including the role of the United Nations,” and “Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.” The Board held its 51st session on 18-20 February in New York. The Board’s 52nd session was held from 1-3 July in Geneva. On 12 August, the board issued a report to the UNGA during their 64th session. In its report, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General: raise the awareness of governments and the public regarding the emerging risks and threats of cyberwarfare; encourage Member States to provide feedback on verification studies so that a better understanding emerges that a “one-size-fits-all” approach is counterproductive in regard to verification; consider a role for regional organizations in verification matters; and encourage Member States to sign the IAEA additional protocol and implement confidence-building measures.

2008: At its 49th and 50th sessions, the Board discussed issues of energy security and environment in the field of disarmament and nonproliferation as well as the ‘Hoover Plan’ for nuclear disarmament including multilateralism and the UN dimension. The Board further discussed emerging weapons technologies, including outer space aspects.

2007: At its 48th session, the Board reviewed ways to advance the disarmament agenda as well as emerging weapons technologies including outer space aspects.

2006: At its 47th session, the Board discussed the way ahead in building an international security system as well as the consolidation and further development of international norms on small arms and light weapons (SALW). At its 46th session, the Board reviewed the situation in the field of disarmament in light of the decisions taken at the summit held on the occasion of the 60th session of the UNGA. The Board also discussed measures to prevent the proliferation of weapon systems to non-state actors.

2005: At its 45th session, the Board conducted a review of disarmament machinery and discussed challenges and opportunities at the regional level in the areas of WMD and conventional arms. At its 44th session held in February, the Board focused on the nuclear fuel cycle and the control of fissile materials. In addition, regional security and global norms issues concerning small arms and light weapons were also included in the session.

2004: At its 43rd session, the board discussed export controls and evaluated its contribution to the work of the secretary-general’s panel on threats, challenges, and change. In its 42nd session held in February, terrorism and WMD capabilities concerning their delivery systems and disarmament and reconciliation in conflict resolution were discussed.

2003: At its 41st session, the compliance, verification, and enforcement of multilateral treaties and rising military expenditures were among the issues concerning disarmament and human security that were discussed. At its 40th session, the items discussed were open source data for disarmament and the relationship between disarmament and development. A review of the functioning and effectiveness of the board in the context of its 25th anniversary of its establishment was also conducted.

2002: At its 39th session, the board discussed, among other things, issues related to the preparedness of public health systems to deal with bio-terrorism, nuclear security and safety, the weaponization of outer space, rising military expenditure, disarmament and development, and disarmament education. The 38th session was composed of topics addressing biological weapons and the BWT Convention, small arms and light weapons, and WMD and terrorism.

2001: The Advisory Board focused on “the revolution in military affairs,” the illicit trade in small arms, reduction of nuclear dangers, nonproliferation regimes, and NWFZs as useful instruments of disarmament. The members also agreed that there existed a “crisis of multilateral disarmament diplomacy” and

that the UN had important roles in addressing the crisis, including through public education, especially with respect to nuclear disarmament.

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Reporting Mechanisms:

Reduction of Military Budgets: Instrument for Standardized International Reporting of Military Expenditures

Established by the UNGA Resolution 25/142B in 1980. In 1985, the UNGA reiterated its recommendation that all Member States should annually report by 30 April to the secretary-general their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, using the reporting instrument. The standardized reporting form invites aggregate and detailed data on expenditures incurred on personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement and construction, and research and development. The alternative simplified reporting form only seeks aggregate data on personnel, operations and procurement.

Thus far, more than 120 States have reported to this instrument at least once since it commenced operation in 1981. Annual participation registered significant increases in recent years over all previous years. The highest number of national submissions recorded so far was 82 in 2002, rising from 61 in 2001, while the average level of participation during the 1980s and 1990s was fewer than 30.

UN Register of Conventional Arms

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Established 1 January 1992, under UNGA Resolution 46/36L, “Transparency in Armaments,” of 6 December 1991. The purpose of the UN Register of Conventional Arms is to serve as a universal and non-discriminatory CBM designed to give early warning and prevent the excessive and de-stabilizing accumulation of arms.

Procedures approved by the UNGA call for the voluntary submission by Member States of data on all items exported or imported in seven major weapon categories: battle tanks, armored vehicles, large cali-

ber artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, and missiles/misile launchers. Background information is also requested on each country’s military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies. Submitted information is made available to the public.

All Member States are invited to participate by providing information for each calendar year by 30 April of the following year. A “nil” report indicates that the reporting country did neither import nor export any arms covered by the Register. A “substantive” report implies that the State did import or export such weapons.

Submission results:

- 2010: 69 reports (30 nil, 39 substantive)
- 2009: 78 reports (30 nil, 48 substantive)
- 2008: 80 reports (31 nil, 51 substantive)
- 2007: 91 reports (39 nil, 52 substantive)
- 2006: 113 reports (61 nil, 49 substantive)
- 2005: 118 reports (58 nil, 59 substantive)
- 2004: 117 reports (64 nil, 51 substantive)
- 2003: 115 reports (66 nil, 49 substantive)
- 2002: 123 reports (76 nil, 46 substantive)
- 2001: 126 reports (77 nil, 49 substantive)
- 2000: 118 reports (64 nil, 54 substantive)
- 1999: 100 reports (42 nil, 56 substantive)
- 1998: 85 reports (30 nil, 54 substantive)
- 1997: 99 reports (44 nil, 54 substantive)
- 1996: 94 reports (41 nil, 51 substantive)
- 1995: 97 reports (42 nil, 54 substantive)
- 1994: 98 reports (45 nil, 53 substantive)
- 1993: 94 reports (45 nil, 49 substantive)
- 1992: 95 reports (39 nil, 56 substantive)

The UN secretary-general releases an annual report of the UN Register of Conventional Arms in July that covers all of the data for the previous year; subsequently a number of addenda and corrigenda are published after the release of the report. The latest report was released in July 2009 ([A/64/135](#)) covering data for the year 2008.

Thus far, 173 States, including 3 non-member States have reported to the Register one or more times. The

UNGA-12

Register captures the great bulk of the global arms trade in the categories of conventional weapons covered by it.

Groups of Governmental Experts (GGE)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

i. The Group of Governmental Experts on the UN Register of Conventional Arms:

2010: The GGE held two meetings during its 2010 session that were both presided over by Jesus S. Domingo of the Philippines. The first 2010 session meeting took place from 12-16 April in Geneva. Participants addressed issues such as anti-runway and anti-ship munitions, the nature of safeguarding mechanisms, self-destruction mechanisms, self-propelled mechanisms, air defense, and assistance to cluster munitions victims. Particular attention was given to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

The second meeting of 2010 session took place on 30 August – 3 September in Geneva. Participants continued discussions from the earlier meeting. Particular emphasis was placed on definitions, international humanitarian law, logistics of the storage and transfer of conventional weapons, clearance and destruction of cluster munitions remnants, victim assistance, and enhanced international cooperation. Special attention was given to determining ways that States could better support the Convention on Cluster Munitions, particularly since the agreement entered into force on 1 August.

2009: The Group of Governmental Experts held three meetings for its 2009 session. The first two occurred from 16-20 February and 27 April-1 May, and the third from 6-10 July. The 2009 report ([A/64/296](#)) was released on 14 August.

The GGE's principal stated aim in 2009 was to determine whether the seven weapons categories that the Register keeps data on are sufficient to provide an accurate picture of global security in the 21st century. In its first two meetings, the GGE discussed the potential addition of new categories to the Register for small arms and light weapons (SALW) and unmanned combat air vehicles. The GGE also considered amending existing categories to include vehicles that perform command and control functions, reconnaissance, and electronic warfare.

With the conclusion of the third meeting, the Group was unable to reach consensus on either proposal regarding the expansion of the Register's scope on new classes of equipment. However, the Group noted

that such issues merit review by future Groups. The Group did make recommendations regarding measures to assist Member States with the submission of meaningful reports and made necessary adjustments to the standardized reporting forms. The report also addressed ways in which to improve the relevance and promotion of universal participation in the Register. In the report, the Group affirmed that efforts should be made toward enhancing participation in the Register, including workshops, increased cooperation between the UN Secretariat and relevant regional/sub-regional organizations, in addition to outreach activities by the ODA and regional disarmament centers. Due to the reduced time for deliberation for the 2009 Group, it was recommended that future Groups be given sufficient time to complete their program of work.

In their final report, the Group put forth five recommendations. The first recommendation encouraged increased and consistent participation by States in order to promote universality. Second, the Group reaffirmed all recommendations made by the 2006 GGE in their report ([A/61/261](#)). The Group also recommended that all Member States use the newer versions of the reporting forms for all future submissions. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General seek the views of the Member States on whether the absence of SALW as a main category in the Register had limited its relevance and affected decisions on participation. Finally, the GGE recommended that the next regular review of the Register be held in 2012.

2006: The 2006 Group of Governmental Experts was established under General Assembly resolution 60/226 of 23 December 2005, which requested the Secretary-General prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, taking into account the views expressed by Member States and the reports of previous Secretary-Generals on the subject.

The group concluded that significant progress had been made towards achieving a high level of participation, but that universal participation would enhance the effectiveness of the Register as a global confidence-building instrument. The group recognized the need to provide the Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) with adequate assistance to carry out outreach and promotional activities.

The group amended the category VI definition of a warship and recommended an overhaul of the Register's website and database. It also recommended that

the DDA conduct a pilot project to test the feasibility of electronic filing of reports

2003: The 2003 Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation and further development of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 57/75, successfully concluded its work at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 1 August by adopting a consensus report.

The report contained a number of recommendations submitted by the Group of Experts, which are designed to improve the operation of the Register further and to enhance its global relevance. Notably, the group recommended that technical adjustments be made to two of the seven categories of conventional arms covered by the Register. Specifically, it proposed that the reporting threshold for large-caliber artillery systems should be lowered from 100 to 75 millimeters, and that man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS) should be included in Category VII entitled "Missiles and Missile Launchers."

The Group discussed in detail a range of other issues, including the status of reporting on procurement through national production and military holdings, as well as the relationship of small arms and light weapons to the Register. So far, 164 member states have participated at least once in this voluntary reporting instrument, while a record number of 126 states submitted reports on arms transfers last year.

A report of the final meeting was submitted to the 58th General Assembly at UN Headquarters.

From 17 - 21 March 2003, the Group of Governmental Experts held its fourth review of the Register pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 57/75 of 22 November 2002. The resolution requested the secretary-general, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened in 2003, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, with a view of a decision at its fifty-eighth session.

Aside from examining the progress made so far in terms of participation level and the quality of data submitted by States, the governmental experts examined a range of issues pertaining to the current scope of the Register, its existing procedures and operation, as well as the implementation of recommendations made by the group of governmental experts in 2000. The group also considered the outcome of a series of regional and sub-regional workshops held over the last two years in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin

America and the Caribbean. The Department for Disarmament Affairs facilitated these workshops in cooperation with the Governments of Canada, Germany, Japan and the Netherlands.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs at the UN Secretariat is responsible for maintaining an electronic database for the import/export data submitted, and files on background information.

2000: The Group of Governmental Experts on the UN Register met from 24 July-4 August 2000. They held two other meetings in the year 2000, from 6-10 March and from 22 May-2 June. The Group submitted its report to the secretary-general (A/55/281) on 9 August of that year. The report contains the following conclusions and recommendations:

The Group emphasized the consistent level of participation since 1992 and the improved quality of information provided by States, but stated that there were wide variations in the level of reporting among regions.

The Group stressed the importance of universal participation and encouraged more States to participate on a regular basis, both in reporting data and information and in making "nil" reports on imports and exports of conventional weapons covered by the Register.

The Group stressed the importance of the principal of transparency and its relevance to WMD and considered the proposal to add a new category to include such weapons. The group, however, agreed that this was an issue to be addressed by the General Assembly.

The Group recommended that the practice of holding periodic reviews, which is essential to the task of ensuring the continued progress of the Register, should be continued.

The Group also met in 1997 and submitted its report to the secretary-general (A/52/316) on 29 August of that year.

1994: In 1994, the Group of Governmental Experts, with members from 25 countries, first met to review operation of the Register and consider its further development, including the addition of new categories of equipment and data on military holdings and procurement through national production. The Group did not reach consensus on any substantial expansion or changes. The following year, the UNGA passed Resolution 50/70 D, which called for continued participation in the Register and requested the secretary-general, with the assistance of a group of government-

UNGA-14

tal experts to be convened in 1997, to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development for submission to the UNGA with a view to a decision at its 1997 session.

ii. Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

The issue of tracing illicit small arms and light weapons was identified during the preparatory process for the July 2001 UN Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (SALW), and at the conference itself, as one of the most critical problems to be addressed in the global efforts to combat, prevent, and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW.

The Program of Action adopted by the conference reflected this concern by recommending that the UNGA “undertake a study, within existing resources, for examining the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner, illicit SALW.”

Accordingly, the UNGA established the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (GGE) and requested “... the secretary-general to undertake a UN study, commencing during the 56th session of the General Assembly, within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by States in a position to do so, and with the assistance of Governmental Experts appointed by him on the basis of equitable geographical representation, while seeking the views of States, to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons and to submit the study to the General Assembly at its 58th Session.”

At the invitation of the secretary-general, the following 23 Member States appointed representatives to the GGE: Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Thailand.

The GGE held three sessions since its establishment: 1-5 July 2002 (Geneva); 24 - 28 March 2003 (Geneva); and 2 - 6 June 2003 (New York).

2002–2003: At its first meeting the Group elected Ambassador Rakesh Sood, Permanent Representative of India to the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as its Chairman, and agreed on the two main guidelines that would govern its deliberations. First, the GGE should focus on its precise mandate, and refrain, to

the extent possible, from discussing other issues that may be important in their own right, but are peripheral to the task at hand. Second, the GGE was not intended to negotiate an international instrument, but rather, was tasked with reporting on the feasibility of developing such an instrument.

In seeking to define the scope of its task with the necessary precision, the GGE examined the issue of definitions such as what constitutes “illicit SALW”; the main components of tracing, namely marking, recordkeeping, and international cooperation, and their respective technical and political dimensions, in the context of both combating crime and conflict and post-conflict situations. Participants enriched the discussion of these and other related issues by examining their relevant national and regional experiences.

The Group concluded its work on 6 June 2003 and agreed to a set of recommendations to the 58th Session General Assembly, including the need for negotiating an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit arms and light weapons.

iii. Group of Governmental Experts to Consider Further Steps to Enhance International Cooperation in Preventing, Combating and Eradicating the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

Illicit brokering is considered one of the major obstacles to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and in ensuring full implementation of United Nations arms embargoes.

On 8 December 2005, with op. 3 of resolution 60/81, the General Assembly established a group of governmental experts “to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons in three sessions of one week’s duration each and to submit the report on the outcome of its study to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.”

On 7 June 2006, the secretary-general appointed a GGE from 25 states: Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.

The GGE has held three sessions since its establishment: 27 November-1 December 2006 (Geneva); 19-23 March and 4-8 June 2007 (New York). During its

first session on 27 November 2006, Mr. Daniël Prins of the Netherlands was selected as chairman of the GGE.

The third session of the Group concluded with suggestions regarding a set of optional elements to be included in national legislation and a call for consistent attention to the issue of illicit brokering in small arms at future UN meetings.

A consensus report was adopted by the end of the third session. It included the first agreed description of what constitutes illicit brokering in small arms. The definition takes a more holistic approach to countering illicit arms brokering by including activities such as transportation and financing. The report also noted that unregulated or poorly regulated arms brokering may result in an increased risk of the diversion of arms to conflict-prone areas, embargoed entities, and organized criminal and terrorist groups.

iv. UN Group of Governmental Experts on Disarmament and Nonproliferation Education

On 20 November 2000, the General Assembly, acting on the advice of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, adopted without a vote Resolution 55/33 E entitled “United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education.” In this resolution, the Assembly requested the secretary-general to prepare such a study, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, and to report to the Assembly on the question at its 57th session (2002). The report was adopted by the UNGA on 22 November 2002 (A/57/124).

The Study builds upon and seeks to revitalize past efforts at disarmament education, which it considers an integral part of peace education. It tackles new elements such as the growth in the significance of nonproliferation of WMD and small arms, as well as gender perspectives on security issues. Its main contribution is the 34 recommendations for action to be undertaken by governments, regional organizations, the United Nations and other international organizations, municipal, and religious leaders. It also seeks to establish close collaboration between experts and civil society, including educators and academic institutions mainly at the secondary and tertiary levels of education.

The 10 governmental experts represent diverse geographical regions of the world and different approaches, philosophies, and cultures with respect to education within regions. They come from Egypt, Hungary, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Senegal, and Sweden.

2002: The 10 experts preparing the United Nations Study on Disarmament and Nonproliferation Education met for the third time at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, from 11–15 March, for a special purpose. They hoped to incorporate contributions from educators, educational organizations, and non-governmental organizations that might not have easy access to New York. The meeting succeeded in drawing together representatives from organizations deeply immersed in disarmament education and international security issues. The Group of Governmental Experts held the fourth session in New York from 22–27 July.

2001: The first session was held in New York City from 18–20 April. The experts gathered information from oral and written presentations by relevant United Nations offices and agencies and from leading formal and informal educators in disarmament and nonproliferation education. The Group of Governmental Experts held its second session from 8–10 August in the form of a study visit hosted by the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California. The focus of the meeting was on evaluating new pedagogical approaches to teaching disarmament and nonproliferation, including the use of information technology and distance learning.

v. UN Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles in All Their Aspects

Recognizing the need to combat the missile proliferation threat, the General Assembly of the UN, in Resolution 55/33A, decided to convene a panel of governmental experts with a mandate to prepare a report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects for consideration by the General Assembly at its 57th session. The Panel was composed of 22 invited experts. The first session was held from 30 July–3 August 2001 in New York, and two more sessions were held in 2002 from 1–5 April and 1–12 July. The report “The issue of missiles in all its aspects” was adopted by the UNGA on 22 November 2002 (A/57/229).

vi. UN Group of Government Experts on Verification in All Its Aspects

UNGA resolution 59/60 established the UN Panel of Government Experts to “explore question of verification in all its aspects, including the role of the UN in the field of verification.” This is the third such UN Panel on Verification: the previous ones were held in 1990 and 1995. The Panel was chaired by Dr. John Barrett of Canada and met for three one-week sessions. The first session was held in New York from 30 January –3 February 2006; the second in Geneva

UNGA-16

from 8-12 May 2006; the third in New York from 7-11 August 2006. There were 16 members on the Panel: Argentina, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, the United States and Ukraine.

The panel's work encompassed nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological, and conventional weapons, as well as their means of delivery. Verification as it applies to activities involving non-state actors as well as states was examined during the sessions. During the first two sessions, the group focused on existing verification regimes in their specific contexts, examining strengths and shortcomings in terms of methods, procedures and technologies. The third session was dedicated to aspects of UN sanctions and illicit transfers of conventional weapons, and the role of verification in such circumstances. The Group issued its report "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification" to the First Committee and was subsequently adopted without a vote on 11 October 2006.

In its report, the Group made the following recommendations:

Non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament treaties, agreements and commitments should be defined in a way such that they can be subject to effective verification.

Verification approaches should be designed to enable the parties to an agreement to monitor compliance, and detect and collect evidence of possible non-compliance, before that non-compliance threatens the core security objectives of the agreement.

Analysis could be undertaken of the capability of existing and possible new verification methods to detect significant, deliberate non-compliance or a pattern of non-compliance with obligations.

Further consideration could be given to responses to withdrawal from multilateral treaties with specific reference to non-compliance and continuing verification, particularly where the withdrawing party has misused its technology and technology transfers for peaceful purposes to pursue prohibited weapons-related activities, and deny violators the benefits of their violations.

Consideration should be given to assisting relevant states and regional groups in developing the legal, institutional and operational capacity to implement their obligations under UNSC embargoes and sanctions. In this regard, the utilization and continued

development of effective, low-tech monitoring technologies and methodologies should be fostered, as well as strengthening national tracking of illegal arms flows and enhanced national controls on imports, exports, financial transactions and brokering related to illicit arms transfers.

The UN also could encourage improved coordination among Member States and regional organizations and assist affected states to participate actively in monitoring and verifying compliance with arms embargoes and sanctions.

UN member states, in line with UNSCR 1540, should consider the kind of practical assistance they can provide, particularly in the areas of reporting and capacity-building, in order to help states implement their non-proliferation obligations.

States should consider practically how they might go about handling challenge inspections at sensitive sites in order to manage access in a way that builds confidence that the process can demonstrate compliance.

The creation of new or expanded obligations may require different or new methodologies and techniques (such as, for example, environmental sampling, open source analysis, interviewing personnel, and informal monitoring by civil society).

In the context of General Assembly Resolutions A/Res/42/37/C and A/Res/45/57/C, States could consider ways in which they could contribute to making the Secretary-General's mechanism to investigate alleged use of CW/BW more operational and cost-effective through national measures.

Consideration should be given to strengthening ties and establishing appropriate standing arrangements with international organizations, including the OPCW, states and regional bodies, so as to build upon and make use of their relevant investigative capabilities and make the mechanism more operational and cost-effective.

States could continue to explore the synergies that may exist in the area of techniques and methodologies of monitoring and verification and in addressing situations relating to compliance and non-compliance.

Bilateral and regional arrangements could be encouraged to play a role, where appropriate, in promoting compliance, building confidence and detecting, assessing and responding to non-compliance.

vii. *Toward an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)*

There has been growing international support from across all regions for the negotiation of a treaty on common international standards on the import, export and transfer of all conventional arms, following the UN General Assembly's 2006 adoption of [Resolution \(61/89\)](#) by an overwhelming majority. Member States submitted views on the feasibility, scope and parameters of such a treaty in record numbers.

These submitted views informed the work of the Group of Governmental Experts, (GGE) appointed by the Secretary-General. In addition, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) produced both an analysis of States' views on an ATT and a report on the implications of those States' views with the aim of helping governments, non-governmental organizations and academics understand why and how discussions on an ATT have evolved, what the central issues and obstacles are, and what its scope could look like.

2010: The 2010 Arms Trade Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting took place from 12-23 July and was chaired by Ambassador Garcia Moritán of Argentina. Participants drafted an outline of the Arms Trade Treaty, including a preamble, outline of articles, and a set of goals and objectives.. Additionally, participants discussed ways to prepare for the 2011 Arms Trade Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting.

2009: The Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) met on 23 January for an Organization Session and again on 2-6 March for its First Session. Mr. Karel Komárek, Minister-Counselor at the permanent mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations, stated, on behalf of the European Union, that some consensus formed regarding the actual scope of the ATT.

Ms. Hannelore Hoppe, on behalf of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, delivered a statement in which she argued strongly for the passage of an ATT. She endorsed a Security Council statement from the previous November that called for "undiminished security for all at the lowest appropriate level of armaments." In the [debate](#) that ensued, the participants agreed on the desirability of an ATT, but several countries, including the United States and Russia, voiced concern over the feasibility of such a treaty.

The OEWG met for its Second Session from 13-17 July. Through the course of its sessions, the OEWG held 19 meetings, including two organizational meetings. From 16-17 July, the OEWG considered the "Report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth

session." The draft report was adopted by the OEWG at their 9th meeting.

In both the OEWG and the First Committee, the ATT garnered significant support. Most notably, the United States switched from a no-vote to a yes-vote, leaving Zimbabwe as the only country to cast a vote against the ATT. Both Iraq and Israel switched their abstentions to yes-votes. In addition, for the first year yes-votes were submitted by Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Palau, the Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Swaziland, Tonga, and Vanuatu. Cuba and Nicaragua, however, altered their yes-votes from the previous year to abstentions. The resolution adopted by the UNGA outlined a timetable for talks, including a UN conference in 2012.

2008: The GGE met three times in 2008: from 11-15 February, 12-16 May, and 28 July-8 August. The sessions brought together experts from 28 countries, including the five permanent members of the Security Council and other major arms exporters. Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, Secretary of Foreign Affairs at the Foreign Ministry of Argentina chaired these meetings. The Group produced a [report](#) for the General Assembly's 63rd session.

The General Assembly decided [Resolution \(63/240\)](#) "to establish an open-ended working group, to meet for up to six one-week sessions starting in 2009." The open-ended working group will, during 2009, "further consider those elements in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts where consensus could be developed for their inclusion in an eventual legally binding treaty on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms" and should submit an initial report to the next session of the General Assembly.

Programs:

UN Disarmament Information Program:

(prior to 1992 — World Disarmament Campaign) Instituted in 1979, it is a global program to inform, educate, and generate public understanding of UN activities in the field of disarmament.

UN Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Program:

The United Nations Program of Fellowships on Disarmament was launched by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978. The program aims at the training and specialization of national officials in more Member States, particularly in developing countries. It enables them

UNGA-18

to participate more effectively in international deliberating and negotiating forums.

Participants are selected on the basis of nominations invited from all Member States of the United Nations (one nomination per Member State per year). The selection of candidates is the responsibility of the substantive department (UN Department for Disarmament Affairs) on the basis of the greater needs of developing countries in terms of training their young diplomats in the field of disarmament and security, and the overall geographical balance.

The program is structured in three segments. The first segment of the program is carried out in Geneva and is aimed primarily at exposing the Fellows to multi-lateral negotiations on disarmament undertaken by the Conference on Disarmament and other intergovernmental meetings held there. The second segment of the program comprises study visits to intergovernmental organizations of relevance in the field of disarmament, as well as to Member States, at their invitation. The third segment of the program, which is held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, consists of a second cycle of lectures by members of delegations to the First Committee and United Nations officials, on items on the agenda of the Committee, and regular attendance in meetings of the Committee.

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