

The United Nations **DISARMAMENT YEARBOOK**



United
Nations

Volume 49

Office for Disarmament Affairs
New York, 2025

The United Nations
**DISARMAMENT
YEARBOOK**
2024

Volume **49**



**United
Nations**

COVER DESIGN: The 2024 Pact for the Future recognized youth participation as critical to international peace and security. **Top:** Young Latin American leaders gather in Lima in December to build a region free of armed violence through GenerAcción Paz, a collaboration between the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Development Programme. **Bottom:** Participants in the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons during their inaugural study visit to Japan in August.

TIMELINE PHOTOS:

Secretary-General António Guterres attends the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on 26 February to deliver his statement during the high-level segment.

The Security Council unanimously adopts resolution 1540 (2004) on 28 April 2004, deciding that all States would establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

Maritza Chan Valverde, President of the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations, briefs reporters on 19 June in New York.

Participants of the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons showcase their traditional Japanese calligraphy with peace messages during their study visit to Hiroshima in August.

Norwegian People's Aid representatives pose on the way to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's fifth Review Conference venue in Siem Reap, Cambodia, during a march for a mine-free world on 24 November. Over 3,000 people, including deminers, joined the march.

Herman Phleger, United States Representative at the Diplomatic Conference in Washington, D.C., signs the Antarctic Treaty on 1 December 1959. Paul C. Daniels, Alternate United States Representative, looks on (standing), and Secretary of State Christian A. Herter is seated at the back.

Available in electronic format at <https://yearbook.unoda.org> and <https://disarmament.unoda.org>.

UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATION
405 East 42nd Street, S-09FW001
New York, NY 10017
United States of America
Email: publications@un.org
Website: <https://shop.un.org>

Sales No. E.25.IX.8
Print ISBN: 9789210034975
PDF ISBN: 9789211072228

Copyright © 2025 United Nations
All rights reserved worldwide
Printed in the United States

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Volume 49 of the *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, like previous editions, was a collaboration to which the staff of the Office for Disarmament Affairs devoted considerable time and effort. It was prepared under the overall direction of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, and the Director of the Office, Adedeji Ebo. We sincerely thank all colleagues who contributed to this publication on behalf of other funds, programmes, entities and organizations.

Editor-in-Chief: Diane Barnes

Graphics Coordinator and Copy Editor: Cecile Salcedo

Graphic design and layout: Michelle Romero

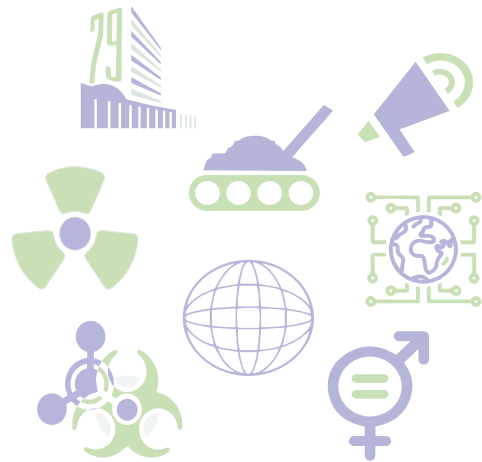
Writers and contributors:

Kena Alexander
Nora Allgaier
Saana Annala
Tania Banuelos
Tomisha Bino
Katja Boettcher
Virginia Browning
Mariame Camara
Natasha Carvalho-Malekane
Trushaa Castelino
Hyoung Rark Cho
Tam Chung
James Cooke
Amanda Cowl
Courtney Cresap
Asa Cusack
Jayjit Dave
Radha Day
Michelle Erazo
Estela Evangelista
Zihangu Fang
Sylvain Fanielle
Daniel Feakes
Claudia Garcia Guiza
Melanie Gerber
Christa Giles
Giada Greco

Sophie Guillermin-Golet
Yasmine Hadjouj
René Holbach
Leonie Frances Hopgood
Jiayi Huang
Zhandos Issayev
Rebecca Jovin
Erika Kawahara
Soo Hyun Kim
Christopher King
Kathryn Kuchenbrod
Hermann Lampalzer
Sebastien Lapierre
Theo Malhotra
Claudia Marquina
Manuel Martinez
Alice Marzi
Tak Mashiko
Hideki Matsuno
Anna Mensah
Silvia Mercogliano
Jiaming Miao
Annelisa Miglietti
Laurie Mincieli
Mohamed Aarif Mohamed
Sulaiman
Marykate Monaghan

Veerle Moyson
Cheriff Musombo
Yosuke Nakagawa
Suzanne Oosterwijk
Charles Ovink
Katherine Prizeman
Vanda Proskova
Mohamad Reza
Ida Scarpino
Damon Shavers
Diane Sheinberg
Fiona Simpson
Ariana Smith
Michael Spies
Gizem Sucuoglu
Olga Tegay
Frida Thomassen
Christine Uhlenhaut
Soledad Urruela
Juliana Helou van der Berg
Xiaoyu Wang
Lara Wilkinson
Anselme Yabouri
Yue Yao
Melissa Yi
Aaron Junhoung Yoo
Aleksandra Zubenko

GUIDE to the user



The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs publishes the *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* as a **concise reference tool** for diplomats, researchers, students and the general public on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control issues under consideration by the international community.

The Office releases the *Yearbook* in two versions: a **preview edition** providing a concise, accessible overview; and a **full edition** offering comprehensive coverage of the year's activities. Both editions are released within a year of the period they cover — the

preview edition launches in **July** and the full edition in **September**. Digital versions (PDF and website formats) are available at <https://yearbook.unoda.org>, while print copies can be purchased at <https://shop.un.org>.

The *Yearbook* is **divided into the main multilateral issues** under consideration throughout the year. It includes **developments and trends**, a convenient issue-oriented **timeline** and explanatory **graphics and charts**. The annex on **resolutions, status of treaties and other resources** is a one-stop shop for accessing recommended databases, publications and information materials from the year. The **Disarmament Resolutions and Decisions Database** contains the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, as well as their sponsors, voting patterns and other related information. The **Disarmament Treaties Database** provides the status of multilateral regulation and disarmament





agreements. The information in those databases was formerly published each year within the *Yearbook*; producing it in database form offers *Yearbook* users a more interactive experience and easier access to data from previous years. Both databases have filters for specific years.

The *Yearbook* website is user-friendly — accessible on **mobile devices** and available in **multiple languages** through third-party machine translation. Official translations in the six official languages of the United Nations will be uploaded as they become available.



Because much of the background information is condensed, consulting **previous editions** for expanded historical knowledge will be helpful.

Websites of United Nations departments and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, research institutes and non-governmental organizations are referenced as **hyperlinks in the online version** of the *Yearbook*.

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Hyperlinks to these documents are included in the online version of the *Yearbook*. Alternatively, they can be accessed, in the official languages of the United Nations, from <https://documents.un.org>.

Specific disarmament-related documents are also available from the **disarmament reference collection** at <https://library.unoda.org>.

CONTENTS

	1	Foreword
	4	Multilateral disarmament timeline: Highlights, 2024
Chapters		
1. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation	6	
2. Biological and chemical weapons	50	
3. Conventional weapons	82	
4. Regional disarmament	143	
5. Emerging, cross-cutting and other issues	196	
6. Gender and disarmament	225	
7. Disarmament machinery	253	
8. Information and outreach	280	
	317	Annex Resolutions, status of treaties and other resources
Disarmament resolutions and decisions of the seventy-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly	317	
Status of multilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements	317	
Publications and other information materials in 2024	317	
Events held on the margins of the 2024 session of the First Committee	327	



Infographics

Figure 1.1	Nuclear arsenals of the world	7
Figure 1.2	Status of safeguards agreements with States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as at 31 December 2024	9
Figure 2	Secretary-General's Mechanism: number of nominated qualified experts, expert consultants and analytical laboratories (2020–2024)	53
Figure 3.1	Trends in small arms and light weapons	84
Figure 3.2	Quick facts: unplanned explosions at munition sites	86
Figure 4	The Caribbean Firearms Roadmap: 2024 in numbers	146
Figure 5.2	Regional distribution of participants in the 2024 workshops on promoting responsible innovation in artificial intelligence for peace and security	199
Figure 6.1	Number and proportion of First Committee resolutions incorporating gender language, 2010–2024	227
Figure 6.2	Highlights: Women's participation in multilateral disarmament forums, 2024	230
Figure 7	First Committee 2024 at a glance: number of delegations delivering statements, 2023–2024	254
Figure 8.1	Youth4Disarmament programme: 2024 in numbers	282
Figure 8.2	Charting progress: the global reach of online disarmament education, as at 31 December 2024	284



Maps

Figure 5.1	Global intergovernmental points of contact directory in numbers, as at 31 December 2024	197
-------------------	---	-----



We must ask ourselves:
Can succeeding generations
sustain what was forged
in the crucible of shared
suffering? The answer to this
question may well determine
whether the founding purpose
of the United Nations is
reinvigorated as a living
commitment or becomes an
artefact of history.

Izumi Nakamitsu

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs



FOREWORD



I am pleased to present the 2024 *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*. For nearly five decades, this publication has provided an objective record of developments in multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Now in its forty-ninth volume, the *Yearbook* continues its vital mission to document efforts by the United Nations, Member States and other stakeholders to advance international peace and security through disarmament initiatives and arms control measures. Its enhanced preview edition, issued earlier in the year, equips policymakers and the public with a timely and authoritative overview of the most salient developments in this field.

As we reflect on the past year, we face a sobering truth: the international security architecture, built painstakingly over decades, now faces extraordinary strain. The proliferation of active conflicts, the erosion of established arms control frameworks and unprecedented military spending all signal a regression in our collective commitment to peace and security. The rapidly accelerating pace of these challenges starkly contrasts with the deliberate tempo of diplomatic processes — a fundamental misalignment portending yet more peril for people and the planet.

It is in this context that the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Nihon Hidankyo — the Japanese Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations — a poignant recognition of the tireless efforts of atomic bomb survivors to bear witness to the horrors

of nuclear weapons and to advocate for their abolition. This award arrives at a watershed moment, as the youngest hibakusha are now in their 80s, their lives having paralleled the existence of our Organization.

Indeed, both the United Nations and the hibakusha emerged from the cataclysm of the Second World War. For nearly eight decades, they have carried forward a shared mission: to spare our children and descendants from the ravages of war and the existential threat of nuclear annihilation.

As we witness the gradual passing of this generation of survivors — both the hibakusha and all those who withstood the global conflict — we confront not only the loss of their irreplaceable testimony, but also the fading of the first-hand insight that birthed our multilateral institutions. We must ask ourselves: Can succeeding generations sustain what was forged in the crucible of shared suffering? The answer to this question may well determine whether the founding purpose of the United Nations is reinvigorated as a living commitment or becomes an artefact of history.

It is with this sobering responsibility in mind that the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its essential work throughout 2024. Most notably, the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons was launched with the explicit aim of carrying forward the legacy of the hibakusha, helping the wisdom borne of their experiences to endure. This comprehensive

learning and professional development programme reached young advocates in 63 countries in 2024, marking one of our broadest and most direct efforts to preserve the visceral understanding that has animated our founding purpose.

The year also witnessed progress on traditional and emerging security threats. In June, Member States agreed to establish an open-ended technical expert group to tackle rapidly advancing technologies in the small-arms landscape — from polymer weapons that defy standard tracing to 3D-printed firearms circumventing existing regulatory frameworks — a crucial adaptation of our collective security mechanisms to innovation's quickening pace. On cybersecurity, States forged new consensus through an open-ended working group on information and communications technologies, unpacking common understandings around threats both current and anticipated, laying groundwork for greater trust through new confidence-building measures, and charting the architecture for a future permanent mechanism

in this increasingly vital domain. These and other developments support the global commitments enshrined in the [Pact for the Future](#), which world leaders adopted in September 2024 — particularly actions 25 through 27, in which Member States reaffirmed their resolve to work together in tackling long-standing and novel security challenges.

The *Yearbook* itself represents our commitment to documenting these ongoing efforts — creating a record that connects our present work to both our founding purpose and the tests that lie ahead. Even as we acknowledge the headwinds of this moment, we remain steadfast in our commitment to the vision that gave birth to both this Organization and the disarmament movement: a world free from the scourge of war and all its sorrows.

Izumi Nakamitsu

Under-Secretary-General

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

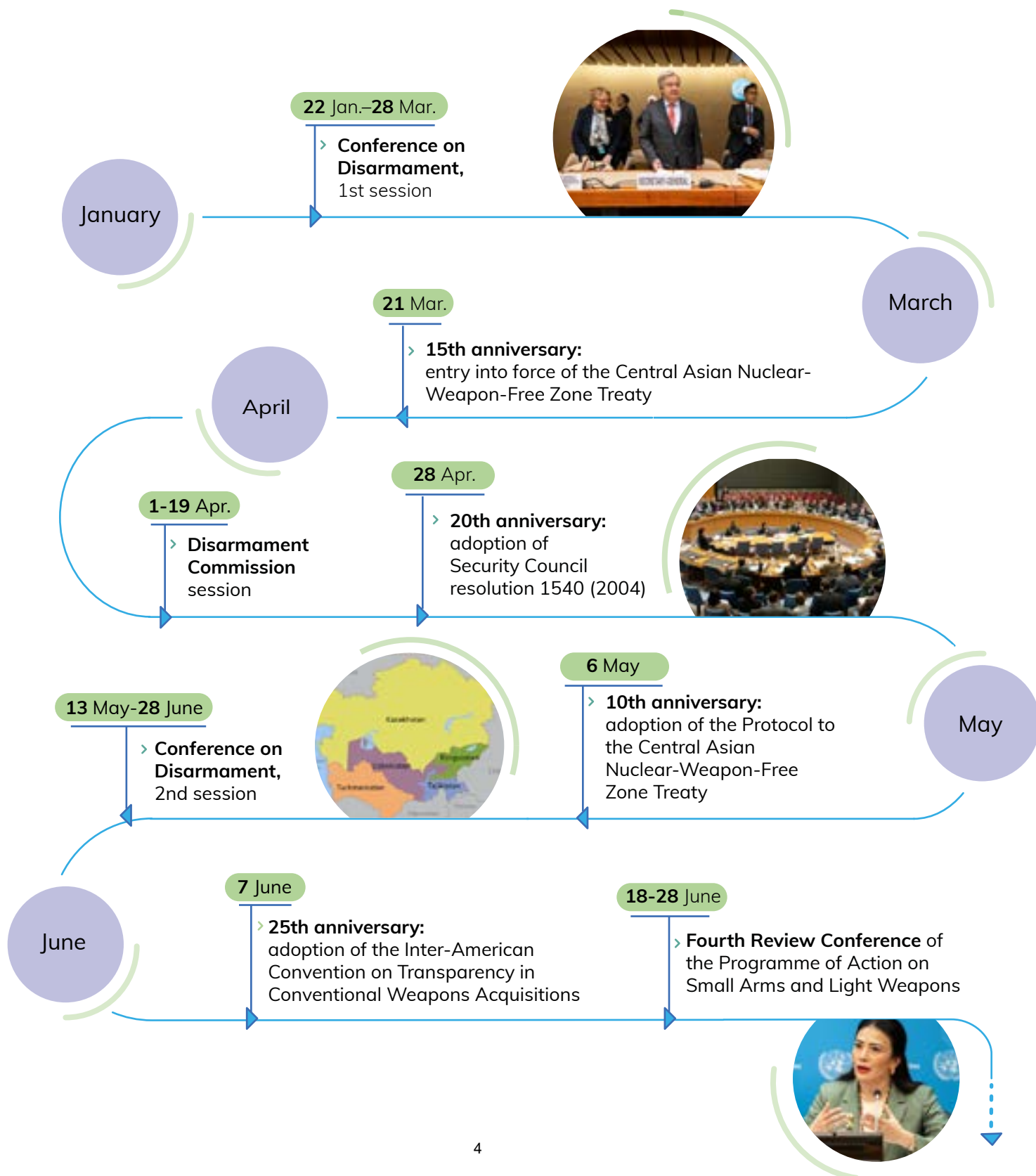
May 2025

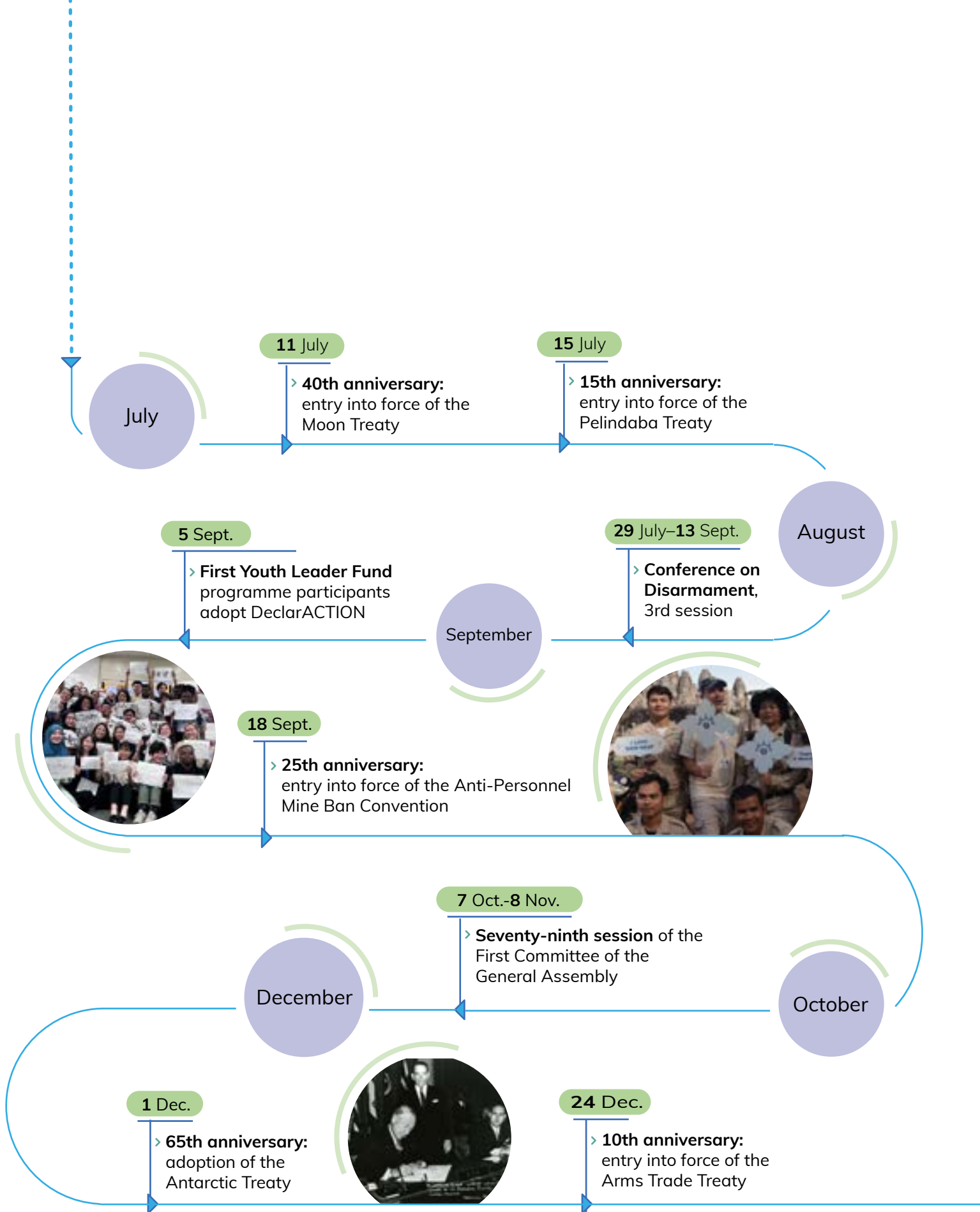


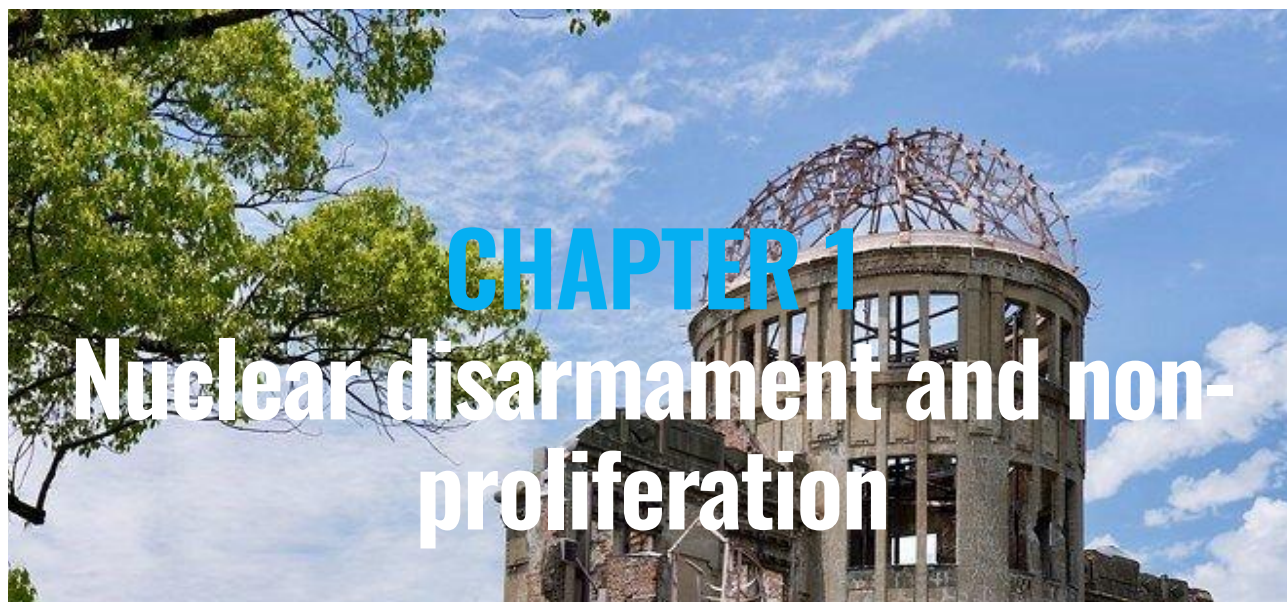
Secretary-General António Guterres (at podium and on screens) addresses the opening of Summit of the Future in New York on 21 September. At the Summit, world leaders adopted the Pact for the Future and its annexes: the "Global Digital Compact" and the "Declaration on Future Generations". This historic agreement is the culmination of years of inclusive dialogue and collaboration aimed at modernizing international cooperation to address today's realities and prepare for tomorrow's challenges. (Credit: UN Photo/Loey Felipe)

Highlights, 2024

MULTILATERAL disarmament timeline







Disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. Progress in one spurs progress in the other.

— António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Developments and trends, 2024

Following the pattern of recent years, 2024 continued to see acutely elevated nuclear risk, with geopolitical tensions further dividing States, and progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation appearing ever more elusive. References in international discourse to a “**nuclear tipping point**” captured an atmosphere of mounting distrust, with prior commitments going unfulfilled or facing further backsliding.

In one positive development, Member States formally recommitted in the **Pact for the Future** (General Assembly resolution **79/1**) to “the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons”, demonstrating that the vast majority of the international community still held that aspiration as its guiding vision.

However, the Pact stood as one of the few bright spots in this field. The ongoing war in Ukraine continued to be characterized by nuclear rhetoric and threats. In an apparent response to increased support to Ukraine by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin signed a new nuclear doctrine in November entitled “**Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence**”. The doctrine signalled that increased NATO State engagement, especially through troop presence, or support for an attack on Russian territory by a non-nuclear-weapon State could

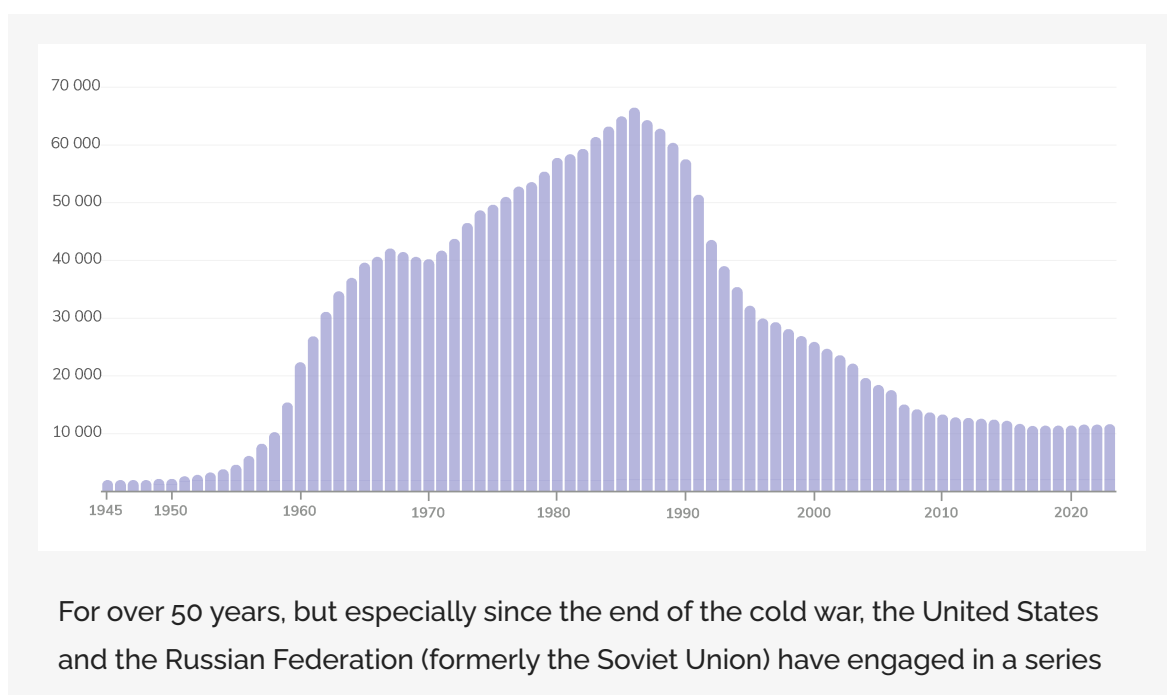
trigger a nuclear response. Notably, the doctrine's section on "principles of nuclear deterrence" excluded a previous provision on "compliance with international obligations in the field of arms control".

As a direct result of the ongoing war, the P5 Process, intended to bring the five nuclear-weapon States together to discuss their unique responsibilities, did not hold any ministerial-level meetings in 2024. While working-level meetings chaired by the Russian Federation did take place, they produced no concrete outcomes.

The invasion of Ukraine continued to raise concerns about the safety and security of nuclear power plants in armed conflict, particularly the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant, where the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continued to maintain its presence established in September 2022.

As relationships between nuclear-weapon States deteriorated, fears grew about a return to dangerous cold war practices. Former and current officials in those States issued pronouncements on the need to resume nuclear testing, and the ongoing qualitative nuclear arms race threatened to become quantitative for the first time since the 1980s. The lack of measures to prevent nuclear-weapon use, combined with the erosion of the nuclear arms control regime, stoked fears about accidental use, miscalculation and escalation. Speaking on the 2024 International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September), the Secretary-General **warned** that "instead of dialogue and diplomacy being deployed to end the nuclear threat, another nuclear arms race is taking shape, and sabre-rattling is re-emerging as a tactic of coercion".

Figure 1.1. Nuclear arsenals of the world



of bilateral arms control measures that have drastically reduced their strategic nuclear arsenals from a peak of around 60,000. The most recent of those measures, the New START Treaty, limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 per State. The Treaty is scheduled to expire on 4 February 2026; if it expires without a successor or is not extended, it will be the first time since the 1970s that the strategic arsenals of the United States and the Russian Federation have not been constrained.

Data source: The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' [Nuclear Notebook](#), written by Hans M. Kristensen, Matt Korda, and Eliana Johns, [Federation of American Scientists](#).

The prospect of an unprecedented three-way arms race gained further momentum in 2024. China faced mounting pressure to increase transparency and accountability around its nuclear arsenal amid widespread reports of a rapid quantitative expansion, which China continued to deny. The United States announced it would [adapt its approach](#) to arms control and non-proliferation for a new era “marked by evolving proliferation risks and rapid changes in technology”. This policy shift included preparing to compete with two nuclear peers for the first time, while reaffirming a determination to modernize both the country's nuclear triad^[1] and nuclear command, control and communications systems to “sustain, and if necessary, enhance [its] capabilities and posture”.

Regional tensions in 2024 continued to accelerate proliferation risks. Prospects for reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action became increasingly remote, with the Islamic Republic of Iran further advancing its nuclear programme while continuing not to provide the cooperation required by the IAEA. In November, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a resolution requesting an updated assessment for March 2025 ([GOV/2024/68](#)), raising the likelihood of snapback sanctions under Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). Amid widening conflict with Israel, Iranian officials warned that their country could [revisit its nuclear weapons](#) policy and, if sanctions were reimposed, withdraw from the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#) (NPT). Nevertheless, [talks](#) held between France, Germany and the United Kingdom and the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva in November indicated continued interest in diplomatic solutions.

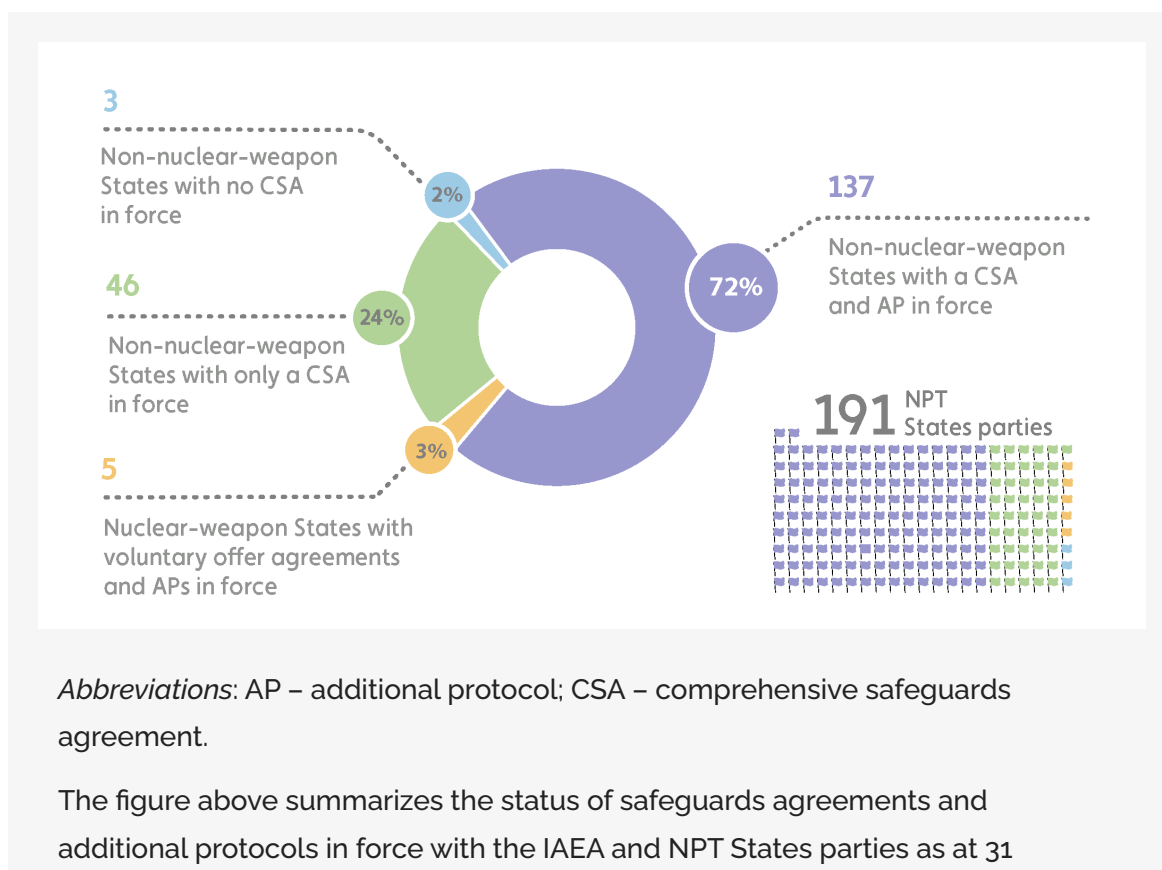
Nuclear risk in North-East Asia continued to rise throughout 2024, with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ongoing advancement of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. During the year, the country test-fired 45 ballistic missiles of various ranges in contravention of the relevant Security Council resolutions — an increase since 2023, which had seen fewer than half of the 70 launches conducted in 2022. The missile activities in 2024 included launches of a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile, three launches of intermediate-range ballistic missiles tipped with hypersonic glide vehicles and multiple

independently targetable warheads, and several short-range ballistic missiles, including some fired in a large salvo. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also undertook other activities in line with its 2021 five-year military development plan.

The fifth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction took place in New York in November, providing a platform for the participating States to reflect on past and future activities of the Conference and its working committee. Those States welcomed the procedural and substantive achievements made to date, acknowledging the success of their approach in making incremental and systematic substantive progress towards the development of a draft legally binding instrument.

All these issues came into sharp focus at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference, held from 22 July to 2 August. Regional conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine and elsewhere were discussed primarily in the context of nuclear coercion and threats. The issue of transparency and accountability of nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty remained a central concern, with non-nuclear-weapon States expressing growing frustration over the lack of tangible progress on nuclear disarmament and mounting scepticism about nuclear-weapon States' commitment to their disarmament obligations.

Figure 1.2. Status of safeguards agreements with States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as at 31 December 2024



December 2024. Safeguards agreements were in force with 188 NPT States parties, of which 183 are non-nuclear-weapon States with comprehensive safeguards agreements and five are nuclear-weapon States with voluntary offer agreements. Additional protocols were in force with 142 NPT States parties, including 137 States with comprehensive safeguards agreements and the five States with voluntary offer agreements. There were three NPT non-nuclear-weapon States that had not yet brought into force comprehensive safeguards agreements: Equatorial Guinea, Guinea and Somalia.

Data source: [International Atomic Energy Agency](#).

States still demonstrated their commitment to working within the Treaty's framework by putting forward various proposals to make concrete progress, although nuclear-weapon States received them with varying degrees of enthusiasm. The issue of "nuclear sharing" and extended deterrence arrangements gained prominence, exposing divisions among non-nuclear-weapon States. Many challenged the compatibility of such arrangements with the spirit — if not the letter — of the NPT, while criticizing non-nuclear-weapon States benefiting from these arrangements. Yet, despite these tensions, States parties showed continued willingness to explore new ideas for improving the review process.

In addition, the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) expanded its membership with ratifications by Indonesia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands. Informal working groups and facilitators advanced States parties' implementation efforts through the Treaty's intersessional process, which included the first informal consultations on the security concerns of States parties, coordinated by Austria. The Treaty's Scientific Advisory Group continued its substantive work throughout 2024, including by establishing a scientific network to support the Treaty, which held an inaugural meeting in December.

The [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) also gained ratifications, with Papua New Guinea becoming the 178th State party in March. As concerns grew about the potential resumption of nuclear testing, States used the International Day Against Nuclear Tests (29 August) to reaffirm their support not only for the Treaty itself but for the broader norm against nuclear testing, emphasizing their determination to preserve that norm. The global focus on environmental and human impacts of past nuclear testing also continued to grow.

The General Assembly demonstrated ongoing commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by adopting several new mandates. By resolution [79/238](#), it established an independent Scientific Panel on the Effects of Nuclear War to examine the physical effects and societal consequences of nuclear war at local, regional and planetary scales. The Panel would conduct its work throughout 2025 and 2026, reporting to the General Assembly's eighty-second session, in 2027. Through resolution [79/241](#), the Assembly also mandated the

first comprehensive study on nuclear-weapon-free zones in nearly 50 years, with findings to be submitted at the body's eighty-first session, in 2026.

Meanwhile, following the work of the [Group of Governmental Experts to further consider nuclear disarmament verification issues](#), the General Assembly asked the Secretary-General, through resolution [79/240](#), to seek Member States' written views on establishing a group of scientific and technical experts on nuclear disarmament verification within the United Nations. The Assembly also agreed to hold a one-day symposium in 2026 on victim assistance and environmental remediation in the context of the second resolution on addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons (resolution [79/60](#)). These new mandates, emerging despite broader challenges to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, demonstrated that progress remained possible, however daunting the prospect.



Citizens of Oslo participate in a torchlight procession on 10 December in honour of Nihon Hidankyo's receipt of the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. Nihon Hidankyo is a grass-roots organization of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (Credit: ICAN | Kaspar Fossler)

Issues related to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#) (NPT) is a landmark international treaty whose objectives are to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and further the goal of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

Second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference held its [second session](#) in Geneva from 22 July to 2 August, with Akan Rakhmetullin (Kazakhstan) serving as Chair. Representatives from 118 States parties, 12 international organizations and 72 non-governmental organizations participated in the session (for the list of participants, see [NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/INF/7](#)). The Preparatory Committee adopted a procedural report ([NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/7](#)).

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, in her [opening statement](#) to the Preparatory Committee, expressed her continued concern that cynicism about the efficacy of the Treaty will erode the many benefits it provides to its States parties. She suggested several priority issues that States could consider during their deliberations: (a) the accelerated implementation of existing commitments; (b) the notion that disarmament is not a reward for the resolution of security challenges, but rather a prerequisite for international peace and security; (c) ways to prevent nuclear war or any use of a nuclear weapon; (d) a recommitment to reinforcing the non-proliferation regime and supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); and (e) ways to strengthen the linkage between the NPT and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Preparatory Committee set aside six meetings for a general debate on issues related to all aspects of its work. It heard 89 statements by States parties and 21 statements by non-governmental organizations.

States parties reaffirmed the Treaty's central role as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In that regard, they emphasized the Treaty's vital contribution to international peace, security and stability. They also emphasized the importance of ensuring balanced implementation of the Treaty's three pillars, while noting their mutually reinforcing nature.

National positions under the Treaty's three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy — revealed familiar fissures between States. Many States parties expressed frustration regarding the implementation of past commitments, particularly on nuclear disarmament and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, as well as the perceived imbalance of obligations between the Treaty's non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-

weapon States. States parties recalled the necessity of implementing decisions 1 and 2 of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties, as well as the resolution on the Middle East adopted at that meeting ([NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)](#), annex); the final document adopted at the 2000 Review Conference ([NPT/CONF.2000/28 \(Parts I and II\)](#)); and the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions adopted at the 2010 Review Conference ([NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. II\)](#)).

Similar to the first session of the Preparatory Committee, the second session occasionally saw heated exchanges between States parties on geopolitical matters. Unsurprisingly, the war in Ukraine, the war in Gaza, the [AUKUS](#) partnership, the issue of nuclear sharing and extended deterrence, and the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran emerged as areas of strong contention.

After the general exchange of views, the Preparatory Committee structured its work into three clusters, allocating equal time to each of the Treaty's three pillars: (a) non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and international peace and security; (b) non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, safeguards and nuclear-weapon-free zones; and (c) the inalienable right of all NPT States parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of the Treaty. Each cluster addressed a distinct area of work, respectively: (a) nuclear disarmament and security assurances; (b) regional issues, including with respect to the Middle East and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East; and (c) peaceful uses of nuclear energy and other provisions of the Treaty. The Preparatory Committee also conducted deliberations on the strengthened review process.

Cluster 1

States parties reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of article VI of the Treaty, emphasizing that such implementation was essential for maintaining the Treaty's credibility and provided an essential foundation for pursuing nuclear disarmament. States parties recalled past outcomes adopted by the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences and emphasized that past commitments remained valid until implemented.

Numerous States parties expressed deep concern about the lack of progress in implementing disarmament obligations and commitments. They recalled the unequivocal undertaking made by the nuclear-weapon States in 2000, and reaffirmed in 2010, to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Delegations stressed the need for efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate nuclear arsenals, both deployed and non-deployed, through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures conducted in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner. States with the largest nuclear arsenals were encouraged to lead those efforts.

Many States parties argued that the deteriorating international security environment should not postpone nuclear disarmament, emphasizing the role of disarmament in reversing such deterioration.

Delegations expressed concern about the increased role of nuclear weapons in national and regional military doctrines; the qualitative and quantitative expansion and improvement of nuclear weapon arsenals; and the continuation of nuclear-weapon modernization programmes. States parties suggested such actions were not conducive to nuclear disarmament, as they contributed to arms racing and increased tensions, while signalling an intention to possess nuclear weapons indefinitely. Serious misgivings also arose around the growing use of nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear weapons, including in the context of regional conflicts. In that regard, States parties recalled the prohibition, in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations, on the threat or use of force. In addition, numerous delegations voiced apprehension about nuclear weapon-sharing arrangements, extended deterrence policies and the practice of stationing nuclear weapons on the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States.

The Preparatory Committee also continued to discuss the risk of the use of nuclear weapons, whether intentionally or by miscalculation, miscommunication, misperception or accident. The nuclear-weapon States, in cooperation with non-nuclear-weapon States, were called upon to take steps to prevent any use of nuclear weapons. Specific areas identified for action concerned resilient nuclear crisis communication channels, reduction of the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems, transparency and restraint on doctrines and deployments, negative security assurances, and negotiations on nuclear arms control and disarmament. However, delegations emphasized that risk reduction cannot be a replacement for disarmament measures, but rather is a complement to ongoing disarmament efforts.

Many States parties recalled the [joint statement](#) of 3 January 2022, in which the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States had affirmed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought and had expressed their commitment to the obligations under the Treaty, including article VI. Delegations also reiterated the importance of negative security assurances by the nuclear-weapon States to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

A significant number of States parties expressed concern about the catastrophic consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. They reaffirmed the need for all States to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law, at all times. Some stressed that both the humanitarian consequences and the need to prevent nuclear-weapon use should underpin nuclear disarmament efforts. Several States parties also stressed the importance of providing victim assistance and addressing environmental contamination caused by nuclear weapon use and testing. Such assistance could include

sharing technical and scientific information and providing financial support to help affected States Parties.

The Preparatory Committee heard many calls for the Russian Federation and the United States to return to fully implementing the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty). Both countries heard calls to negotiate a follow-on treaty or a new nuclear arms control arrangement or instrument aimed at achieving further reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic nuclear weapons. Other nuclear-weapon States were encouraged to join such negotiations.

States parties noted the continued inability of the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on two key issues: a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices; and legally binding arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear-weapon States.

States parties that were also parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) noted its entry into force on 22 January 2021 and emphasized its complementarity with the NPT. In addition, many delegations reiterated the need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a core element of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Cluster 2

The Preparatory Committee emphasized IAEA safeguards as a fundamental component of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime — an essential aspect of peaceful nuclear commerce and cooperation contributing to both development and international collaboration on peaceful uses. In discussing the IAEA, many States parties said that nothing should undermine its authority or independence as the competent authority responsible for verifying and assuring compliance with safeguards agreements.

States parties underscored the critical importance of compliance with the NPT's broader non-proliferation obligations, and they urged for the timely resolution of all safeguards non-compliance cases in full conformity with the IAEA Statute and States parties' respective legal obligations. Voicing concern over non-compliance cases, delegations stressed the importance of ensuring that States either remain in compliance with their obligations or promptly return to compliance. They recalled the roles of the Security Council and the General Assembly in upholding safeguards compliance.

Delegations recalled the importance of applying IAEA safeguards pursuant to comprehensive safeguards agreements based on [INFCIRC/153 \(Corrected\)](#), welcoming that

182 NPT States parties had such agreements in force with the Agency. The Preparatory Committee encouraged States without such agreements to bring them into force as soon as possible.

Even as the Preparatory Committee recognized that comprehensive safeguards agreements provided assurances on declared nuclear material and a limited level of assurance concerning the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, many States parties noted that implementing the model additional protocol ([INFCIRC/540 \(Corrected\)](#)) equipped the IAEA with broader information and access, enabling it to provide increased assurances in States that have an additional protocol in force. Participants stressed that a comprehensive safeguards agreement supplemented by an additional protocol therefore represents an enhanced verification standard, adding that it is the sovereign decision of any State to conclude an additional protocol. The Preparatory Committee noted that 141 States parties had brought additional protocols into force.

Regarding States in comprehensive safeguards agreements with operative small quantities protocols based on the original standard text, the Preparatory Committee noted that such arrangements significantly affect the IAEA's ability to draw credible and sound annual safeguards conclusions. Delegations called upon States that had not yet amended or rescinded their original small quantities protocols to do so as a matter of urgency.

Many States parties expressed grave concern regarding military activities conducted near or at nuclear sites under IAEA safeguards, citing their negative impact on nuclear safety, security and safeguards, as well as the implications when competent authorities lose control over such locations.

The Preparatory Committee continued to debate naval nuclear propulsion and its implications for safeguards and the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime. Several States parties took note of discussions at the IAEA Board of Governors concerning safeguards arrangements related to naval nuclear propulsion.

The Preparatory Committee recognized that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. Participants reaffirmed that nuclear security measures — including physical protection of all nuclear material and facilities from unauthorized access, unauthorized removal and sabotage, as well as computer security — all support the Treaty's aims.

States parties continued to express concern over existing and emerging terrorist threats, including the risk that non-State actors might acquire nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Recalling the essential role of relevant Security Council resolutions, including

resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), delegations emphasized every State's obligation to implement their binding provisions.

States parties stressed the need to ensure that exports of nuclear-related dual-use items do not support the proliferation of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. They also recalled the legitimate right of all States parties, in particular developing States, to have full access to nuclear material, equipment and technological information for peaceful purposes. Delegations stressed the importance of facilitating transfers of nuclear technology and international cooperation in conformity with the NPT, while eliminating any undue constraints inconsistent with the Treaty.

The Preparatory Committee reaffirmed that internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region concerned, enhance international and regional peace and security, strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and contribute towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. In that context, States parties acknowledged the contributions of the Antarctic Treaty, the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia.

States called for further progress by nuclear-weapon States on ratifying the relevant protocols to nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties, which include negative security assurances. To that end, delegations welcomed the stated readiness of the nuclear-weapon States and the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to engage in constructive consultations on the outstanding issues related to signing and ratifying the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty. Nuclear-weapon States also heard calls to review any reservations or interpretative statements made upon ratifying such protocols and to engage in relevant dialogue with zone members.

The Preparatory Committee discussed the importance of advancing the full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995 ([NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)](#), annex). Delegations argued that the 1995 resolution remained valid until its goals and objectives were achieved, noting it was an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 Conference and the basis on which the NPT was indefinitely extended without a vote. States also acknowledged the developments at the first four sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held from 2019 to 2023 at United Nations Headquarters.

Delegations underscored the importance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) endorsed by the Security Council in resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and urged all parties to return to its full implementation.

The Preparatory Committee also discussed the lack of progress in resolving the long-outstanding safeguards issues concerning the Syrian Arab Republic, emphasizing the importance of the country's effective cooperation with the IAEA.

A large group of States parties reaffirmed their unwavering support for the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Expressing grave concern about the continued advancement of the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the group condemned its six nuclear tests to date and stressed that it must not conduct further tests. The countries emphasized that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could not have the status of a nuclear-weapon State pursuant to the NPT, and called on it to return, without delay, to the Treaty and the application of IAEA safeguards on all of its nuclear activities. In that connection, 77 States parties released a joint statement on "addressing the North Korean nuclear challenge" (NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.39).

Cluster 3

The Preparatory Committee reaffirmed that nothing in the NPT should be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all parties to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. Delegations emphasized that all States parties should undertake to facilitate, and had the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with all the Treaty's provisions.

Delegations reaffirmed the right of each State party to define its national energy policy. For those wishing to pursue nuclear power, the Committee noted that nuclear technologies and innovations — including advanced reactors, small and modular reactors, as well as large-capacity power reactors and fast-neutron reactors — could play an important role in facilitating energy security, decarbonization and transitioning to a low-carbon economy. Delegations encouraged States parties in a position to do so to cooperate in contributing to the further development of peaceful nuclear energy applications, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States parties, with due consideration for the needs of the developing areas of the world.

States parties underscored the importance of nuclear safety and nuclear security for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Committee noted that, when developing nuclear

energy, including nuclear power, its use must be accompanied by commitments to and the ongoing implementation of IAEA safeguards, as well as appropriate and effective levels of safety and security, consistent with States parties' national legislation and respective international obligations. Delegations stressed that high levels of safety and security should be ensured in the deployment of new and emerging nuclear technologies, and that the development of advanced reactors and small and modular reactors should proceed in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner.

The Committee discussed how regional and cooperative agreements to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including under the auspices of the IAEA, could provide an effective means to facilitate technical and technology transfers. States parties also considered the importance of transporting radioactive materials consistent with relevant international standards of safety, security and environmental protection. Delegations encouraged continued efforts to improve communication between shipping and coastal States to build confidence and address concerns regarding transport safety, security and emergency preparedness.

Numerous States parties emphasized the importance of nuclear safety and security regarding peaceful nuclear facilities and materials in all circumstances, including in armed conflict zones. Delegations voiced strong support for the IAEA's efforts in that regard, noting the IAEA Director General's seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict, as well as the five concrete principles to help to ensure nuclear safety and security at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

The Committee also noted the [*IAEA Comprehensive Report on the Safety Review of the ALPS-treated Water at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station*](#), with various States parties stressing the importance of the IAEA's impartial, independent and objective safety review and monitoring based on relevant safety standards in all phases.

Emphasizing the critical role of nuclear science and technology in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change, delegations acknowledged the importance of assistance, particularly for developing countries and least developed countries. States noted such assistance could occur through capacity-building, the provision of equipment, the strengthening of regional networking and regional cooperation frameworks and through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

In that context, the Committee stressed the essential role of the IAEA, including through its technical cooperation programme, in assisting States parties, upon request, to build human and institutional capacities, including regulatory capabilities, for the safe, secure and peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. States added that such assistance contributed to meeting energy needs, improving human and animal health, combating

poverty, protecting the environment, developing agriculture, managing the use of water resources, optimizing industrial processes and preserving cultural heritage.

The Committee also discussed the importance of IAEA technical cooperation activities and nuclear knowledge-sharing, as well as the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries and least developed countries. States parties emphasized the importance of sharing nuclear knowledge and transferring nuclear technology to developing countries and least developed countries. To this end, the Committee recognized the need to ensure that the IAEA had adequate and necessary support to enable it to provide, upon request, the assistance needed by member States. States parties welcomed the role of the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative in mobilizing extrabudgetary contributions.

Strengthened review process

The second session of the Preparatory Committee continued discussions on improving the NPT's implementation by strengthening the Treaty's review process, building upon the [deliberations](#) of the July 2023 [working group](#) convened to that end. Although the 2023 working group did not reach consensus on recommendations to the Preparatory Committee, States parties recognized its value in deepening substantive discussions on measures to enhance the Treaty's review mechanisms.

In 2024, the Preparatory Committee continued to exchange views on specific proposals to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, coordination and continuity of the review process. Proposals for improving efficiency and effectiveness included more effective time management and avoiding duplicative and overlapping discussions. Delegations also expressed support for interactive debates, incorporating a rolling text in sessions of the Preparatory Committee, and measures to strengthen coordination between those sessions and the Review Conference.

States parties discussed possible steps to bolster transparency and accountability on the implementation of disarmament obligations. Participants suggested that establishing benchmarks and timelines could help to gauge progress and improve accountability in the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments. Many delegations also called for regular, standardized reporting by nuclear-weapon States, as well as the allocation of time during the formal sessions of the Treaty's review cycle to review and discuss the reports.

Issues related to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

The [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) prohibits nuclear explosions by everyone, everywhere: on the Earth's surface, in the atmosphere, underwater and underground. The

Treaty opened for signature in New York on 24 September 1996. It will enter into force after it is ratified by all 44 States listed in its annex 2.

Challenges to the international norm against nuclear testing

The year 2024 opened under the shadow of the Russian Federation's decision in November 2023 to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, deepening divisions among nuclear-weapon States and challenging their commitment to the international norm against nuclear testing.

The tensions were compounded by a [report](#) from a non-governmental organization detailing increased activities at key nuclear test sites in recent years. Commercial satellite imagery released in September revealed heightened activity at the Russian Federation's Novaya Zemlya test site, with a senior Russian official subsequently declaring the site “[fully ready](#)” for [testing operations](#). The Russian Federation reaffirmed its conditional moratorium on nuclear testing, stating that it would not conduct tests unless the United States did so first.

Progress towards universalization

Nonetheless, the year saw several encouraging developments. In March, Papua New Guinea ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, becoming the 178th ratifying State. This milestone underscored continued global support for the Treaty and the commitment of smaller States to the global moratorium.

The Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, operating with the support of signatory and ratifying States, continued to strengthen both the Treaty's universalization efforts and its verification regime. The International Monitoring System, which comprised over 300 monitoring facilities worldwide at the end of 2024, remained a powerful deterrent against clandestine nuclear testing, providing near real-time data on seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide activities that could indicate nuclear explosions.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

On 4 September, during the General Assembly's high-level plenary session commemorating the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August),^[2] Member States reiterated their commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the imperative of eradicating nuclear testing once and for all. Many States voiced profound concern over the growing risk that a return to nuclear testing would reverse decades of progress towards establishing a universal norm against such activities. Speakers frequently referenced the Russian Federation's withdrawal of its ratification, while citing broader geopolitical tensions

and increasingly strident nuclear rhetoric as contributors to an environment that could facilitate a resumption of nuclear testing.

Addressing the Assembly, the Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs [delivered a pointed appeal](#) to the international community to reinforce its commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. He emphasized the critical deterrent effect of the Treaty's global verification regime, while issuing a call to the remaining Annex 2 States to demonstrate leadership by ratifying the Treaty promptly and without preconditions.

The commemorative session also provided a forum for addressing the historical consequences of nuclear testing on affected communities worldwide. Multiple speakers highlighted the devastating and persistent effects of past nuclear tests on health, the environment and human rights, stressing that nuclear testing has caused irreversible damage across generations. Speakers pressed for stronger international efforts to address those enduring legacies, urging accountability from States responsible for past nuclear tests and emphasizing the need for the full implementation of victim assistance and environmental remediation measures. (For more information, see chap. 8.)

Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Australia's Foreign Minister, Penelope Wong, chaired the [eleventh Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) on 24 September during the high-level week of the General Assembly's seventy-ninth session. The meeting brought together the group's six member countries — Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands — alongside senior officials from ratifying and signatory States.^[3]

Participants emphasized the urgency of the Treaty's entry into force. In its [final declaration](#), the Meeting reaffirmed the Treaty's critical role in global security, expressed concern over recent challenges to the global test ban regime, urged all remaining Annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty, and called on all States to declare or maintain national moratoriums on nuclear-weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions.

In her [remarks](#) to the Meeting, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs underscored the urgent need to uphold the norm against nuclear testing amid rising geopolitical tensions and intensifying nuclear rhetoric. While acknowledging progress since the previous Ministerial Meeting, in 2022, including five new ratifications and one signature of the Treaty, she stressed that voluntary moratoriums remain insufficient without the Treaty's entry into force. The High Representative called on all States, particularly Annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty without conditions and reiterated the Secretary-General's appeal for nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their testing moratoriums. She also highlighted the General Assembly

resolution adopted in 2023 on addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons ([78/240](#)) as a critical step towards victim assistance and environmental remediation.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The [TPNW](#), adopted in 2017, includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear-weapon activity. It entered into force on 22 January 2021, following the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General on 24 October 2020.

Signature and ratification

The TPNW continued to expand its membership in 2024. On 24 September, during a high-level ceremony at the United Nations held during the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, Indonesia, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands ratified the Treaty. These accessions brought the total number of States parties to 73, with 94 signatories, further demonstrating the growing international commitment to the Treaty's objectives and the broader goal of nuclear disarmament.

Intersessional process

States parties remained actively engaged in intersessional work throughout 2024, in accordance with decision 1 of the second Meeting of States Parties, in 2023 ([TPNW/MSP/2023/14](#), annex II). The intersessional process continued through multiple informal working groups and facilitators, with each focusing on specific aspects of the Treaty's implementation, while preparing reports to the third Meeting of States Parties.

South Africa and Uruguay co-chaired efforts on universalization, while Kazakhstan and Kiribati led discussions on victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation. Malaysia and New Zealand co-chaired the working group on the implementation of article 4, particularly regarding the future designation of a competent international authority for overseeing nuclear disarmament and verification processes. Mexico supported the integration of gender perspectives into Treaty implementation as the gender focal point, and Ireland and Thailand acted as informal facilitators to ensure the Treaty's complementarity with the broader nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. These coordinated efforts reinforced collaboration among States parties and advanced Treaty implementation ahead of the third Meeting of States Parties, scheduled for 2025.

Additionally, Austria coordinated a new consultative process on the security concerns of States under the Treaty, established by decision 5 of the second Meeting of States Parties ([TPNW/MSP/2023/14](#), annex II). This process involved engagement with States, experts and

civil society organizations to (a) articulate the security concerns stemming from the existence of nuclear weapons and the doctrine of nuclear deterrence; and (b) challenge the deterrence-based security paradigm with new scientific evidence on the humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons. The process was expected to result in a report containing key recommendations to the third Meeting of States Parties.

Scientific Advisory Group

The Scientific Advisory Group continued to fulfil its mandate of providing independent technical expertise to support the Treaty's implementation and inform decision-making. Established by the first Meeting of States Parties in 2022 and [appointed](#) by the President of the second Meeting of States Parties in 2023, the Group is also tasked to assess developments relevant to nuclear disarmament and humanitarian impacts, support capacity-building among States parties and facilitate engagement with scientists, academia and civil society to strengthen the Treaty's objectives ([TPNW/MSP/2022/6](#), annex III).

Throughout 2024, the Scientific Advisory Group held regular monthly meetings aimed at building upon the Treaty's technical and scientific foundations. Participants provided updates, explored relevant themes on nuclear disarmament and focused on developing in-depth analysis, including a substantive report for the third Meeting of States Parties. The Group also contributed to discussions within the informal working groups on key provisions of the Treaty, including nuclear risk reduction, victim assistance and environmental remediation.

In a significant milestone, the Group led the establishment of a scientific network in accordance with its mandate to "identify and engage scientific and technical institutions in States Parties and more broadly to establish a network of experts to support the goals of the Treaty" ([TPNW/MSP/2022/6](#), annex III). The scientific network held its inaugural meeting on 9 December, establishing a platform for interdisciplinary research and global scientific engagement to advance the Treaty's objectives. Its specific aims included supporting implementation of the Treaty through research, knowledge-sharing and science-based initiatives, while expanding participation from the global scientific community.

Preparations for the third Meeting of States Parties

The Coordination Committee convened regularly throughout 2024 to oversee the workplans of the intersessional process, monitor progress across various workstreams and assess work conducted by the Scientific Advisory Group. It held deliberations under the leadership of Akan Rakhmetullin (Kazakhstan), President of the third Meeting of States Parties ([TPNW/MSP/2023/14](#), para. 24).

On 29 August, coinciding with the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the President hosted a Coordination Committee retreat in Astana as part of the Treaty's intersessional programme of work. The retreat provided an opportunity for dialogue and exchange of ideas on key priorities for the third Meeting of States Parties. Discussions focused on ensuring the Treaty's full and effective implementation, advancing universalization efforts and developing tangible forms of assistance to address the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The retreat also explored the establishment of an international trust fund for States parties affected by nuclear weapons testing; potential outcomes of the third Meeting of States Parties; and milestones leading up to the first Review Conference of the Treaty in 2026.

The third Meeting of States Parties was scheduled to be held from 3 to 7 March 2025 at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Bilateral agreements and other issues

Implementation of the New START Treaty

On 5 February 2018, the United States and the Russian Federation met the central limits of the New START Treaty. Under the Treaty, the parties must possess no more than 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers, and no more than 1,550 warheads associated with those deployed launchers.

In an address to the Russian Federal Assembly on 21 February 2023, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, [announced](#) that the country was "suspending its participation" in the Treaty. In a subsequent [statement](#), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the Russian Federation intended to strictly comply with the quantitative restrictions on strategic offensive arms within the Treaty's life cycle.

During 2024, senior [Russian](#) and [United States](#) officials reaffirmed both parties' commitment to adhering to those quantitative restrictions. However, neither party participated in the biannual data exchange on Treaty-accountable items in 2024 and both parties raised concerns over the other's compliance with the Treaty limitations, which could not be verified due to the lack of information exchange and the halting of inspections. On 27 June, [Russian Foreign Deputy Minister Sergey Ryabkov](#) said that there was no certainty that the United States was adhering to the New START ceilings. The United States Department of State, in its [2024 Report to Congress on Implementation of the New START Treaty](#), asserted that the United States could not certify the Russian Federation to be complying with the terms of the Treaty. Moreover, the United States assessed with high confidence that while the Russian Federation had not engaged in any large-scale activity above the Treaty limits, it was probably close to the deployed warhead limit during much of the year and may have slightly exceeded that limit in some instances.

The [Russian Federation](#) and the [United States](#) both reaffirmed their pledges to continue to comply with the 1988 Ballistic Missile Launch Notifications Agreement, which provides for obligations to provide mutual notifications of intercontinental ballistic missile and submarine-launched ballistic missile launches.

As was the case in 2023, the parties convened no meetings of the Bilateral Consultative Commission in 2024, with the Russian Federation maintaining that it [could not resume the strategic dialogue](#) without taking into account the overall global security outlook and the strategic stability issue. However, both parties had expressed willingness to resume dialogue on strategic stability in the future.

The New START Treaty is the last remaining bilateral strategic nuclear arms control agreement. If it expires on 4 February 2026 without a successor arrangement in place, there will be no limitations on the strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Russian Federation for the first time in five decades.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)

The situation surrounding the JCPOA remained fragile throughout 2024. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which had begun progressively to reduce its JCPOA undertakings in July 2020 following the unilateral withdrawal of the United States two years earlier, continued to significantly limit its cooperation with the IAEA in resolving outstanding safeguards issues. This resulted in the adoption of two resolutions by the IAEA Board of Governors in June and November ([GOV/2024/39](#) and [GOV/2024/68](#)).

[Addressing](#) the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters on 24 September, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian, signalled a potential change in approach, stating that “we have the opportunity to ... enter a new era” and that “[w]e are ready to engage with JCPOA participants”. This message marked a clear departure from the approach of his predecessor, who had said at the same venue in 2022 that the United States had “trampled on the accord” and that his country could not trust the United States to meet its commitments without “guarantees and assurances”.

However, following Israeli [airstrikes](#) against Iranian territory in October, and the November IAEA Board of Governors' resolution on safeguards implementation, several senior Iranian officials made statements alluding to their country's capability to produce nuclear weapons and hinting at a possible review of its military doctrine prohibiting nuclear weapons possession. On 27 November, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi [stated in an interview](#) that his country already had the capability and knowledge to create nuclear weapons. He warned that if previous Security Council sanctions were reimposed through the JCPOA's snapback mechanism, the Islamic Republic of Iran would probably change both its

current policy on cooperation with the West on nuclear issues and its prohibition on possessing nuclear weapons. Additionally, on 9 October, 39 members of the Iranian parliament (Majlis) [wrote](#) to the Supreme National Security Council requesting a review of Iranian self-defence doctrine to permit nuclear weapons development.

According to news reports, the Israeli airstrikes on 26 October successfully targeted a facility in Parchin containing [equipment](#) needed to design and test explosives for a nuclear weapon. The destroyed equipment reportedly dated to the early 2000s and had been stored in the facility since that time. Media reports also indicated that the United States had expressed [serious concerns](#) to the Islamic Republic of Iran about research activities in the country that could support nuclear weapons production.

Notably, the United States Office of the Director of National Intelligence removed long-standing language from an August 2024 [report](#) to Congress. Previous reports since 2019 had consistently stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran “is not currently undertaking the key nuclear weapons-development activities necessary to produce a testable nuclear device”. The revised assessment instead said that the country had “undertaken activities that better position it to produce a nuclear device, if it chooses to do so”.

Nuclear activities by the Islamic Republic of Iran

In 2024, the IAEA continued to report to its Board of Governors and the Security Council on the Islamic Republic of Iran's implementation of nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, as well as on verification and monitoring matters in view of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#).

According to the IAEA's final report of the year on the matter ([GOV/2024/61](#)), the Islamic Republic of Iran had significantly expanded its uranium stockpiles. As of 26 October, the country had accumulated an estimated 5,807.2 kg of uranium hexafluoride (UF-6) enriched to various levels, including 182.3 kg of uranium enriched to 60 per cent U-235 and 839.2 kg of uranium enriched to 20 per cent U-235.

This represented a substantial increase since October 2023, the total enriched uranium stockpile having grown by 1,676.5 kg — a 40.5 per cent increase. The growth included 54 kg more uranium enriched to 60 per cent U-235 (a 42.1 per cent increase) and 272.1 kg more uranium enriched to 20 per cent U-235 (a 48 per cent increase). Under the JCPOA, the Islamic Republic of Iran had committed not to accumulate more than 202.8 kg of uranium enriched to 3.67 per cent U-235.

On 14 November in Tehran, the IAEA Director General met with President Masoud Pezeshkian, the Vice-President and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Mohammad Eslami,

and the Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi. During the meetings, they discussed the possibility of the Islamic Republic of Iran not further expanding its 60 per cent enriched uranium stockpile, including technical verification measures necessary for the IAEA to confirm such an arrangement.

Initial progress appeared promising. On 16 November, at both the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant and the Fuel Enrichment Plant in Natanz, the IAEA verified that the country had begun to implement preparatory measures aimed at stopping the increase of its stockpile of uranium enriched up to 60 per cent U-235.

However, this cooperation proved short-lived. On 2 December, shortly after the IAEA Board of Governors adopted its second resolution of the year on Iranian safeguards implementation ([GOV/2024/68](#)), the Islamic Republic of Iran announced operational adjustments at the Fordow plant that would dramatically accelerate production of uranium enriched to 60 per cent U-235. By beginning with feedstock already enriched to 20 per cent UF-6, rather than 5 per cent UF-6, the IAEA assessed that the Islamic Republic of Iran would be able to produce 34 kg of 60 per cent enriched uranium per month at Fordow — a more than sevenfold increase of the previous rate of approximately 4.7 kg per month, as later reported to the Board of Governors ([GOV/2025/8](#)).

Beyond increasing production rates, the Islamic Republic of Iran also expanded its overall enrichment capacity by adding and starting operation of more advanced centrifuge cascades. In October, the country was operating six additional IR-2m centrifuge cascades and nine additional IR-4 centrifuge cascades at the Fuel Enrichment Plant in Natanz, as well as one additional IR-5 centrifuge cascade at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant.

On 28 November, the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the IAEA of plans for a significant further expansion of its uranium enrichment capacity. The intended additions included 18 new IR-4 centrifuge cascades at the Fuel Enrichment Plant, 14 new cascades incorporating various centrifuge types (IR-2m, IR-4 and IR-6) at the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant, as well as one IR-6 cascade containing up to 1,152 centrifuges — about seven times larger than an average-sized cascade. Once operational, the new cascades were expected to potentially increase the country's uranium enrichment capacity by more than twofold.

Verification and monitoring

In 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran maintained its suspension of voluntary transparency measures contained in the JCPOA. The affected measures included provisions of the additional protocol to the country's comprehensive safeguards agreement, as well as modified code 3.1 of the subsidiary arrangements to its safeguards agreement, both of which the Government had ceased implementing in February 2021. Furthermore, IAEA surveillance

and monitoring equipment related to the JCPOA removed by the Islamic Republic of Iran in June 2022 was not reinstalled and remained inoperative.

These restrictions significantly impaired the IAEA's verification activities. Since February 2021, the Agency had been unable to perform verification and monitoring of various JCPOA-related activities, including Iranian production and possession of centrifuges, rotors and bellows, heavy water, and uranium ore concentrate.

The IAEA emphasized it had lost continuity of knowledge regarding the production and current inventory of those materials — a loss that could not be restored. Additionally, removal of the IAEA's surveillance and monitoring equipment had created "detrimental implications for the Agency's ability to provide assurance of the peaceful nature of the country's nuclear programme".

During high-level meetings between the IAEA and Iranian officials in Tehran on 14 November, the Islamic Republic of Iran agreed to consider accepting the designation of four additional experienced inspectors. This was in response to the Agency's concerns that the country had withdrawn the designation of several experienced inspectors in September 2023. The IAEA noted at the time that while the withdrawal was formally permitted under the NPT Safeguards Agreement of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Government had taken the measure "in a manner that directly and seriously affects the Agency's ability to conduct effectively its verification activities in Iran, in particular at the enrichment facilities".

Implementation of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty safeguards

In 2024, the IAEA continued its quarterly reporting on the implementation of its 1974 safeguards agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran in connection with the NPT and the additional protocol provisionally applied by the Government pending its entry into force.

Since 2019, the Agency had been seeking clarifications from the country regarding information related to anthropogenic uranium particles and possible undeclared nuclear material and nuclear-related activities at four locations that had not been declared. These outstanding safeguards issues are believed to be connected to the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear-related activities dating back to the early 2000s.

Following exchanges between the sides, the IAEA reported that it "had no additional questions" on two of the four locations — identified as "Lavisian-Shian" and "Marivan" — and the issues at those sites were "no longer outstanding" as of March 2022 and May 2023, respectively. The IAEA persisted in seeking clarifications regarding two remaining locations, identified as "Varamin" and "Turquzabad".

In its report dated 27 May ([GOV/2024/29](#)), the IAEA reported an Iranian assertion that there had “never been any undeclared location which is required to be declared under the [comprehensive safeguards agreement]” in Varamin, and that there “has not been any nuclear activity or storage” at Turquzabad.

On 5 June, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a draft resolution on the Islamic Republic of Iran ([GOV/2025/38](#)) by a vote of 20 in favour, 2 against and 12 abstentions^[4] — a substantial increase in abstentions from the 5 recorded on the previous such resolution in November 2022 ([GOV/2022/70](#)). In the new resolution, the Board noted that despite previous resolutions on the matter and the IAEA's continued efforts, the Islamic Republic of Iran had not yet fully clarified the remaining outstanding safeguards issues, and called on the country to cooperate with the IAEA and resolve those matters.

Following the IAEA's report of 19 November ([GOV/2024/62](#)), which showed continued lack of progress, the Board of Governors adopted another resolution on 21 November ([GOV/2024/68](#)), tabled by France, Germany and the United Kingdom (the E3), as well as the United States. In the resolution — adopted by a vote of 19 in favour, 3 against and 12 abstentions^[5] — the Board again noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran had not yet fully clarified the remaining outstanding safeguards issues with the IAEA. Significantly, in operative paragraph 6, the Board requested the IAEA to “produce a comprehensive and updated assessment on the possible presence or use of undeclared nuclear material in connection with past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme”, to be submitted by the next Board meeting in March 2025 or “at the latest by spring 2025”.

Implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)

By its resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) on the JCPOA, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report every six months on the resolution's implementation. In his seventeenth ([S/2024/471](#)) and eighteenth ([S/2024/896](#)) reports, issued on 19 June and 12 December respectively, the Secretary-General focused on the resolution's remaining provisions concerning restrictions applicable to nuclear-related activities. Restrictions related to ballistic missile activities, transfer of conventional arms to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran, asset freezes and travel bans had been lifted in previous years, in line with their respective provisions.

The Secretary-General noted in his reports that no new proposals to participate in or permit the activities set forth in paragraph 2 of annex B to resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) had been submitted to the Security Council in 2024. However, a total of 18 new notifications were received during the year for certain nuclear-related activities consistent with the JCPOA that do not require approval by the Council but must be reported to it.

In his eighteenth report, the Secretary-General observed that the regional context surrounding the JCPOA had deteriorated, which underscored the critical need for a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. Noting that 2025 would mark the final year of implementation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), he urged JCPOA participants and the United States to remain committed to a diplomatic solution for restoring the objectives of the JCPOA and to prioritize multilateralism and diplomacy.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in 2024. The country launched 45 ballistic missiles of various ranges in contravention of the relevant Security Council resolutions,^[6] continuing a trend of frequent launches that began in 2022, when the country conducted 70 launches — its most ever in a single year — after averaging 11.8 annual launches over the preceding five years.

The country's 2024 activities included a test flight of a new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile, three launches of intermediate-range ballistic missiles tipped with hypersonic glide vehicles and multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles, and numerous short-range ballistic missile launches, some conducted in large salvos. Meanwhile, it undertook other activities in line with the five-year military development plan unveiled at its eighth Party Congress in January 2021.

Ballistic missile launches

On 31 October, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea [launched a "Hwasong-19" intercontinental ballistic missile](#). With a flight time of 85 minutes and 56 seconds, the missile flew a distance of 1,001.2 km and reached an altitude of over 7,687.5 km before falling into the sea. Those figures set new records for both flight duration and maximum altitude for the country's intercontinental ballistic missile launches. The Hwasong-19 is the second solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile developed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, following the Hwasong-18, which was first launched in April 2023 and tested twice more that year. Solid-propellant missiles offer significant operational advantages, as they do not need to undergo fuelling before launch and thus can be prepared more quickly than liquid-propellant missiles, while being harder to detect in advance.

On 14 January, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a [solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile](#) loaded with what it described as a hypersonic manoeuvrable controlled warhead — an apparent reference to a manoeuvrable re-entry vehicle capable of manoeuvring and changing its trajectory. Its flight, which ended in waters near the east coast of the Korean Peninsula, followed the country's announcement in November 2023 that it had carried out two successful tests of a new engine for a solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic

missile. According to open-source information, its previously developed intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Hwasong-12 — first tested in 2017 and twice more in 2022 — uses liquid propulsion.

On 2 April, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a [Hwasong-16B intermediate-range ballistic missile](#) equipped with what it called a “hypersonic glide flight combat unit”. According to the country's state media, this marked the first launch of the new weapon system, with the missile following its predetermined flight trajectory before landing off the eastern Korean Peninsula.

On 26 June, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted a ballistic missile launch that reportedly exploded shortly after take-off. However, the country [claimed](#) that it had successfully conducted “the separation and guidance control test of individual mobile warheads” using the first-stage engine of an intermediate-range ballistic missile. The event appeared to indicate the country's intention to acquire a multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle capability, as outlined in its five-year military plan.

In addition, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted multiple “salvo” launches of short-range ballistic missiles, on [18 March](#), [22 April](#) and [30 May](#). The 30 May launch reportedly involved 18 such missiles. Additionally, the country's state media reported the launch of a “tactical ballistic missile” on [17 May](#) to test “a new autonomous navigation system”.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also conducted several cruise missile launches in 2024. Its state media reported the first test launch of a “new-type strategic cruise missile” called the “Pulhwasal-3-31” on [24 January](#) and [28 January](#), describing it as a submarine-launched cruise missile. On [2 February](#), the country launched cruise missiles carrying what it termed “super-large” warheads. While cruise missiles are not covered by relevant Security Council resolutions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had linked its cruise missile development to its nuclear weapons programme by referring to the weapons as “strategic” — a term it often used to signify nuclear payload delivery capability.

On [27 May](#), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea attempted to launch the reconnaissance satellite “Malligyong-1-1” using what it described as a “new-type satellite carrier rocket” from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station. The launch failed due to what state media called “the air blast of the new-type satellite carrier rocket during the first-stage flight”, attributed to reliability issues with a newly developed liquid oxygen and petroleum engine. The country had reportedly conducted tests of a new engine for its satellite carrier rocket before that launch attempt.

Despite plans previously announced by the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to put three satellites into orbit in 2024, no additional satellite launch attempts were

made following the failed effort. This followed three military satellite launches in 2023 — one of them successful — after which Kim Jong Un, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea, President of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army, outlined the 2024 satellite plans.

Nuclear activity

The IAEA continued to observe concerning developments in the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea throughout 2024. The Agency [noted](#) indications that the light water reactor at Yongbyon continued to operate intermittently, consistent with an ongoing commissioning process, while the centrifuge enrichment facility at Yongbyon appeared to continue operating. The IAEA also observed indications of the ongoing operation of the 5MW(e) reactor, although it noted that the reactor had been shut down between August and October. The Agency assessed that this period would have provided sufficient time to refuel the reactor and begin its seventh operational cycle.

In February, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea constructed a [new annex](#) to the main building in the Kangson complex, significantly expanding the available floor space. In mid-September, the country published [photographs](#) of its leader visiting what it described as a "[uranium enrichment base](#)", which appeared to have been taken in the Kangson complex. The IAEA Director General expressed [serious concern](#) at this display of an undeclared enrichment facility and Kim Jong Un's call "to further strengthen the foundation for producing weapon-grade nuclear materials". The Director General reiterated his call for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with its obligations under Security Council resolutions, cooperate promptly with the IAEA in implementing its NPT safeguards agreement and resolve all outstanding issues.

Meanwhile, there were no indications of change at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site, which remained occupied and prepared to support a new nuclear test. Any such test would contravene Security Council resolutions.

Political developments

On 28 March, the Russian Federation vetoed a draft resolution ([S/2024/255](#)) that would have extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts responsible for monitoring sanctions implementation under Security Council resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#), ending the Panel's operations on 30 April. Initially established under the Committee's direction by Security Council resolution [1874 \(2009\)](#), the Panel had its mandate extended most recently through resolution [2680 \(2023\)](#).

Following the Russian veto, the United States delivered a joint statement on behalf of France, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and itself, asserting that the veto made it more difficult for Member States to address the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and sanctions evasion efforts within their jurisdictions, thereby jeopardizing international peace and security ([S/PV.9591](#)).

In response to the Panel's termination, 11 countries — Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States — [announced](#) on 16 October the establishment of the Multilateral Sanctions Monitoring Team. In a statement, they said the team would monitor and report violations and evasions of sanctions measures stipulated in relevant Security Council resolutions, assisting in the full implementation of those texts by publishing information based on rigorous inquiry into sanctions violations and evasion attempts.

Bilateral ties between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation continued to strengthen in 2024. On 19 June, the Russian President visited Pyongyang and met Kim Jong Un; the two signed the [Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership](#) between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. The Treaty includes provisions related to mutual defence (article 4) and cooperation in scientific and technological fields, including space, biology, peaceful nuclear energy, artificial intelligence and others (article 10).

The Security Council met four times in 2024 to address the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic missile launches and military activities (see [S/PV.9643](#), [S/PV.9676](#), [S/PV.9775](#) and [S/PV.9820](#)). The Council remained divided, with many members strongly condemning the country's actions, while China and the Russian Federation attributed rising tensions to the United States and its allies. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had begun attending the meetings in July 2023, continued to defend its launches as legitimate self-defence exercises.

The role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament

In 2024, the Secretary-General submitted for the General Assembly's seventy-ninth session a compilation of Member States' views ([A/79/93](#)) on the 2023 report of the [Group of Governmental Experts to Further Consider Nuclear Disarmament Verification Issues](#), in line with General Assembly resolution [78/239](#).

On 24 December, the General Assembly adopted resolution [79/240](#), requesting the Secretary-General to seek written views from Member States on establishing a group of scientific and technical experts on nuclear disarmament verification within the United Nations. In that regard, it asked the Secretary-General to also account for the views of relevant

intergovernmental organizations entrusted with the verification of disarmament or non-proliferation obligations.

The Assembly encouraged Member States to focus their submissions on the possible merits, objectives, mandate and modalities for such a group. It also requested the Secretary-General to convene three in-person informal meetings on the topic, two at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and one at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

In addition, the General Assembly asked the Secretary-General to submit a substantive report at its eightieth session on possible options for establishing a group of scientific and technical experts on nuclear disarmament verification within the United Nations.

International Atomic Energy Agency verification

Since its founding in 1957, the [IAEA](#) has served as the focal point for worldwide cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, for promoting global nuclear security and safety and, through its verification activities, for providing assurances that States' international undertakings to use nuclear material and facilities for peaceful purposes are being honoured. The following is a brief survey of the work of the IAEA in 2024 in the areas of nuclear verification, nuclear security, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear fuel assurances.

Nuclear verification

A major pillar of the IAEA's programme involves the implementation of safeguards activities that enable the IAEA to provide assurances to the international community regarding the peaceful use of nuclear material and facilities. The IAEA's verification programme thus remains at the core of multilateral efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons by verifying that States are complying with their [safeguards](#) obligations.^[7]

Safeguards conclusions

At the end of each year, the IAEA draws safeguards conclusions for each State with a safeguards agreement in force for which safeguards are applied, based upon the evaluation of all safeguards-related information available to it for that year. For a "broader conclusion" to be drawn that "*all* nuclear material remained in peaceful activities", a State must have both a comprehensive safeguards agreement^[8] and an additional protocol^[9] in force. The IAEA must have been able to conduct all necessary verification and evaluation activities for the State and have found no indication that, in its judgment, would give rise to a safeguards concern. For States that have a comprehensive safeguards agreement but no additional protocol in force, the IAEA draws a safeguards conclusion regarding only the non-divertible credible assurance of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in such States.

For those States for which the broader conclusion has been drawn, the IAEA was able to implement integrated safeguards — an optimized combination of measures available under comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols — based on the State-level safeguards approach^[10] developed for that State.

In 2024, safeguards were applied for 190 States^[11],^[12] with safeguards agreements in force with the IAEA. Of the 137 States that had both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in force, the IAEA concluded that *all* nuclear material remained in peaceful activities in 75 States.^[13] For 61 of those, the IAEA concluded only that declared nuclear material remained in peaceful activities, as the necessary evaluation regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities remained ongoing. For one of the States with both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in force that also had an operative small quantities protocol based on the original standard text, the IAEA could not draw any safeguards conclusion. For 31 States with a comprehensive safeguards agreement but with no additional protocol in force, the IAEA concluded only that declared nuclear material remained in peaceful activities. Finally, for the other 14 States with a comprehensive safeguards agreement but no additional protocol in force that had an operative small quantities protocol based on the original standard text, the IAEA secretariat could not draw any safeguards conclusions.

Integrated safeguards were implemented for the whole of 2024 or part thereof for 71 States.^[14]

For the three States for which the IAEA implemented safeguards pursuant to item-specific safeguards agreements,^[15] the IAEA concluded that nuclear material, facilities or other items to which safeguards had been applied remained in peaceful activities.

Safeguards concerning nuclear material in selected facilities in the five NPT nuclear-weapon States under their respective voluntary offer agreements were also implemented. For these five States, the IAEA concluded that nuclear material in selected facilities to which safeguards had been applied remained in peaceful activities or had been withdrawn from safeguards as provided for in the agreements.

As of 31 December 2024, three NPT non-nuclear-weapon States parties had yet to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements into force pursuant to article III of the Treaty. For those States parties, the IAEA could not draw any safeguards conclusions.

Safeguards agreements, additional protocols and small quantities protocols

Safeguards agreements and additional protocols are legal instruments that provide the basis for IAEA verification activities. The entry into force of such instruments, therefore, continues to be crucial for effective and efficient IAEA safeguards.

The Agency continued to implement the Plan of Action to Promote the Conclusion of Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols, which was last updated in September 2024. During the year, the Agency conducted visits to the Plurinational State of Bolivia (5–7 February) and Sierra Leone (20–23 November). The Agency held consultations with representatives from several member and non-member States in Geneva, New York and Vienna, at various times throughout the year. During those outreach activities, the Agency encouraged States to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols and to amend or rescind their small quantities protocols based on the original standard text.

In 2024, a comprehensive safeguards agreement with a small quantities protocol based on the revised standard text and an additional protocol entered into force for Timor-Leste.

As concluded by the Board of Governors in 2005, the small quantities protocol based on the original standard text is a weakness in the Agency's safeguards system. In 2024, a small quantities protocol was amended for Cyprus, Fiji, Mongolia, Oman and Sierra Leone and rescinded for the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Saudi Arabia. At the end of 2024, 84 States had operative small quantities protocols in force based on the revised standard text.

Verification activities

Between 16 January 2016 and 23 February 2021, the Agency, in view of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), verified and monitored the Islamic Republic of Iran's implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. From 8 May 2019 onwards, however, the country reduced the implementation of those commitments on a step-by-step basis and, from 23 February 2021 onwards, stopped the implementation of those commitments altogether, including the additional protocol. This seriously affected the Agency's verification and monitoring in relation to the JCPOA, which was exacerbated in June 2022 by the Islamic Republic of Iran's decision to remove all of the Agency's equipment previously installed in the country for surveillance and monitoring activities in relation to the JCPOA. During 2024, the Director General submitted to the Board of Governors and in parallel to the Security Council four quarterly reports ([GOV/2024/7](#), [GOV/2024/26](#), [GOV/2024/41](#) and [GOV/2024/61](#)) and five additional reports (GOV/INF/2024/8, GOV/INF/2024/9, GOV/INF/2024/16, GOV/INF/2024/17 and GOV/INF/2024/18) [JH1] [CS2] [DB3] providing updates on developments in between the issuance of the quarterly reports, entitled "Verification and monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in light of United Nations Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)".

During 2024, despite the Agency's continued efforts to engage the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to resolve outstanding safeguards issues related to the presence of uranium particles of anthropogenic origin at locations in the country not declared to the Agency, no progress was made. Unless and until the Islamic Republic of Iran clarifies these issues, the Agency will

not be able to provide assurance about the exclusively peaceful nature of the country's nuclear programme. The Director General submitted four reports to the Board of Governors entitled "NPT Safeguards Agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran" ([GOV/2024/8](#), [GOV/2024/29](#), [GOV/2024/44](#) and [GOV/2024/62](#)) and one report entitled "Implementation of the Joint Statement of 4 March 2023" ([GOV/INF/2024/1](#)).

In August, the Director General submitted a report to the Board of Governors entitled "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic" ([GOV/2024/43](#)) covering relevant developments since the previous report in August 2022 ([GOV/2023/42](#)). The Director General informed the Board of Governors that no new information had come to the knowledge of the Agency that would have an impact on the Agency's assessment that it was very likely that a building destroyed at the Dair Alzour site in 2007 was a nuclear reactor that should have been declared to the Agency by the Syrian Arab Republic. ^[16] In 2024, the Syrian Arab Republic allowed the Agency to visit the three locations that were allegedly functionally related to the Dair Alzour site and permitted the Agency to take environmental samples. The Director General will report to the Board of Governors the Agency's findings from these visits once the results from the environmental samples taken by the Agency have been analysed, assessed and discussed with the Syrian Arab Republic.

Based on the evaluation of information provided by the Syrian Arab Republic, and all other safeguards-relevant information available to it, the Agency found no indication of the diversion of declared nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities and no indication of undeclared production or processing of nuclear material at declared facilities and locations outside facilities. For 2024, the Agency concluded that the country's declared nuclear material remained in peaceful activities.

In August 2024, the Director General submitted a report to the Board of Governors and General Conference entitled "Application of safeguards in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" ([GOV/2024/42-GC\(68\)/15](#)), which included new information since the Director General's report of September 2023 ([GOV/2023/41-GC\(67\)/20](#)).

Since 1994, the Agency has not been able to conduct all necessary safeguards activities provided for in the country's NPT safeguards agreement. From the end of 2002 until July 2007, the Agency was not able — and since April 2009 has not been able — to implement any verification measures in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and, therefore, the Agency could not draw any safeguards conclusion regarding the country.

In 2024, no verification activities were implemented in the field, but the Agency continued to monitor developments in the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to evaluate all available safeguards-relevant information, including open-source information and satellite imagery.

In 2024, the IAEA secretariat continued to maintain the Agency's enhanced readiness to play its essential role in verifying the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme. The secretariat continued its collection and analysis of safeguards relevant open-source information on the country's nuclear programme, continued its collection and analysis of high-resolution commercial satellite imagery, maintained necessary equipment and supplies, prepared Agency inspectors for verification and monitoring activities in the country, and continued to review and document the Agency's knowledge of its nuclear programme. Once a political agreement has been reached among the countries concerned, the Agency is ready to return to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea promptly, if requested to do so by the country, and subject to approval by the Board of Governors.

In 2024, in Ukraine, the Agency continued to undertake a vital verification role to reach independent conclusions that nuclear material under safeguards remains in peaceful use and that safeguarded facilities are not used for the undeclared production or processing of nuclear material. The Agency continues to implement safeguards, including in-field verification activities, in accordance with Ukraine's comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol. Based on the evaluation of all safeguards-relevant information available to the Agency to date, the Agency has not found any indication that would give rise to a proliferation concern.

Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East

As requested in operative paragraph 13 of resolution [GC\(67\)/RES/13](#) on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, adopted at the sixty-seventh regular session of the General Conference of the IAEA in 2023, the Director General submitted to the IAEA Board of Governors and the General Conference at its sixty-eighth regular session a report on the implementation of this resolution ([GOV/2024/46-GC\(68\)/14](#)). The report on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East describes, inter alia, the steps undertaken by the Director General in his efforts to further the implementation of his mandates conferred by the IAEA General Conference in resolution [GC\(67\)/RES/13](#) and decision [GC\(44\)/DEC/12](#).

In relation to this, in September 2013, following the discussions of the Board of Governors, the Director General provided to the member States of the IAEA the background documentation prepared for the 2012 Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, which described the work the IAEA undertook and the experience it gained concerning modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East region.^[17] Furthermore, in response to a request conveyed to the IAEA by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, the IAEA secretariat provided in 2019 background documentation describing the work previously undertaken by the Agency on modalities of the application of safeguards in the Middle East and its role under nuclear-

weapon-free zone treaties and regional arrangements ([A/CONF.236/3](#)). The IAEA background documentation was most recently updated in 2023, for the fourth session of the Conference ([A/CONF.236/2023/BD.2](#)). Upon invitation of the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, the IAEA attended, as an observer, the first, second, third, fourth and fifth sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held at United Nations Headquarters from 2019 to 2024.

Assurances of the supply of nuclear fuel

In December 2010, the IAEA Board of Governors approved the establishment of the IAEA low-enriched uranium bank, a physical stock of standard commercial low-enriched uranium hexafluoride with enrichment levels of up to 4.95 per cent. During the bank's establishment, the Agency decided to stock it with sixty 30B type cylinders containing 90 metric tons of low-enriched hexafluoride with enrichment levels of 1.6 and 4.95 per cent. The bank serves as a supply mechanism of last resort if an eligible member State's supply of low-enriched uranium is disrupted and cannot be restored by commercial means.

The IAEA low-enriched uranium bank was established and became operational on 17 October 2019 with the receipt in the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Storage Facility — located at and operated by the Ulba Metallurgical Plant in Kazakhstan — of 32 30B cylinders filled with low-enriched uranium. The physical stock of low-enriched uranium in the bank was completed with the receipt of 28 additional 30B cylinders filled with low-enriched uranium, on 10 December 2019.

IAEA contracts with KTZ Express, TENEX (Techsnabexport) and China Nuclear Energy Industry Corporation to ensure possible shipments of the low-enriched uranium and equipment to and from the bank, either through China or the Russian Federation.

Following its cylinder management programme, the IAEA undertook activities in June to recertify 36 low-enriched uranium-filled cylinders, so as to ensure their long-term safety and security, in situ at the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Storage Facility and during subsequent transport, in compliance with the requirements of the revised ISO 7195:2020(E) Standard.

Minimization of highly enriched uranium

The IAEA continued to support minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium in the civilian sector around the globe, both directly and through support from member States. The Agency facilitates the conversion of research reactors through supporting the development of low-enriched uranium fuels and improved analytic techniques.

Direct support of highly enriched uranium fuel removal efforts continued. In 2024, the Agency assisted Kazakhstan with the preparatory work for the disposition of spent highly enriched uranium fuel from two research reactors. Conversion to the use of low-enriched uranium for the production of the medical isotope Mo-99 had been completed by all major producers in 2023.

Nuclear security

Nuclear security plan

In 2024, the Agency continued to assist States, at their request, in making their national nuclear security regimes more robust, sustainable and effective, while playing a central role in enhancing international cooperation in nuclear security. In implementing the Nuclear Security Plan 2022–2025 ([GC\(65\)/24](#)) and contributing to global efforts to achieve effective nuclear security, the IAEA established comprehensive nuclear security guidance and promoted its use through peer reviews and advisory services and capacity-building, including education and training. Furthermore, the IAEA worked to assist States in adhering to and implementing relevant international legal instruments, as well as strengthening international cooperation and coordination of assistance.

Additionally, in May 2024, the Agency hosted the [International Conference on Nuclear Security: Shaping the Future \(ICONS 2024\)](#), the fourth quadrennial conference in this series. ICONS 2024 featured ministerial and scientific–technical segments, attracting over 2,000 registered participants from 142 member States and 16 invited organizations. During the ministerial segment (attended by 49 ministers, deputy ministers and other high-ranking officials), over 100 statements were delivered.

International nuclear security framework

The year 2024 saw further progress towards the universalization of the principal binding international instruments relevant to nuclear security, both adopted under the auspices of the IAEA: the [Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and its 2005 Amendment](#). During the year, the number of States parties to the original Convention increased from 164 to 165 and the number of States parties to the Amendment increased from 135 to 137. The Amendment entered into force in May 2016, establishing a legal basis for a strengthened framework to protect nuclear facilities and nuclear material in domestic use, storage and transport.

The IAEA continued to promote universal adherence to the Convention and its Amendment through various outreach activities, including three regional workshops, one national workshop and two outreach missions.

Nuclear security guidance for member States

The IAEA establishes and maintains the [Nuclear Security Series](#) as part of its central role in providing nuclear security-related international support and coordination. In 2024, the IAEA released four new publications in the Series, reaching 46 published volumes, and held two meetings of the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee. Throughout the year, 17 Nuclear Security Series publications were in various stages of development, including eight revisions.

Incident and Trafficking Database

The IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database remained an important source of information assisting the IAEA secretariat, participating States and selected international organizations in strengthening nuclear security. In 2024, States reported 147 incidents of nuclear and other radioactive material out of regulatory control, three of which were incidents related to trafficking,^[18] increasing the number of incidents in the database to 4,390. The database is a component of the information management systems supporting the implementation of the IAEA Nuclear Security Plan.

Nuclear security human resource development

The IAEA continued to provide comprehensive assistance to States on nuclear security human resource development, including through programme development, needs analysis, training events, instructor training, educational programmes and further development of Nuclear Security Support Centres. In 2024, the Agency conducted 157 nuclear security-related training events, providing training to 2,990 participants from 163 States. The IAEA also continued implementation of its e-learning programme, with over 2,600 users from 141 States completing more than 5,300 e-learning modules, an increase of 1,000 users from 2023.

The IAEA continued to support the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme](#) through the organization of the annual International School on Nuclear Security exclusively for programme participants. The most recent iteration of the school was held in Vienna in August and September, bringing together 46 fellows from 41 countries as in-person and virtual participants.

Based on its analysis of the needs of member States and the capabilities of Nuclear Security Support Centres in different regions, the Agency established the [Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre](#) at the Agency's laboratories in Seibersdorf, Austria. Equipped with state-of-the-art technical infrastructure and equipment, the Centre began operations in October 2023. In 2024, it hosted 50 events with over 700 participants and experts, and 50 visits by over 1,000 visitors. The Centre complements existing national and international capabilities in nuclear security that do not commonly exist among institutions in States, and

focuses on new capabilities for the IAEA, further enhancing capacity-building in nuclear security by providing hands-on training and using advanced technology and expertise. As of the end of 2024, the Centre's training programme incorporated 28 training courses and workshops.

Nuclear security peer reviews and advisory service

The IAEA continued to implement peer reviews and advisory services to help States to evaluate their nuclear security regimes. It conducted such missions with a focus on national nuclear security regimes, including practical security measures for nuclear and other radioactive material and associated facilities and activities.

In 2024, the IAEA carried out several expert missions and workshops to guide States on drafting regulating principles, reviewing regulatory frameworks and finalizing nuclear security regulations and associated administrative measures, including conducting six International Physical Protection Advisory Service missions, two International Nuclear Security Advisory Service missions and two Regulatory Infrastructure for Radiation Safety and Nuclear Security missions. Since 1996, a total of 108 International Physical Protection Advisory Service missions had been conducted, upon request, in 63 member States.

The IAEA remains committed to maximizing the impact and effectiveness of efforts to establish and maintain nuclear security regimes. To this end, in 2024, the IAEA systematically implemented the upgraded Integrated Nuclear Security Sustainability Plans framework, with a phased roll-out to States undergoing their scheduled three- to four-year review cycle, ensuring a consistent and structured approach to nuclear security support.

Coordinated research projects

The IAEA continued to coordinate with educational, nuclear security operational, and research and development institutions to implement [coordinated research projects](#) focused on various scientific and technical areas of nuclear security to address evolving threats and technologies, including the establishment and sustainability of national nuclear security regimes. In 2024, the IAEA initiated a new nuclear security-related coordinated research project, "Nuclear security implications of uncrewed aerial, ground, and maritime systems". This coordinated research project was launched as a cross-cutting effort to address both the use of and countermeasures to uncrewed systems.

The IAEA continued nine other coordinated research projects on topics related to computer security; nuclear detection technology; nuclear forensics; counterfeit, fraudulent and suspect items; computer security for radiation detection systems; radiation detection equipment;

protecting against insider threats; security of radioactive material throughout its life cycle; and nuclear security for research reactors.

Risk reduction

The IAEA continued to advise States on formal threat characterization and assessment; the development, use and maintenance of design basis threats; the conduct and evaluation of exercises; methodologies for nuclear material accounting and control for security purposes; and the evaluation and inspection of physical protection systems. In 2024, the Agency continued to support member States in protecting radioactive material during and after use. The Agency supported the removal of 11 high-activity disused sealed radioactive sources from two States; continued work on the removal of more than 50 disused sealed radioactive sources from 10 States and the conditioning of four radioisotope thermoelectric generators; and initiated the removal of over 50 disused sealed radioactive sources from five States. This work contributes to an overall effort to reduce radiological risk globally by securing materials that could be potentially used for malicious purposes.

Export controls

Nuclear Suppliers Group

The [Nuclear Suppliers Group](#) is a group of 48 nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of guidelines for nuclear transfers and transfers of nuclear-related dual-use equipment, materials, software and related technology. The guidelines aim to ensure that nuclear trade for peaceful purposes does not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and that international trade and cooperation in the nuclear field is not hindered unjustly in the process. The European Commission and the Chair of the [Zangger Committee](#) participate as observers.

In 2024, the Group held its thirty-third plenary meeting in Rio de Janeiro on 10 and 11 July. Chaired by Claudia Vieira Santos (Brazil), the Group focused on technical issues important to implementing its control lists, including exchanging views and agreeing on a proposal to clarify and update the Dual-Use List. The amendment eliminates a possible control loophole, potentially allowing proliferators access to systems and techniques suitable for carrying out hydrodynamic experiments for weapons applications. It also clarifies that microwave velocity interferometers are to be controlled by the velocity interferometer entry in 5.B.5.a.

Following the Group's established practice, in 2025, it planned to provide the IAEA with a compilation of changes the Group had made through Plenary Meeting decisions over the

previous three years (2022–2024) for official publication as part of the Agency's INFCIRC series (INFCIRC/254 [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)).

As set out in paragraph 7c of the Part 1 Guidelines, in 2024, the Nuclear Suppliers Group finalized a quinquennial review of arrangements for exports of enrichment facilities, equipment and technology in order to address changes in enrichment technology and commercial practices.^[19] In its 2024 review, the Group confirmed that there had been no significant developments in enrichment technology and commercial practices requiring changes to the arrangement set out in paragraph 7c of the Group's Part 1 Guidelines.

During the 2024 Plenary Meeting, the Group exchanged views on national awareness-raising practices and tools for engaging with nuclear industry and research stakeholders. Participating Governments also continued to work on a comprehensive revision of the Group's good practices documents. Further to the [awareness-raising document](#) endorsed by its 2023 Plenary Meeting, the Group finalized a revision of its [good practices document on Government-to-Government assurances](#), agreeing that the current version remained up to date. The Group also exchanged information on all aspects of the 2008 Statement on Civil Nuclear Cooperation with India.

In July, the Brazilian Chair of the Group was succeeded by Xolisa Mabhongo (South Africa).

Missile Technology Control Regime

Flávio Soares Damico (Brazil) continued to serve as Chair of the [Missile Technology Control Regime](#) in 2024. While the Regime was unable to elect a new Chair and did not hold its usual plenary meeting, it convened events such as the Reinforced Points of Contact meeting and the Technical Experts Meeting, which typically take place during the plenary meeting. At the end of 2024, consultations to identify a new Chair were ongoing.

Missile-related issues

Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation

The twenty-third annual regular meeting of the subscribing States to the [Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation](#) took place in Vienna on 11 and 12 April, chaired by Chile. As had been the case since 2022, subscribing States were unable to agree on issuing a press release reflecting the outcome of their meeting.

Qatar subscribed to the Code of Conduct on 22 January 2024, bringing the total number of subscribing States to 145.

Political declarations and other initiatives

Reaffirmations that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought

Following the [joint statement](#) of January 2022 from the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the NPT, in which they reaffirmed that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”, references to the assertion continued to appear throughout 2024 in various forums, including during the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee. In addition, the Group of Seven major industrialized countries gathered from 13 to 15 June in Apulia, Italy, where they warned in a [communiqué](#) that any use of nuclear weapons in the context of the war in Ukraine would be “inadmissible”.

Declarations calling for a world free of nuclear weapons

Several forums underlined the imperative of advancing disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In the Pact for the Future, adopted at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 22 September (resolution [79/1](#)), the General Assembly called for advancing the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and underscored a decision to recommit to that goal.

The nineteenth Summit of the Group of 20 countries, held in Rio de Janeiro on 18 and 19 November, stated in a [declaration](#) that the Group should recommit to “advancing the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and a safer place for all and will uphold our obligations in this regard”.

In the [declaration](#) of the 2024 BRICS summit, held on 23 October, the countries called “for the strengthening of non-proliferation and disarmament to safeguard and maintain global stability and international peace and security”.

P5 Process

Owing to the ongoing war in Ukraine, no ministerial-level meeting took place under the P5 Process in 2024. The Russian Federation, as Chair of the dialogue among the P5, organized working-level meetings in [Riyadh](#) on 29 February and in [Geneva](#) on 23 July on the margins of the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee. Topics of discussion included strategic risk reduction, as well as nuclear doctrines and policy.

China, taking over as Chair of the dialogue from Russia, conducted a working-level meeting in [New York](#) on 10 October and an expert-level meeting in [Dubai](#) on 4 December. The discussions were focused on nuclear doctrines.

The P5 did not deliver any joint statements and did not submit any working papers to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament

The [Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament](#) was launched in 2019 by NPT States parties. It aims to strengthen disarmament diplomacy within the context of the NPT, as well as building bridges between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

Members of the Stockholm Initiative^[20] delivered a [statement](#) on its behalf to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

In the remarks, the members called for the implementation of its “stepping stones for advancing nuclear disarmament” ([NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.13](#)), which was submitted to the tenth Review Conference to strengthen the implementation of article VI and of working towards a successful review cycle. The paper addresses main issues identified for the current review cycle, including recommendations on reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, negative security assurances and nuclear-weapon-free zones, risk reduction, humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, accountability and transparency, and strengthening the review process.

Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative

Founded in 2010, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative is a ministerial-level group of NPT States parties^[21] focused on practical steps that would promote the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference.

Members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative delivered a [statement](#) on behalf of the group to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference. In the statement, it recalled its past recommendations for implementing the NPT's three pillars. It called on the nuclear-weapon States to ensure that the decrease in global nuclear arsenals was sustained and not reversed.

The statement by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative also highlighted the need to enhance transparency and accountability to build trust and confidence, facilitating further reductions in nuclear arsenals. The Initiative submitted a working paper on enhancing transparency and strengthening accountability in the NPT review process ([NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.32](#)) and also held a side event during the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee on 29 July.

Footnotes

[1]The “nuclear triad” refers to a military force structure of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and strategic bombers with nuclear bombs and missiles.

[2]See *Journal of the United Nations*, “High-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests” ([part 1](#) and [part 2](#)), 4 September 2024.

[3]Canada, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka.

[4]China and the Russian Federation voted against. Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Namibia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Türkiye abstained. Paraguay was unable to vote due to arrears.

[5]Burkina Faso, China and the Russian Federation voted against. Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa and Thailand abstained. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was unable to vote due to arrears.

[6]Security Council resolutions [1718 \(2006\)](#), [1874 \(2009\)](#), [2087 \(2013\)](#), [2094 \(2013\)](#), [2270 \(2016\)](#), [2321 \(2016\)](#), [2356 \(2017\)](#), [2371 \(2017\)](#), [2375 \(2017\)](#) and [2397 \(2017\)](#).

[7]See also article III (1) of the NPT.

[8]Comprehensive safeguards agreements are based on [INFCIRC/153 \(Corrected\)](#), “The structure and content of agreements between the Agency and States required in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”.

[9]Additional protocols are based on [INFCIRC/540 \(Corrected\)](#), “Model Protocol Additional to the Agreement(s) between State(s) and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards”.

[10]The IAEA develops a State-level safeguards approach for individual States on the basis of an acquisition path analysis, which is a structured technical method used to analyse the plausible paths by which, from a technical point of view, nuclear material suitable for use in a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device could be acquired.

[11]These States do not include the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, where the IAEA did not implement safeguards and, therefore, could not draw any conclusion.

[12]And Taiwan Province of China.

[13] And Taiwan Province of China.

[14] And Taiwan Province of China.

[15] Item-specific safeguards agreements are based on [INFCIRC/66/Rev.2](#), "The Agency's safeguards system (1965, as provisionally extended in 1966 and 1968)".

[16] The Board of Governors, in its resolution [GOV/2011/41](#) of June 2011 (adopted by a vote), had, inter alia, called on the Syrian Arab Republic to urgently remedy its non-compliance with its NPT safeguards agreement and, in particular, to provide the Agency with updated reporting under its safeguards agreement and access to all information, sites, material and persons necessary for the Agency to verify such reporting and resolve all outstanding questions so that the Agency could provide the necessary assurance as to the exclusively peaceful nature of the Syrian nuclear programme.

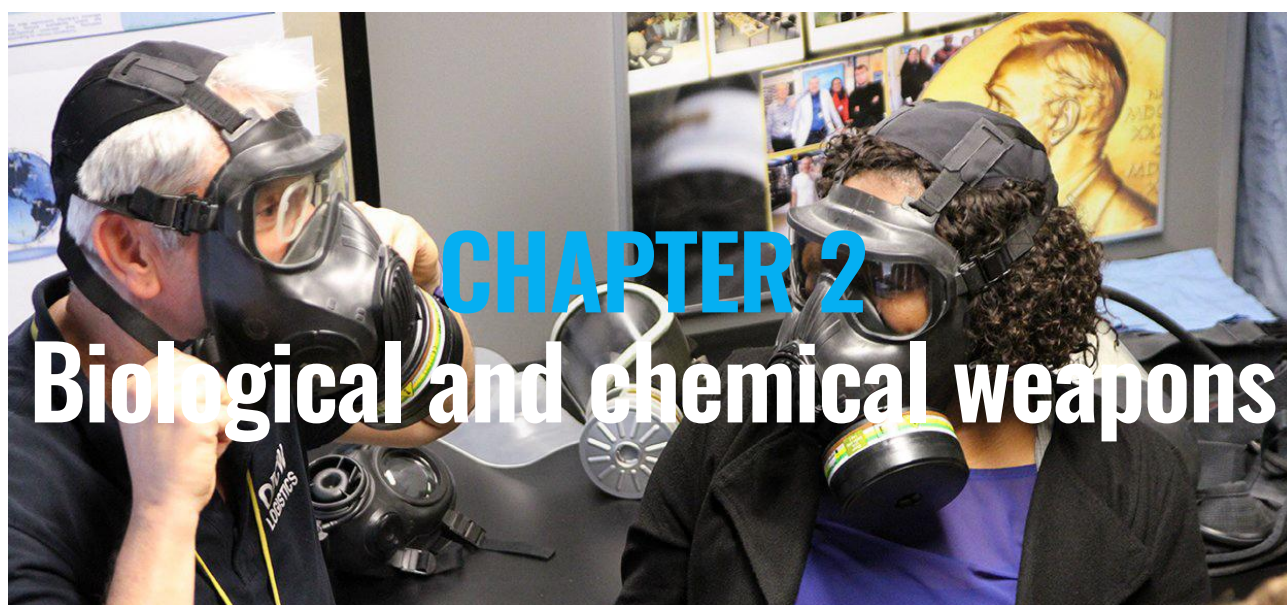
[17] The 2010 Review Conference endorsed that the IAEA and other relevant international organizations be requested to prepare background documentation for the 2012 Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained ([NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. I\)](#), p. 30, para. 7 (d)). See also IAEA document [GOV/2013/33/Add.1-GC\(57\)/10/Add.1](#).

[18] In order to accurately categorize all reported trafficking incidents and distinguish them from other unauthorized activities, a definition of "trafficking" had been agreed for communication purposes among the points of contact of the Incident and Trafficking Database. According to this definition, incidents are grouped on the basis of whether the intent to commit an act of trafficking or malicious use is confirmed, is not known or is absent.

[19] This review was to take place every five years beginning in 2013.

[20] Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

[21] Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nigeria, Philippines, Poland, Türkiye and United Arab Emirates.



I am heartened that through the Pact for the Future, States have committed to pursue a world free from chemical and biological weapons and ensure that those responsible for any use of these weapons are identified and held accountable.

— Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Developments and trends, 2024

In 2024, the Secretary-General continued to emphasize that the use of chemical weapons anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances is intolerable and that impunity for their use is equally unacceptable. The Secretary-General also continued to urge States to reaffirm their commitment to the [Chemical Weapons Convention](#) and called for unity in the Security Council to identify and hold accountable those who have dared to use such weapons. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to support the Secretary-General's good offices in furthering the implementation of Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#) on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Office also continued to work with members of the Security Council in their efforts to build unity, restore cooperation and ensure adherence to the global norm against chemical weapons.

The year also witnessed a continued international focus on the security implications of emerging technologies in the biological sphere. In adopting the [Pact for the Future](#) in September, Member States emphasized the need to address emerging and evolving biological risks through improved anticipation, prevention, coordination and preparedness processes. Furthermore, they committed to identify, examine and develop effective

measures, including possible legally binding measures, to strengthen and institutionalize international norms and instruments against the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling, retention and use of biological agents and toxins as weapons.

It was in this context that the international community pushed ahead with various initiatives aimed at bolstering the [Biological Weapons Convention](#), including through the dedicated Working Group on the strengthening of the Convention. During the fourth and fifth sessions of the Working Group in Geneva, States parties discussed ways to identify, examine and develop specific and effective measures, including possible legally binding measures, and to make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention. In line with the Group's mandate from the ninth Review Conference in 2022, its deliberations addressed the following: (a) international cooperation and assistance under article X; (b) scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention; (c) confidence- building and transparency; (d) compliance and verification; (e) national implementation of the Convention; (f) assistance, response and preparedness under article VII; and (g) organizational, institutional and financial arrangements.

Despite intensive negotiations before and during the Group's fifth session in December, however, consensus eluded States parties on a recommendation for establishing two new mechanisms within the Convention's framework, focused respectively on scientific and technological review and on facilitating international cooperation and assistance under article X. One State party objected to a proposal by the Chair to recommend that States parties convene a special conference specifically tasked with formally establishing the mechanisms.

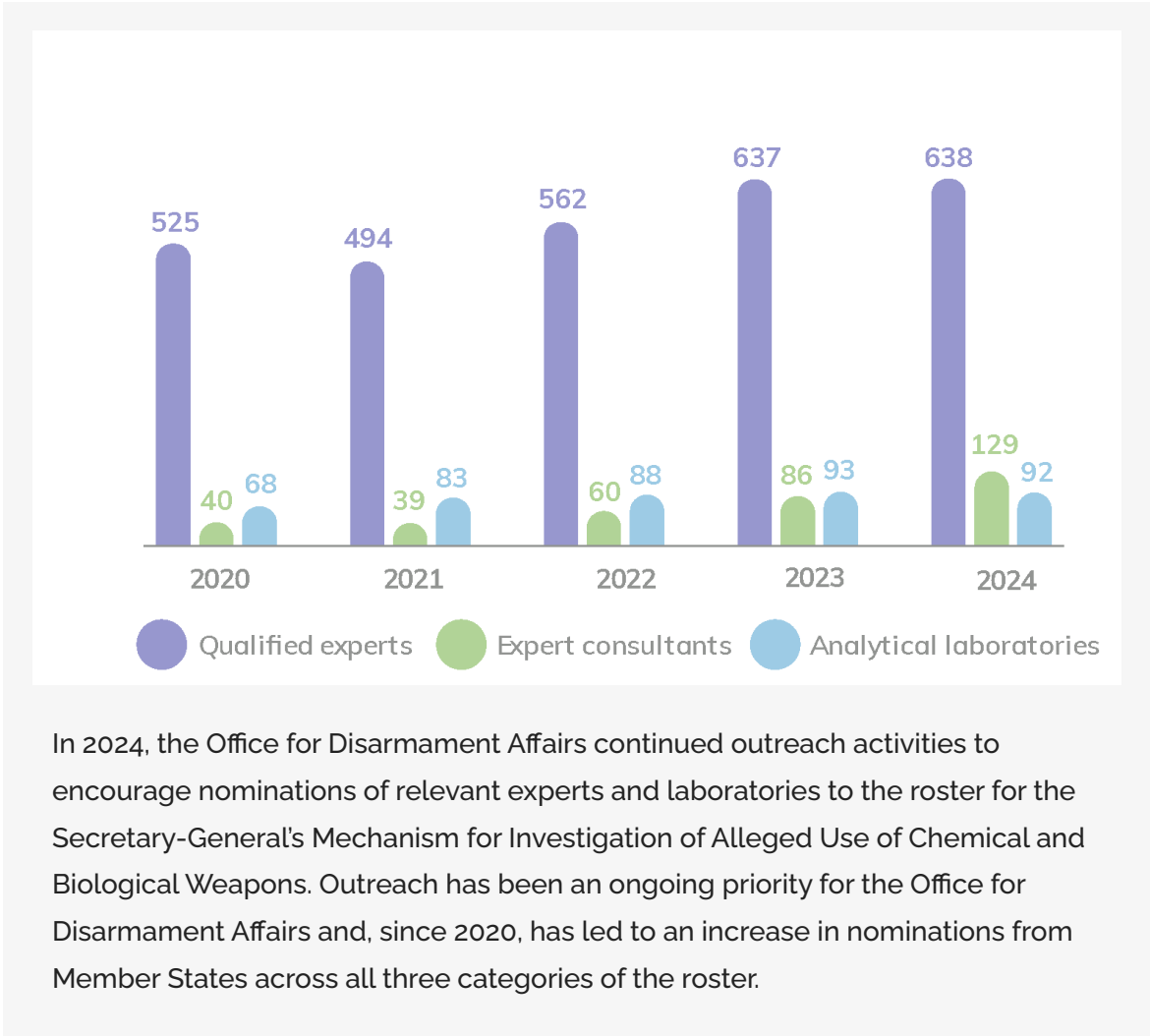


Participants in the Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship programme attend a study visit in Geneva. Their trip from 15 to 23 August coincided with the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention.

From March to August, the Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship programme hosted its second cohort, comprising 20 young leaders in the biological sciences from 17 States in the global South. The participants took part in a series of tailored, expert-led online learning sessions and collaborative research that culminated in a 10-day study visit to Geneva to observe the

fourth session of the Working Group. Building on the momentum of the first edition, the Fellowship received a significant increase in applications, with more than 2,400 applicants from over 100 countries — a rise of more than 200 per cent compared with the previous year.

Figure 2. Secretary-General’s Mechanism: number of nominated qualified experts, expert consultants and analytical laboratories (2020–2024)





Qualified experts for the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons or Toxin Weapons participate in a simulated decontamination exercise for scenarios such as sampling suspected chemical weapons. The activity was part of a skills training course conducted in Lisbon from 21 to 24 May.

Chemical weapons

In 2024, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) continued to deliver on its mandate and commitment to supporting the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction ([Chemical Weapons Convention](#)).

During 2024, the OPCW continued to develop its activities aimed at preventing the re-emergence and proliferation of chemical weapons, following the end of the destruction of declared stockpiles in 2023. In parallel, the organization continued to respond to current and emerging challenges and threats. It met its mandated target of 200 industry inspections in 2024. It also marked the 500th industry inspection in China, the country with the largest chemical industry. The OPCW continued to use its new facility, the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (the ChemTech Centre), in supporting a variety of relevant activities, including enhancing the skills of inspectors and providing training and capacity-building activities for OPCW member States.

The ChemTech Centre also remained the hub for the OPCW's network of designated laboratories. During 2024, four new laboratories were added to the network, in Algeria, Japan, Poland and Türkiye. At the end of 2024, there was at least one designated laboratory in every region, giving additional assurances of the independence of the OPCW Technical Secretariat's work.

Keeping abreast of rapid scientific and technological advancements, particularly concerning emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), remains a major priority for the organization. The Technical Secretariat organized or participated in several expert activities culminating in the Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, co-hosted by the OPCW and Morocco in Rabat in October.

Responding to chemical weapons use and allegations of use remains a key priority. Throughout the year, the organization continued its work to address the Syrian chemical weapons dossier. The OPCW Declaration Assessment Team held three rounds of consultation with the Syrian authorities in 2024. At the end of the year, 19 issues remained unresolved, some of them of serious concern. The fact-finding mission continued its work and issued three further reports detailing its findings. Likewise, the Investigation and Identification Team continued its work, and the OPCW Technical Secretariat issued another report on the result of its investigation of the incident in Marea in September 2015, identifying Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Daesh) as the perpetrator of the use of mustard gas.

Following the fall of the Assad regime in the Syrian Arab Republic on 8 December 2024, upon the request of the OPCW Director General and in consultation with the Chairperson of the Executive Council, the Executive Council of the OPCW held an extraordinary meeting on 12 December ([EC-M-66](#)) to discuss the ongoing developments in the country. Briefing the Council on ongoing efforts with respect to the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, the Director General underlined the urgent need to identify, verify and secure any components of the programme still present in the country and to preserve records and other material related to the programme. He also stressed that all legal obligations binding upon the Syrian Arab Republic under the Chemical Weapons Convention, relevant decisions of the OPCW policymaking organs and Security Council resolutions remain valid, regardless of any change in government. The Director General emphasized that while the new situation in the Syrian Arab Republic presented a unique opportunity to bring the Syrian chemical weapons dossier to a close, achieving the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme would require significant resources, effort and cooperation.

On 26 December, the Director General held telephone consultations with the new Syrian caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs and reiterated Syrian obligations under the Convention

irrespective of the change of government, as well as the Technical Secretariat's readiness to support the country in meeting its obligations. He requested the Syrian caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs to, among other things, ensure that Syrian caretaker authorities secure chemical weapons-related locations and materials therein. He also requested the caretaker Minister to appoint a team of experts to receive and engage with the Technical Secretariat's experts. The caretaker Minister expressed the country's full commitment to cooperating with the Technical Secretariat in dealing with any outstanding issues relating to the chemical weapons programme.

The work of the Technical Secretariat in the Syrian Arab Republic is ongoing with the Syrian transitional government.

In 2024, under subparagraph 38(e) of article VIII of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the OPCW deployed a technical assistance visit team to Ukraine. The team received samples and other evidence from Ukraine during the deployment and was able to verify that the chain of custody for the evidence had been maintained in line with international standards. Two OPCW-designated laboratories confirmed that the grenade and a soil sample contained 2-chlorobenzylidenemalononitrile (CS), a riot control agent. The use of riot control agents in warfare is prohibited under the Convention. The Technical Secretariat issued a report on these findings on 18 November ([S/2338/2024](#)).

The year also saw significant progress with respect to the verified destruction of [old and abandoned chemical weapons](#). From 17 to 21 September, the OPCW Director General visited China with the Chairperson of the OPCW Executive Council and a delegation from the States parties for briefings on ongoing efforts on excavation, recovery and destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China.

Additionally, the OPCW continued its work to achieve the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention, urging the remaining States not parties to the Convention to join without delay or preconditions.

Twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties

The twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention took place in The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands, from 25 to 29 November. Representatives of 152 States parties, one signatory State and one non-signatory State attended the Conference ([C-29/5](#), paras. 1.2–1.4). Delegates from 118 civil society organizations registered to participate ([C-29/DEC.4](#), annex), along with representatives from the chemical industry and scientific community ([C-29/DEC.3](#), annex). The session was also attended by six international organizations, specialized agencies and other international bodies ([C-29/DEC.2](#), annex).

The twenty-ninth session of the Conference considered questions, matters and issues within the scope of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including disarmament, the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons, assistance and protection, international cooperation, and emerging technologies.

The Conference considered and approved the revised programme and budget of the OPCW for 2025 (C-29/DEC.11), providing the necessary resources for its operations. The Conference also considered and adopted a decision on the OPCW's participation in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, scheduled for implementation beginning on 1 January 2025 (C-29/DEC.9).

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Verification activities

Since the destruction of all categories of declared stockpiled chemical weapons was achieved in July 2023, the OPCW has increased its attention on the retention of knowledge in destruction technologies to maintain preparedness for the possible future accession of new States parties.

The year 2024 saw the continued destruction of non-stockpiled weapons. This included abandoned chemical weapons in Haerbaling, Harbin and Wuhan, in China, as well as the excavation of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in several other locations in China. Furthermore, China, Japan and the Technical Secretariat held their thirty-ninth and fortieth trilateral meetings virtually, focusing on practical and technical aspects of the ongoing destruction projects.

The destruction of old chemical weapons continued in 2024. At the end of the year, 19 States parties had declared 157,747 old chemical weapons, and 122,423 had been verified as destroyed.

During 2024, the Technical Secretariat conducted a workshop on verification practices at chemical weapons production facilities and organized a session on new chemical weapon destruction technologies. It also undertook a field training exercise in relation to verification activities of technical assistance visits, initial visits at chemical weapons storage facilities, and final engineering review and systematic inspection at chemical weapon destruction facilities. These activities captured core knowledge related to methodologies, challenges and lessons learned during destruction and enhanced the Technical Secretariat's knowledge management repository.

Regarding industry verification activities in 2024, the Technical Secretariat was able to carry out all 200 planned inspections pursuant to article VI of the Chemical Weapons Convention — 11 “Schedule 1” inspections, 42 “Schedule 2” inspections, 10 “Schedule 3” inspections, and 137 inspections of other chemical production facilities.

The OPCW ChemTech Centre, now fully operational, significantly bolsters the organization's capability to fulfil the objectives of the Convention, enhancing its ability to respond to emerging threats such as chemical terrorism, to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and to keep pace with developments in science and technology. The Centre also serves as a high-quality platform for research, analysis, training and various activities for international cooperation and assistance to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

The OPCW — in addition to carrying out inspector training, laboratory exercises, proficiency testing and mission-preparedness activities at the ChemTech Centre's Technology and Training Hub — used the Centre to convene many capacity-building events and topical meetings. Those events included an analytical chemistry course for women chemists, a training course on investigating incidents involving toxic industrial chemicals, a table-top exercise convened under the auspices of the OPCW Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, and a meeting on the relevance of AI to the Chemical Weapons Convention. In addition, an inter-agency workshop on deployments was organized in cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, drawing participation from across the United Nations system and beyond.

Designated laboratories

The OPCW maintains a global network of [designated laboratories](#) that must meet its proficiency criteria and be capable of performing off-site analysis of samples collected by the OPCW inspectors. This network is the linchpin of the organization's verification regime and its capacity to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

In 2024, 62 laboratories from 40 States parties participated in OPCW confidence-building exercises and proficiency tests for the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. At the end of 2024, there were 33 designated laboratories from 25 States parties, including four new laboratories added to the network in 2024, in Algeria, Japan, Poland and Türkiye. The presence of at least one designated laboratory in every region gives additional assurances of the independence of the Technical Secretariat's work (see below for a list of OPCW-designated laboratories).

1. National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie (Algeria)
2. Defence Science and Technology Group (Australia)
3. Defensielaboratoria – Laboratoires de la Défense (Belgium)

4. Laboratório de Análises Químicas, Centro Tecnológico do Exército (Brazil)
5. Laboratory of Analytical Chemistry, Research Institute of Chemical Defence (China)
6. Laboratory of Toxicant Analysis, Academy of Military Medical Sciences (China)
7. Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Finland)
8. DGA Maîtrise NRBC, Département Analyse Chimique (France)
9. Bundeswehr Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology (Germany)
10. Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and CBRN Protection (Germany)
11. Centre for Analysis of Chemical Toxins, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (India)
12. VERTOX Laboratory, Defence Research and Development Establishment (India)
13. Defense Chemical Research Laboratory (Islamic Republic of Iran)
14. Chemical School, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (Japan)
15. TNO Defence, Safety and Security (Kingdom of the Netherlands)
16. Laboratory for Analysis of Chemical Threat Agents, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (Norway)
17. Analytical Laboratory, Defense Science and Technology Organization (Pakistan)
18. Chemical Laboratory of CBRN Area Control Centre (Poland)
19. CBRN Defense Research Institute, Republic of Korea Defense Command (Republic of Korea)
20. Chemical Analysis Laboratory, CBR Directorate, Agency for Defense Development (Republic of Korea)
21. Research and Innovation Center for CBRN Defense and Ecology, Chemical Analysis Laboratory (Romania)
22. Central Chemical Weapons Destruction Analytical Laboratory of the Federal State Unitary Enterprise, "State Scientific Research Institute of Organic Chemistry and Technology" (Russian Federation)
23. Laboratory for the Chemical and Analytical Control of the Military Research Centre (Russian Federation)
24. Laboratory of Chemical Analytical Control and Biotesting, Research Institute of Hygiene, Occupational Pathology and Human Ecology (Russian Federation)

25. Verification Laboratory, Defence Medical and Environmental Research Institute, DSO National Laboratories (Singapore)
26. Laboratorio de Verificación de Armas Químicas, INTA Campus La Marañosa (Spain)
27. Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI (Sweden)
28. Spiez Laboratory, Swiss NBC Defence Establishment (Switzerland)
29. Chemical Warfare Agents Identification and Verification Laboratory (Türkiye)
30. Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Porton Down (United Kingdom)
31. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (United States)
32. DEVCOM Chemical Biological Center, Forensic Analytical Laboratory (United States)
33. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (United States)

National implementation, assistance and protection against chemical weapons, and international cooperation in promoting the peaceful uses of chemistry

The OPCW continued to assist States parties in achieving the full and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Technical Secretariat provided support in the areas of national implementation and assistance and protection against chemical weapons, as well as international cooperation in promoting peaceful uses of chemistry. It conducted 97 online and in-person capacity-building and knowledge-sharing activities, benefiting 2,765 participants. In-person activities were conducted in 41 States parties around the world.

The ChemTech Centre completed its first full year of activities in 2024, following its inauguration in May 2023. During 2024, the Technical Secretariat conducted 24 capacity-building activities at the Centre, with multiple units and branches providing support, benefiting 559 participants from all regions. The Technical Secretariat planned to continue developing and expanding activities at the Centre, including with respect to international cooperation and assistance. The Centre was also positioned to maintain its role as a hub for creating efficiency gains and synergies across the Technical Secretariat, in support of States parties' capacities and the implementation of the Convention.

Concerning [national implementation](#), the Technical Secretariat continued to assist States parties, conducting 22 events that benefited 846 participants. It trained national authorities and other stakeholders, in particular chemical industry staff, as well as customs officers, on

measures to meet the Convention's national obligations related to declarations and inspections. For instance, two separate events focused on identifying best practices for resolving discrepancies between import and export data for scheduled chemicals: one for East Asian countries and States parties from the Western European and Others Group, and another for Eastern Europe. In addition, customs authorities from Pacific States parties benefited from a subregional conference addressing ways to establish effective customs control over the trade in toxic chemicals. Furthermore, the Technical Secretariat continued to provide targeted legislative support to States parties without comprehensive legislation for implementing the Convention. That assistance included a dedicated workshop for Portuguese-speaking States parties, as well as a subregional forum for Pacific States parties. In 2024, three States parties that had not previously reported any national implementation measures reported adopting Convention-relevant legislative instruments.

Regarding [assistance and protection](#) against chemical weapons under article X of the Convention, the Technical Secretariat supported States parties in enhancing their capacity to respond to chemical incidents. It organized a total of 42 capacity-building activities with 1,006 participants across all events. Participants benefited from a broad range of training opportunities aimed at supporting implementation under article X of the Convention. In addition to conducting assistance and protection training cycles and various specialized courses, including under the medical action plan, a revised training cycle — Integrated Advanced Course and Exercise — was launched and piloted in Ecuador. It aimed to reduce duplication in the training cycle and optimize resources, enabling more events to benefit States parties.

Notably, the Technical Secretariat delivered support to Ukraine upon the State party's request under article X of the Convention. In particular, the Technical Secretariat provided Ukrainian first responders with specialized training on assistance and protection at the ChemTech Centre, as well as online courses on emergency measures for incidents involving toxic chemicals. In addition, it acquired protective, detection and identification equipment for Ukraine and conducted technical assistance visits to deliver the equipment and provide training on their use, as well as technical advice. The delivered equipment consisted of 70 LCD 3.3 and 13 FirstDefender RM Raman spectrometers — detectors funded by contributions from States parties to the Trust Fund for the Implementation of article X.

To support [international cooperation](#) in promoting the peaceful uses of chemistry under article XI of the Convention, the OPCW focused on strengthening its existing programmes and activities as it continued to deliver them. It also undertook new initiatives in areas such as promoting integrated chemicals management, enhancing laboratory capabilities and facilitating the promotion and exchange of chemical knowledge. In total, the Technical Secretariat organized 33 capacity-building events in 2024, benefiting 913 experts.

To enhance understanding of the impact of AI technology on the implementation of the Convention and the work of the OPCW, the Technical Secretariat partnered with Morocco to organize the Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The conference brought together 88 leading experts representing 47 States parties from all regions to discuss both opportunities and risks that such novel technology may pose in the field of chemistry, chemical security and chemical disarmament, as well as its impact on the implementation of the Convention and its verification regime.

The Secretariat also hosted its annual Symposium on Women in Chemistry, under the theme “Empowering women to advance peaceful uses of chemistry”. The twenty-fifth iteration of the [Associate Programme](#) — the OPCW’s flagship capacity-building activity — took place in three parts: a training segment in the Kingdom of the Netherlands; a university segment in the United Kingdom; and an industry segment in 15 facilities located in 11 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. The programme benefited 29 professionals from 29 States parties.

The OPCW continued to address the specific needs of African member States through the sixth phase of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (the [Africa Programme](#)). In this phase, the Technical Secretariat focused on enhancing the Convention’s national implementation, improving cross-border transfer controls on scheduled chemicals, developing capabilities for assistance and protection related to chemical emergencies, advancing management of chemical safety and security, and upgrading laboratory competencies across the continent. In 2024, the Technical Secretariat organized 67 capacity-building initiatives, including 37 intended specifically for Africa, reaching some 750 participants from 44 African States parties. In two new capacity-building initiatives launched in 2024 specifically for African member States, participants focused on the investigation of chemical emergencies and the maintenance of laboratory equipment.

In a key highlight of the year, in April, a laboratory in Africa obtained OPCW designation status for analysis of authentic environmental samples. This landmark achievement, by the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie, in Algeria, benefited from crucial capacity-building support through established OPCW programmes from two key partners: the Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and CBRN Protection (WIS), in Germany, and the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN). Following the designation, Africa, for the first time since 2006, has an OPCW-designated laboratory. There are now OPCW-designated laboratories in all regions.

In addition to the Algerian laboratory's successful designation with support from VERIFIN and WIS, the Technical Secretariat continued facilitating other twinning and assistance projects, including (a) ongoing collaboration between Protechnik Laboratories in South Africa (as the assisted laboratory) and the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (as the assisting laboratory); and (b) a new effort launched between the National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police of Morocco (assisted laboratory) and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the United States (assisting laboratory).

Additionally, Kenya's Government Chemist Department and Nigeria's National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control received further capacity-building support in the framework of a multi-year project funded by the United Kingdom. Its aim was to help laboratories in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean to acquire capacities necessary to pass the proficiency tests needed to gain OPCW designation.

The Technical Secretariat continued to update the African Union Commission on key developments in the Africa Programme and maintained contacts with its Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department to revitalize OPCW-African Union cooperation based on concrete proposals for enhanced collaboration. The Africa Programme Steering Committee, including African member States and regular donors, continued to monitor and support the programme's implementation in 2024.

Mission to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons programme

In 2024, the OPCW Technical Secretariat continued its mission to verify the elimination of the Syrian Arab Republic's declared chemical weapons. The OPCW Declaration Assessment Team continued its efforts to clarify all outstanding issues regarding the initial and subsequent declarations submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as with relevant OPCW decisions and Security Council resolutions.

As previously reported, from 2014 to 2024, the Declaration Assessment Team conducted 28 rounds of consultations with the Syrian National Authority and two limited in-country activities, with a reduced team.

In 2024, the Declaration Assessment Team conducted three rounds of consultations with the Syrian National Authority, in January, May and September, in Damascus.

During the twenty-sixth round of consultations, in January 2024, the Declaration Assessment Team and experts from the Syrian National Authority discussed the results of the analysis of samples collected by the Team between 2019 and 2023 with the focus on unexpected presence of indicators of potentially undeclared activities involving research and

development, production, storage, and/or weaponization of unknown quantities of chemical weapons.

The twenty-seventh round of consultations between the Declaration Assessment Team and the Syrian National Authority took place in Damascus in May 2024. Following this round of consultations, and despite additional information provided by the Syrian National Authority upon the Technical Secretariat's request regarding the results of analysis of the samples collected by the Team between September 2020 and April 2023 at two declared sites, the Team analysed this information and assessed it as insufficient to explain the samples analysis results. Consequently, in July 2024, the Technical Secretariat informed the Syrian Arab Republic that three new outstanding issues were opened with regard to the unexplained results of the analysis of the April 2023 samples. With the newly opened issues, the total number of outstanding issues became 26 (7 of them resolved and 19 unresolved).

The twenty-eighth round of consultations between the Declaration Assessment Team and the Syrian National Authority took place in September 2024 in Damascus. The substance of the 19 outstanding issues reported by the Team remains a serious concern to the Technical Secretariat as it involves large quantities of chemical agents and munitions reportedly destroyed or otherwise consumed before the Syrian Arab Republic acceded to the Convention, the fate of which cannot be fully verified by the Technical Secretariat. It also involves potentially large quantities of chemical warfare agents, the production of which has not been declared to the Technical Secretariat.

Additionally, pursuant to the OPCW Executive Council decision adopted in November 2016 ([EC-83/DEC.5](#)), the Technical Secretariat conducted the eleventh round of inspections in November 2024 at the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre.

Meanwhile, the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic continued its work on allegations assessed as credible and analysis of information collected from its team's deployments.

In February 2024, the Technical Secretariat issued a report by the fact-finding mission on the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Al-Yarmouk, Syrian Arab Republic, on 22 October 2017 ([S/2254/2024](#)). Then, in June 2024, the Technical Secretariat issued a second report on the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Hama Governorate, Syrian Arab Republic — in Qalib al-Thawr, al-Salamiyah, on 9 August 2017; and in al-Balil, Souran, on 8 November 2017 ([S/2295/2024](#)).

In the first report ([S/2254/2024](#), dated 22 February 2024), the fact-finding mission concluded that the information obtained and analysed as a whole, in accordance with its mandate to

gather facts regarding incidents of the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic, was not sufficient to provide reasonable grounds for the fact-finding mission to determine that toxic chemicals were used as a weapon in the reported incident that occurred in Al-Yarmouk on 22 October 2017.

In the second report ([S/2295/2024](#), dated 11 June 2024), the fact-finding mission concluded that the information obtained and analysed as a whole, in accordance with its mandate to gather facts relevant to the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic, was not sufficient to provide reasonable grounds for the fact-finding mission to determine that toxic chemicals were used as a weapon in the reported incidents that occurred on 9 August 2017 in Qalib al-Thawr and on 8 November 2017 in al-Balil, Souran.

In 2024, the fact-finding mission carried out seven deployments to collect further information regarding allegations under review, on which States parties were briefed on 29 February, 2 July and 1 October.

In 2024, the Investigation and Identification Team continued its investigations into several incidents where the fact-finding mission had found that chemicals had been used as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. On 22 February, the fourth report ([S/2255/2024](#)) of the Investigation and Identification Team was released, focusing on the use of sulfur mustard in the town of Marea on 1 September 2015. Based on all of the information it had obtained and analysed, the Investigation and Identification Team concluded in the report that there were reasonable grounds to believe that on 1 September 2015, during sustained attacks aimed at capturing the town of Marea in the Syrian Arab Republic, units of Da'esh used sulfur mustard, delivered using one or more artillery guns. Fifty-five casualties were treated by a field hospital in the aftermath of the incident, of which at least 11 individuals who came into contact with the delivered chemical substance experienced symptoms consistent with exposure to sulfur mustard. The Director General briefed OPCW member States on the report on 5 March 2024.

Throughout 2024, the Investigation and Identification Team continued to be denied access to (and direct engagement with) representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as to relevant locations.

The Investigation and Identification Team also continued to preserve and share information with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (established in 2016 through General Assembly resolution [71/248](#)), in line with paragraph 12 of the Decision by the OPCW Conference of the States Parties dated 27 June 2018 ([C-SS-4/DEC.3](#)).

On 12 December 2024, upon request of the OPCW Director General and in consultation with the Chairperson of the Executive Council, the Executive Council of the OPCW held an extraordinary meeting ([EC-M-66](#)) to discuss the ongoing developments in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Director General briefed the Executive Council members on developments following the overthrow of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on 8 December and the next steps with regard to the continued elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme.

In his briefing to the Executive Council, the Director General underlined the urgent need to identify, verify and secure any components of the Syrian chemical weapons programme still present in the country and to preserve records and other material related to the programme. The Director General also stressed that all legal obligations binding upon the Syrian Arab Republic under the Convention, relevant decisions of the OPCW policymaking organs and Security Council resolutions remain valid, regardless of any change in government. He emphasized that while the new situation in the country presented a unique opportunity to bring the Syrian chemical weapons dossier to a close, achieving the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme would require significant resources, effort and cooperation.

On 26 December, the Director General held telephone consultations with the new Syrian caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs, and reiterated Syrian obligations under the Convention irrespective of the change of government, as well as the Technical Secretariat's readiness to support the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting its obligations. He requested the Syrian caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs to, among other things, ensure that Syrian caretaker authorities secure chemical weapons-related locations and materials therein. He also requested the caretaker Minister to appoint a team of experts to receive and engage with the Technical Secretariat's experts. The caretaker Minister expressed the country's full commitment to cooperating with the Secretariat in dealing with any outstanding issues relating to the chemical weapons programme.

The work of the Technical Secretariat in the Syrian Arab Republic is ongoing with the Syrian transitional government.

Science and technology-related activities

The OPCW Technical Secretariat maintained broad engagement with the global scientific community throughout 2024, fostering strong ties with scientists and scientific societies, as well as staying informed of developments in science and technology relevant to the Convention's implementation.

As part of these efforts, the [Scientific Advisory Board](#) convened once in 2024 for its thirty-eighth session, in May. The Scientific Advisory Board also continued the activities of the Temporary Working Group on Chemical Forensics, whose objective is to review the science and technology relevant to chemical forensics and identify remaining gaps and challenges such that the OPCW can make best use of the information chemical forensics can yield. The Working Group met three times during the year: in January, June and September. Following a recommendation by the Scientific Advisory Board at its thirty-eighth session, the Director General established a new temporary working group focused on AI, scheduled to begin work in 2025.

In addition, the OPCW conducted several AI-related initiatives in 2024. In April, the Director General hosted a meeting with scientific experts at the OPCW ChemTech Centre and the OPCW Main Building, in The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands, to discuss specific aspects of interest to the organization related to AI. In July, the OPCW launched the AI Research Challenge, a competition funded by the European Union and the United Kingdom that sought proposals for tangible approaches to use AI to enhance the organization's effectiveness, efficiency and preparedness. In October, Morocco and the OPCW co-hosted the first Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, in Rabat. Gathering 88 leading experts from 47 States parties across all regions, the Conference facilitated, among other things, a better understanding of AI's role in the implementation of the Convention and informed policy discussions on AI-related risks in chemical security and disarmament.

Partnership with the chemical industry

The OPCW Technical Secretariat and the chemical industry continued efforts to strengthen their cooperation, in accordance with the relevant recommendations of the third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention. In 2024, the [Chemical Industry Coordination Group](#) held one hybrid meeting on 21 March, at which participants discussed current trends and challenges in the global chemical industry and exchanged information on capacity development activities, focusing on cybersecurity and the promotion of best practices in chemical safety and security.

Education and outreach

In 2024, the [OPCW Advisory Board on Education and Outreach](#) met for its sixteenth session from 16 to 18 April. The sixteenth session focused on various topics, such as the importance of developing a network with academic institutions worldwide, the need to tap into synergies with international organizations in areas related to education and outreach, and the enhancement of OPCW e-learning offerings. At its seventeenth session, from 11 to 13 June, the Advisory Board emphasized the ChemTech Centre's role in preventing the re-emergence

of chemical weapons through contributions to the research, analytical and capacity-building capabilities of the organization. The session also included a visit to the ChemTech Centre, where members of the Advisory Board received updates on related activities, resources and plans. In addition, the Chairperson of the Advisory Board participated on its behalf in a joint side event with the Director of the Biological Security Research Centre (London Metropolitan University), Lijun Shang, on the margins of the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties. The joint side event focused on progress in chemical and biological security education.

Biological weapons

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction ([Biological Weapons Convention](#)) was opened for signature on 10 April 1972 and entered into force on 26 March 1975, becoming the first multilateral treaty banning an entire category of weapons. As at 31 December 2024, the Convention had 187 States parties. Four signatory States had yet to ratify the Convention,^[1] and six States had neither signed nor acceded to it.^[2]

Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention

States parties established the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention at the ninth Review Conference in 2022, tasking it with identifying, examining and developing specific and effective measures — including possible legally binding measures — and to make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects ([BWC/CONF.IX/9](#), sect. II, paras. 8–16). The Working Group was mandated to address measures on the following: (a) international cooperation and assistance under article X; (b) scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention; (c) confidence-building and transparency; (d) compliance and verification; (e) national implementation of the Convention; (f) assistance, response and preparedness under article VII; and (g) organizational, institutional and financial arrangements.

Fourth session

As agreed by the 2023 Meeting of States Parties, the Working Group convened its [fourth session](#) in Geneva from 19 to 23 August. In accordance with the indicative schedule of activities adopted at its first session ([BWC/WG/1/2](#), annex II), the Working Group devoted the fourth session to consideration of three topics: assistance, response and preparedness (three days); scientific and technological developments (one day); and international cooperation and assistance (one day).

The session began with a change in leadership, as the previous Chair, Flávio Soares Damico (Brazil), had resigned following his posting outside of Geneva. Therefore, the Chief of Service for the Geneva branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs opened the session and presided over the election by acclamation of Frederico S. Duque Estrada Meyer (Brazil) as the new Chair, with Camille Petit (France) and Irakli Jgenti (Georgia) continuing as Vice-Chairs.

A total of 112 States took part in the fourth session, including 111 States parties and one observer State neither a party nor a signatory to the Convention. Eight observer agencies attended the session,^[3] along with three United Nations bodies and 16 non-governmental organizations and research institutes ([BWC/WG/4/INF.1](#)).

Following the practice of earlier sessions, the Working Group stimulated its deliberations on assistance, response and preparedness through expert panel sessions featuring representatives of various international organizations. The Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit prepared a background information document on the topic of assistance, response and preparedness ([BWC/WG/4/1](#)). In the ensuing interactive discussions, States parties introduced seven working papers (BWC/WG/4/WP.1–7). In preparation for the discussions on assistance, response and preparedness, the Friends of the Chair circulated a [non-paper](#) as an aide-memoire to help to inform the deliberations.

Several designated delegates assisted the Chair in his consultations and negotiations related to each of the session's three topics. These Friends of the Chair were Angel Dalmazzo (Argentina) and Andreas Fink-Jensen (Denmark), who addressed assistance, response and preparedness; Vincent Bodson (Belgium), Ljupčo Gjorgjinski (North Macedonia), Grisselle Rodríguez (Panama), and Peter Ahabwe and Musa Kwehangana (Uganda), who worked on scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention; and Thomas Fetz and Trevor Smith (Canada) and Christian Hope Reyes (Philippines), who focused on international cooperation and assistance under article X.

During the session, those addressing the latter two topics continued to draft recommendations on establishing mechanisms, one on scientific and technological review, the other on facilitating international cooperation and assistance under article X. Having achieved progress during the week, the delegates announced their intention to continue discussions during the intersessional period.

At the end of the fourth session, States parties adopted a procedural report by consensus ([BWC/WG/4/2](#)).

Fifth session

The Working Group convened its [fifth session](#) in Geneva from 2 to 13 December, as agreed by the 2023 Meeting of States Parties. Despite intensive negotiations on an ambitious proposal by the Chair to accelerate progress towards establishing the new mechanisms for scientific and technological review and for international cooperation and assistance, the Working Group could not reach consensus on a report for the session after one State party objected to convening a special conference before the Group completed all of its mandated work.

A total of 122 States took part in the fifth session, including 119 States parties, two signatory States and one observer State neither a party nor a signatory to the Convention. Six observer agencies and three United Nations bodies attended, along with 34 non-governmental organizations and research institutes ([BWC/WG/5/INF.1](#)).

The Chair announced his proposal to accelerate the Working Group's discussions during an informal retreat that preceded the fifth session, organized by France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom in support of the Chair's work. At the retreat in Montreux, Switzerland, the Chair proposed that the upcoming session should focus on negotiating draft recommendations to establish the two mechanisms, which would be submitted to a special conference to be convened in 2025. Once established, and for a provisional period until the tenth Review Conference in 2027, both mechanisms would focus on supporting the Working Group's deliberations on compliance and verification. In his remarks at the retreat, the Chair said, "The time to act is now. Procrastination is the ally of stagnation. The [Biological Weapons Convention] is at a crossroads. It can either solidify its role as the cornerstone of international biosecurity or risk being overshadowed by more agile actors".

In accordance with the indicative schedule of activities adopted at its first session ([BWC/WG/1/2](#), annex II), the Working Group was due to consider six topics at its fifth session: assistance, response and preparedness (one day); confidence-building and transparency (one day); compliance and verification (three days); organizational, institutional and financial arrangements (one day); international cooperation and assistance mechanism (one day); and science and technology review mechanism (one day). On the last two days of the meeting, the Working Group was also scheduled to give overall consideration to all seven topics under its mandate, as well as the two mechanisms. States parties introduced 21 working papers during the session ([BWC/WG/5/WP.1–21](#)).

Beyond the topics listed above, the fifth session devoted significant time to considering the proposal that the Chair had announced at the retreat. A revised draft ([BWC/WG/5/CRP.1](#)), which became the subject of intensive negotiations following its introduction on 8 December, called for the Working Group to recommend establishing the two mechanisms on a provisional basis, with their terms of reference and regulations subject to review and potential

adjustment at the tenth Review Conference in 2027. During the provisional application period, the Science and Technology Advisory Mechanism would focus exclusively on providing scientific and technological advice to the Working Group on possible compliance and verification measures. For the two mechanisms to be formally established, the Working Group would recommend that States parties request the convening of a special conference.

Despite the intensive negotiations on the Chair's proposal, consensus could not be reached as, on the penultimate evening of the session, one State party objected to the convening of a special conference before the Working Group had completed all of its work. In his closing remarks on the final day, the Chair said, "This delay is not harmless. It comes at a cost, a huge cost. The biosecurity landscape is evolving rapidly. The [Biological Weapons Convention] risks failing even further behind. A single lapse in vigilance could spark consequences that reverberate across continents and generations. Developing countries, in particular, will bear the brunt of this inertia. And I repeat, developing countries in particular will bear the brunt of this inertia". Following almost 40 statements in support of the Chair's proposal, he closed the fifth session on 13 December.

2024 Meeting of States Parties

The [2024 Meeting of States Parties](#) took place in Geneva from 16 to 18 December, in accordance with the decision of the ninth Review Conference to hold a three-day Meeting each year, from 2023 to 2026. The Meeting was attended by 126 States parties, one signatory State, three United Nations bodies and 28 non-governmental organizations and research institutes. Furthermore, one State neither a party nor a signatory to the Convention and five specialized agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations applied for observer status in accordance with the rules of procedure ([BWC/MSP/2024/INF.1](#)).

The 2024 Meeting of States Parties could not function normally because no regional group was able to nominate a Chair.^[4] Upon convening on 16 December, the Meeting appointed Yuri Sterk (Bulgaria) as its Chair only to facilitate the preparation and adoption of the Meeting's report, also agreeing that this would not set a precedent for the future. Therefore, the Meeting was not able to adopt its agenda ([BWC/MSP/2024/1](#)), its programme of work ([BWC/MSP/2024/2](#)) or its rules of procedure ([BWC/CONF.IX/2](#)). In addition, several agenda items were not considered, including the general debate, the management of the intersessional programme, budgetary and financial matters, progress with universalization of the Convention, and the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit.

States parties nonetheless agreed that, in 2025, the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention would hold its sixth session from 11 to 22 August and its seventh session from 8 to 12 December. Additionally, they agreed that the 2025 Meeting of

States Parties would take place from 15 to 17 December. At the end of the Meeting, States parties adopted a brief report by consensus ([BWC/MSP/2024/6](#)).

Work of the Implementation Support Unit

Support for the comprehensive implementation of the Convention

As part of its mandated activities in 2024, the Implementation Support Unit provided administrative and procedural support for the Meeting of States Parties and the two sessions of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, while also assisting in the Convention's comprehensive implementation ([BWC/MSP/2024/4](#)). Voluntary contributions from States parties enabled the Unit to enhance its ability to carry out its mandated tasks, including by employing 10 additional fixed-term staff members and providing further assistance to developing States parties upon their request.^[5]

The assistance provided by the Office for Disarmament Affairs to national contact points for the Convention included organizing three regional training courses: the first in [Doha](#) for States from the Middle East and North Africa (16–17 January); the second in Almaty, Kazakhstan, for States from Central Asia and the Caucasus region (12–13 March); and the third in Geneva for European and other States (23–24 April). The Office also hosted national contact points from over 90 States parties for a two-day workshop in Geneva on lessons learned and best practices for national implementation (28–29 November). During the event, it launched a self-paced e-learning course for national contact points and other relevant stakeholders on the contact points' role and responsibilities, an overview of national implementation measures, and steps to prepare and submit reports on confidence-building measures under the Convention.^[6] Furthermore, a new, dedicated website for national contact points was under development in 2024 and projected to launch in 2025.

Throughout 2024, Mongolia continued a project in cooperation with the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Office for Disarmament Affairs on establishing a national inventory of dangerous pathogens.^[7] In addition, the Office convened the first national awareness-raising events on the Convention for [the Plurinational State of Bolivia](#) and [El Salvador](#), held on 28 and 29 May and on 24 and 25 July.^[8]

In 2024, the Implementation Support Unit collected and updated further details on national contact points for the Convention, making them available to all States parties via a restricted section of the Convention's website. By the end of the year, a total of 156 States parties had nominated a national contact point, as requested by previous Review Conferences, an increase of nine States parties since 2023. Furthermore, the [Guide to Implementing the Biological Weapons Convention](#) — launched during the ninth Review Conference in 2022 and

subsequently translated into all official United Nations languages — was also translated into Portuguese for Lusophone countries.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also organized national assistance activities for the Biological Weapons Convention at the request of [African](#) States parties. In 2024, the Office supported States in four key areas: (a) general awareness-raising and sensitization; (b) legislative assistance; (c) preparation and submission of reports on confidence-building measures; and (d) general training of stakeholders and national contact points. It facilitated 14 workshops that alternately focused on sensitizing key stakeholders and on preparing and submitting confidence-building measures, respectively held in national capitals of the following States: Zambia (29–30 January); Burundi (20–21 February); [Sao Tome and Principe](#) (4–6 March); [Guinea](#) (14–15 May); Ghana (29–30 May); Rwanda (18–19 June); Nigeria (19–20 June); Lesotho (10–11 July); Cabo Verde (17–18 September); Côte d'Ivoire (1–2 October); Zimbabwe (2–3 October); Angola (15–17 October); Eswatini (13–14 November); and Morocco (20–21 November), with the final workshop in the series addressing Burkina Faso and Mali, as well as Morocco.^{[19](#)}

The workshops aimed to familiarize participants with the Convention and the resulting obligations of States parties, while also focusing on the importance and benefits of comprehensive national implementation. By bringing together a diverse range of national actors, the gatherings represented important first steps towards promoting and strengthening domestic inter-agency and stakeholder coordination. These workshops also included table-top exercises for preparing and submitting reports on confidence-building measures, helping participants to collaboratively strengthen national submission processes. As a result, Angola, Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe submitted their first reports on confidence-building measures in 2024.

After organizing subregional events for stakeholders in Eastern Africa (2022) and Central Africa, Northern Africa and Western Africa (2023), the Office convened a [subregional workshop for Southern Africa](#) from 12 to 14 March 2024 in Gaborone. In addressing national implementation needs, priorities and challenges, these workshops laid a foundation for fruitful and collaborative working relationships moving forward.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also supported two national workshops on legislative implementation. From 16 to 17 July, Morocco hosted a workshop in Rabat to raise awareness among national representatives from Libya about the importance of comprehensive national implementing legislation. From 12 to 14 September, the Office partnered with the European Union Partner-to-Partner Export Control Programme to organize a [national legal drafting workshop](#) in Antananarivo. The event brought together national stakeholders to provide tailored assistance in reviewing the initial draft of Madagascar's national implementing law.

Confidence-building measures

The Implementation Support Unit assisted States parties throughout the year in exchanging reports on national confidence-building measures. It maintained capabilities for electronic reporting, compiled and distributed submissions, provided routine assistance and substantive advice, and followed up with States parties on their submissions. As part of those efforts, the Unit introduced a new electronic reporting platform to ensure continued compliance with United Nations information and communications technology standards.

Development of the [new platform](#) offered an opportunity to enhance the application's design, user-friendliness and functionality, while introducing state-of-the-art security features. The enhanced system enables simplified electronic submission of reports in all six official United Nations languages and provides enhanced search functionality for confidence-building measures and detailed statistics. The platform serves as the repository for all reports submitted since 1987, with some records made publicly accessible and others available only to States parties. The Unit unveiled the new platform's features at a webinar on 6 May and introduced various capacity-building improvements following its launch.

In 2024, 113 States parties submitted annual reports on confidence-building measures covering relevant activities in 2023 — the most ever submitted in a calendar year, reflecting a participation rate of 60 per cent. In its annual report ([BWC/MSP/2024/4](#)), the Implementation Support Unit listed the States parties that had submitted reports on confidence-building measures in 2024 covering the 2023 calendar year (annex III).

Meanwhile, voluntary contributions supported the Implementation Support Unit in providing several States parties, at their request, with assistance related to confidence-building measures. Upon request, the Unit conducted in-person or online training courses for States parties in Africa, Central and Southeast Asia, and Latin America, providing assistance and guidance on preparing and submitting their annual reports.

International cooperation and assistance

The Implementation Support Unit continued to maintain the database for assistance requests and offers under article X of the Convention. As at 31 December, the database contained 28 offers of assistance from 12 States parties and one group of States parties and 71 requests for assistance from 30 States parties.

From 4 to 8 March, the Unit co-organized a [training course on virus detection and biosecurity](#) in the framework of article X of the Convention, with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, the InterAcademy Partnership and the World Academy of Sciences, in Trieste, Italy. Fourteen technical experts (seven men and seven women) from 14

developing States parties participated in the course, which consisted of both lectures and hands-on practical exercises in the Centre's laboratories.

A second iteration of the [Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship](#) programme took place from March to August, engaging 20 young biosecurity leaders from the global South on global biosecurity issues. The fellows from 17 States parties participated in online learning sessions with leading experts, a collaborative research project and a 10-day immersive study trip to Geneva during the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, in August. Building on the momentum of the first edition, the programme enjoyed a significant rise in applicants, with more than 2,400 applications submitted from over 100 countries — a threefold increase over the previous year.

The Unit also administered the Convention's sponsorship programme, designed to support and increase the participation of developing States parties in the meetings of the intersessional programme. In 2024, five States parties (Canada, France, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom) and the European Union contributed to the Convention's sponsorship programme. In addition, the United States supported the programme through bilateral arrangements. Thanks to voluntary contributions to the programme, over 60 national experts from almost as many developing States parties could attend the Working Group's fourth and fifth sessions and the 2024 Meeting of States Parties.

Universalization of the Convention

The Unit also promoted the universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention through its support to States parties, which included coordinating activities by national authorities and informing them of progress on accessions or ratifications. The Unit also informed and advised several signatories and non-States parties about the Convention (see [BWC/MSP/2024/3](#)). Meanwhile, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to promote the Convention's universalization through coordinated outreach to the States not yet parties.

From 23 to 25 January, a [regional workshop on universalizing the Convention in the Pacific](#) took place in Brisbane, Australia.^[10] The workshop resulted in Tuvalu acceding to the Convention on 28 June and the Federated States of Micronesia acceding on 12 July. On 6 and 7 February, a second universalization event took place in [Chad](#). During the event, representatives from the Office for Disarmament Affairs met with senior decision makers to raise awareness of the Convention, including its importance in the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and its contribution to development.^[11]

Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons

When Member States report the alleged use of chemical or biological weapons to the Secretary-General, he has a mandate to carry out investigations. To fulfil that mandate, the United Nations relies on countries to nominate technical experts to deploy to the field on short notice and expert consultants to provide advice, as well as analytical laboratories to support such investigations. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, as custodian of the [Mechanism](#), maintains a roster of those nominations and organizes a range of in-person and virtual activities.

Training activities

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs expanded its in-person training of experts on the Mechanism's roster, including through two new courses on investigative interview skills and on decontamination skills.

Basic training courses took place in [Johannesburg](#) (15–26 July) and [Berlin](#) (4–15 November). The course in Johannesburg, organized in cooperation with the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (a division of the National Health Laboratory Service of South Africa), was the third of its kind and trained 17 experts from 15 countries. The course in Berlin, held in partnership with Germany's Robert Koch Institute, trained 16 experts from 15 countries. Both courses followed the Mechanism's standard curriculum, covering its background and mandate, as well as key aspects of investigations such as safety and security, sampling, decontamination, planning and report writing. Each course concluded with a short field exercise.

A [skill training course on investigative interview skills](#), held in Geneva from 5 to 9 February in collaboration with the Institute for International Criminal Investigations and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre, brought together 16 experts from 15 countries for instruction on the theory and practice of investigative interviews, including role-play exercises.

A [training course on decontamination skills](#) took place in Lisbon from 21 to 24 May in collaboration with the Portuguese Army's Military Laboratory Unit for Biological and Chemical Defense (UMLDBQ). Nineteen experts from 15 countries, representing all United Nations regional groups, received training on biological and chemical decontamination principles, decontamination of personnel as distinct from decontamination of samples and equipment, decontamination set-up and waste management, and the integration of decontamination into mission planning.

In a [training course on biological crime scene management](#), held in Brindisi, Italy, from 26 to 30 August, 21 experts from 17 countries learned about personal protective equipment, accessing contaminated scenes, conducting initial scene assessments, strategies for briefing and sampling, and evidence packaging procedures. The programme was made possible through a partnership with the Bioterrorism Prevention Unit of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the National Microbiology Laboratory of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

A [training course on sampling and transporting toxic and infectious substances](#) took place in Berlin from 17 to 20 September in cooperation with the Robert Koch Institute and the National Microbiology Laboratory of Canada. Fourteen experts from 12 countries received training on International Air Transport Association (IATA) regulations for shipping toxic and infectious substances, followed by instruction on biological sampling tools and techniques.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also organized two iterations of the Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments training course, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security. The [first course](#) (5–11 May) trained 14 experts from 13 countries, and the [second course](#) (10–16 November) trained 20 experts from 16 countries. Participants received an overview of the United Nations Security Management System and guidance on working in field environments, including medical aspects such as individual first aid and managing injuries in the field.

Other workshops and events

The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to organize various additional in-person workshops and virtual activities in support of the Mechanism.

From 19 to 21 March, a workshop on predeployment orientation for potential missions under the Mechanism took place at United Nations Headquarters. The event brought together a select group of qualified experts and expert consultants on the Mechanism's roster, members of the United Nations Internal Task Force for the Mechanism, and external specialists with extensive field investigation experience. A set of [recommendations](#) for preparing experts ahead of potential deployments was developed as part of the event, which the Office co-hosted with the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre.

In April, two virtual onboarding sessions were held for newly nominated experts and laboratory focal points. More than 120 participants from more than 40 countries joined the sessions, which provided an overview of the Mechanism and expectations for rostered experts and laboratories.

The Office also organized an inter-agency workshop in April to consider opportunities for cooperation with four key international organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the OPCW, the World Health Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health.

In December, the Mechanism conducted its annual “call-out exercise” — a routine, unannounced activity designed to test the responsiveness and continued availability of experts and laboratories on the roster.

The Office also hosted a virtual round-table discussion in December for all nominated experts and laboratory focal points to reflect on recent activities, share updates and discuss future plans.

Outreach

Outreach remained a priority in 2024, with ongoing efforts to raise awareness about the Mechanism and to enhance the diversity of its rostered experts and laboratories with respect to subject-matter expertise, geography and gender balance.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs provided updates on the Mechanism's activities during the February and December meetings of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

It also delivered a presentation on the Mechanism at a coordination meeting organized by the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States, aimed at identifying areas for collaboration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In June, the Office delivered a briefing on the Mechanism at the Global Health Security Conference in Sydney, Australia. It also participated in a table-top exercise hosted by the United States and Switzerland, which evaluated the challenges of conducting concurrent national and international investigations of an alleged bioterrorism incident.

From 1 to 3 October, a [joint workshop](#) was held in Santiago to strengthen regional support for the global norm against biological weapons. The event focused on the Biological Weapons Convention, Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) and the Mechanism, with national stakeholders from the region exchanging best practices for strengthening each instrument.

In October, the fourth annual briefing of all Member States on the Mechanism took place on the margins of the General Assembly, First Committee. Participants received updates about recent activities to strengthen the Mechanism and the critical role of Member States in supporting it.

In December, the Office for Disarmament Affairs distributed the annual [note verbale](#) to all Member States, inviting new or updated nominations of experts and laboratories for the Mechanism's roster.

Also in December, a side event on the Mechanism was held during the Global Workshop for National Points of Contact for the Biological Weapons Convention.

Export controls

Australia Group

The Australia Group is an informal forum of 42 countries and the European Union, which, through the harmonization of national export controls, seeks to ensure that their exports do not contribute to the production or proliferation of chemical or biological weapons. Participants use their national licensing measures to ensure that exports of certain chemicals, biological agents, and dual-use chemical and biological manufacturing facilities and equipment do not contribute to the spread of chemical or biological weapons and that legitimate trade is facilitated. All participants in the Australia Group are States parties to both the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Support for these regimes and their aims remains the overriding objective of Australia Group participants. Export licensing measures instituted by individual members also assist in implementing key obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (article I, para. 1 (a) and (d)) and the Biological Weapons Convention (articles I and III), as well as ensuring compliance with Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). Guidelines, common control lists and handbooks, and public statements of the Group are available on its [website](#).

In 2024, the Australia Group met twice to consider current chemical or biological weapons developments, explore the scope for increasing the effectiveness of existing controls and consider updates to its common control lists where necessary.

Its Intersessional Meeting, held in January in Berlin, brought together technical experts from participating countries for in-depth discussions on advancing the Group's mission. Topics included new and evolving technologies, implementation practices and outreach to aspirant member countries.

The Plenary Meeting, held in Paris in June, provided a platform for participants to exchange views on a range of topics, including shared approaches for keeping pace with rapidly evolving dual-use technologies and their relevance for non-proliferation and export control. Participants agreed to maintain their active outreach to non-members, as well as furthering engagement with industry, academia and international organizations to better understand

the impact and pace of scientific and technological developments. The Group also further refined its common control lists.

Footnotes

[1] Egypt, Haiti, Somalia and Syrian Arab Republic.

[2] Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Israel and Kiribati.

[3] In recognition of the special nature of the issues under consideration at the session and without creating a precedent, the Chair invited experts from four participating observer agencies to take part in panel sessions: the European Union; the International Atomic Energy Agency; the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology; the International Criminal Police Organization; the International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat; the OPCW; the World Health Organization; and the World Organization for Animal Health.

[4] On 22 October, Turkmenistan, as coordinator of the Eastern European Group (which should have provided the Chair), informed the Implementation Support Unit that the Group had decided not to present a nominee. On 26 November, Australia, as coordinator of the Western Group, informed the Implementation Support Unit that the Group was not in a position to nominate a Chair. Finally, on 13 December, Uganda, as coordinator of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, informed the Implementation Support Unit that the Group was also not in a position to present a nominee.

[5] In 2024, the Unit received voluntary contributions from member countries of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States in the framework of the [Signature Initiative to Mitigate Biological Threats in Africa](#)), Ireland, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the European Union.

[6] The European Union provided financial support for the training courses and e-learning course benefiting national contact points.

[7] The project launched in July 2023 and was concluded in January 2025 in Ulaanbaatar.

[8] The European Union provided financial support for the project in Mongolia and the awareness-raising events in the Plurinational State of Bolivia and El Salvador.

[9] The European Union co-funded the national and regional activities in Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Morocco and Zimbabwe.

[10] Held with financial support from the European Union.

[11] Organized with financial support from the European Union and the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.



CHAPTER 3

Conventional weapons

While the threat of weapons of mass destruction looms large, we continue to see the devastating impact of conventional arms across regions. From fuelling conflict and organized crime, to facilitating sexual and gender-based violence, the consequences of unregulated and illicit conventional weapons are felt every day.

— [Izumi Nakamitsu](#), High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Developments and trends, 2024

In 2024, both rising military expenditure and the ongoing flow of weapons and ammunition into armed conflicts, including through illicit trade, continued to stoke deep concerns about potential escalations in violence and risks of diversion to unauthorized recipients. The trade in conventional weapons drove and sustained geopolitical conflict and instability in many regions, most notably in Ukraine, Gaza, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Myanmar and the Syrian Arab Republic. Entrenched conflicts and geopolitical tensions placed growing pressure on treaties and norms governing conventional arms.

The year saw intense fighting and unprecedented civilian suffering in the Middle East. Political and public debates on arms and ammunition exports intensified globally, with Israel's conduct of hostilities across the region generating mounting scrutiny of its weapons suppliers. Continued arms transfers to Israel, especially from Western States, amplified accusations of double standards in the application of humanitarian norms within arms trade regulatory frameworks, leading to increased calls for stronger accountability and transparency. Even as ceasefire negotiations brought new hope to civilians in Gaza for an end

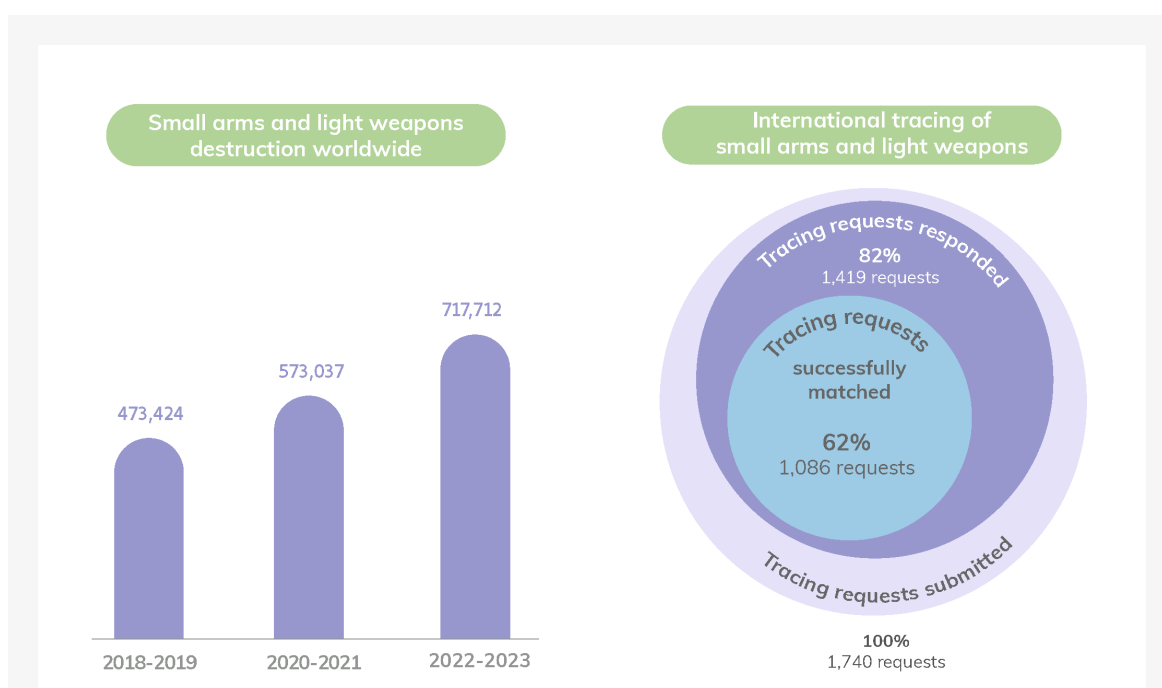
to the fighting and to Israeli hostages for their swift release, the future of the region remained fraught with uncertainty.

As the war in Ukraine persisted into another year, combat operations escalated and evolved in nature, with numerous States continuing to provide military assistance and transfers of arms and ammunition to both sides. The year was marked by significant shifts in battlefield dynamics, including the reported [deployment of troops to Kursk from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea](#) in support of the Russian Federation's invasion, and Ukraine's use of long-range missiles supplied by the United States and others to strike targets in Russian territory. The humanitarian situation for civilians in Ukraine remained dire, with deliberate targeting of civilian and energy infrastructure intensifying alongside the widespread deployment of armed uncrewed aerial vehicles.

Numerous other countries experienced severe crises fuelled by armed conflict. The Sudan endured one of the most challenging periods in its modern history, as the ongoing conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces plunged the nation deeper into turmoil ([A/HRC/57/23](#)). Haiti remained in the grip of unrelenting gang violence, which [claimed at least 5,601 lives](#) in 2024 alone. The Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to be ensnared in cycles of conflict that had killed and displaced millions of people over decades. Four years after the military coup in Myanmar, the death toll in the thousands continued to rise, with millions more suffering displacement and insecurity. Meanwhile, significant military developments in the Syrian Arab Republic led to the establishment of a new interim governing authority after 14 years of devastating war, potentially creating a historic opportunity to build peace.

Reflecting faith in diplomacy and the multilateral disarmament system, States agreed to better address the role of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the risks of diversion to unauthorized recipients in aggravating conflict and violence. At the fourth Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, countries reached a landmark agreement to establish an open-ended technical expert group tasked with addressing emerging technological opportunities to eradicate illicit arms and challenges, including polymer and modular weapons, 3D printing, and associated difficulties in weapons tracing ([A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3](#), annex). Meanwhile, the Security Council continued to recognize the detrimental impact of small arms and light weapons in a range of country-specific and thematic discussions.

Figure 3.1. Trends in small arms and light weapons



Left: The global pace of reported small arms and light weapons destruction increased from 2018 to 2023, with 717,712 weapons destroyed in the 2022–2023 biennium alone. Destruction terminates the life cycles of weapons, making it an effective method of reducing their number on the illicit market. The entire six-year period saw more than 1,763,000 weapons destroyed, including weapons collected in previous years and obsolete weapons from national stockpiles.

Data source: National reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The data cover the two prior years as reported by 96 countries in 2020, 90 countries in 2022, and 100 countries in 2024.

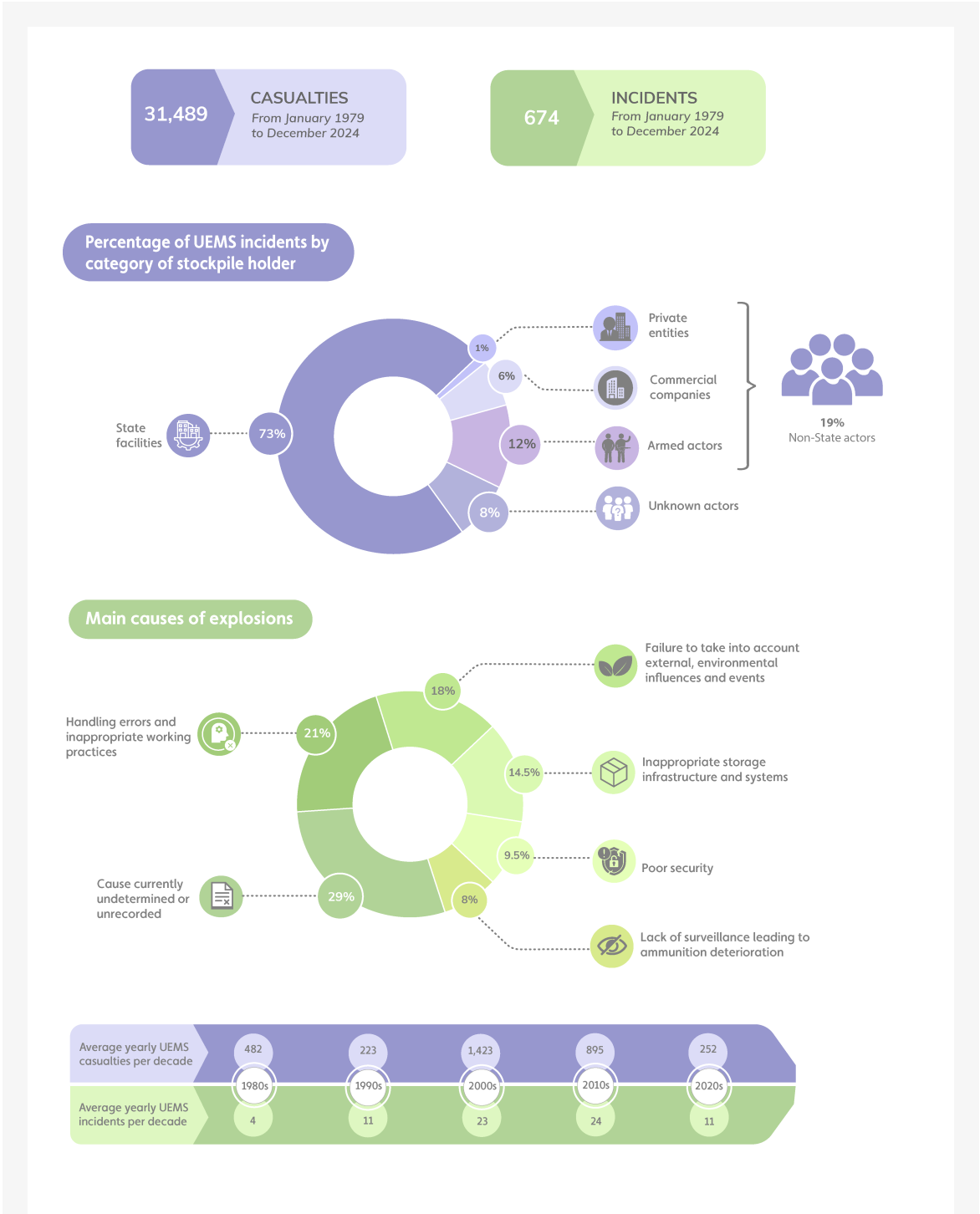
Right: International tracing helps investigators track the origin of illicit small arms and light weapons and identify where they were diverted from legal channels. Under the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, States work together by sharing manufacturing records, transfer documentation and licensing data through national inquiries and international and regional databases. Among 100 national reports submitted in 2024 (covering 2022–2023), 21 States collected data on international tracing requests. They recorded a total of 1,740 tracing requests submitted in that period, with 1,419 (82 per cent) receiving responses and 1,086 matching to successfully traced weapons (62 per cent). This high success rate was primarily driven by efficient tracing operations in Jamaica and Burkina Faso.

Data source: 2024 national report on the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In 2024, multiple incidents of unplanned explosions took place at ammunition sites across various regions, underscoring the persistent safety risks posed by inadequate ammunition management practices. Building upon the landmark adoption of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management in 2023, States and other stakeholders engaged in substantive discussions at the subregional level on implementing the new political commitments.

The deliberations focused on developing comprehensive regional and national approaches to address the challenges of illicit trafficking, diversion and unplanned explosions of conventional ammunition.

Figure 3.2. Quick facts: unplanned explosions at munition sites



Abbreviation: UEMS – unplanned explosions at munition sites.

From January 1979 to December 2024, more than 31,000 casualties were recorded from incidents caused by unplanned explosions at munitions sites. The data show the importance of adopting effective measures to prevent and reduce the number of explosions at munition sites, while mitigating the consequences for the victims of these incidents. The adoption of the Global Framework for

Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management represents an opportunity to enhance the prevention and mitigation of explosions at munition sites.

Data source: [Small Arms Survey](#).

The threat posed by improvised explosive devices remained a significant focus for Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian organizations and civil society actors. Throughout 2024, these devices continued to cause devastation across multiple regions in the context of armed conflict, crime and terrorism. Despite a 27 per cent decrease in the total number of incidents from the previous year, civil society organizations recorded a **67 per cent surge in casualties** from attacks involving improvised explosive devices, highlighting their profound human impact. The Security Council addressed the evolving threat through dedicated thematic discussions and within its deliberations on specific country and regional situations.

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its support for the African Union's Silencing the Guns initiative through the continued implementation of their joint Africa Amnesty Month project. Established by the African Union Assembly in 2017, the effort promotes the voluntary surrender of illicitly held small arms and light weapons in accordance with national laws and international agreements, allowing civilians to hand over weapons without fear of arrest or prosecution. In collaboration with the African Union Commission and the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the project successfully implemented impactful activities in three beneficiary States: Central African Republic, Djibouti and Rwanda. The activities had the aim of raising awareness about the dangers of illegal arms possession, facilitating weapons collection and strengthening national capacities to combat illicit arms trafficking across the region.

Throughout the year, the Department of Peace Operations and the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to advance their joint initiative on effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context. By fostering interdepartmental collaboration, the effort continued helping to bridge the interconnected domains of arms control, peacekeeping, conflict prevention and peacebuilding in alignment with the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, particularly its focus on reducing the human cost of weapons.

During its 2024 reporting cycle, participation in key transparency instruments showed a slight decline. A total of 57 Member States submitted annual reports to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, down from 63 in the previous year. Likewise, submissions to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms fell to 65 States in 2024, from 74 in 2023.

Meanwhile, the Saving Lives Entity ([SALIENT](#)) expanded its impact, supporting comprehensive and sustainable responses through development-oriented projects in six

countries: Ghana, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Panama, Papua New Guinea and South Sudan. The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) continued to serve as a sustainable and predictable funding mechanism for international assistance in the field of conventional arms. In 2024, UNSCAR financed 10 arms control projects implemented by civil society organizations and United Nations partners, while selecting 11 new initiatives for implementation in 2025, further strengthening its role in advancing multilateral arms control objectives.



A law enforcement officer in Saint Kitts and Nevis participates in a firearms and ammunition destruction exercise held from 20 to 24 May. Defence and police forces in the country facilitated the training session in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Arms Trade Treaty

The [Arms Trade Treaty](#)^[1] was created to establish common standards for international trade in conventional arms and to eradicate the illicit trade in conventional weapons. At the end of 2024, the Treaty's total number of States parties stood at 116, with 26 signatory States that had not yet ratified it. In 2024, Colombia, the Gambia and Malawi became States parties to the Treaty.

Tenth Conference of States Parties

The [tenth Conference of States Parties](#) took place from 19 to 23 August under the presidency of Razvan Rusu (Romania), and concluded with the adoption of a final report ([ATT/CSP10/2024/SEC/807/Conf.FinRep](#)). The Conference was attended by 93 States parties, 17 signatory States and 1 State not party to the Treaty. In addition, 10 international and regional organizations and 60 civil society organizations participated as observers ([ATT/CSP10/2024/SEC/806/Conf.PartList](#)). In preparation, the Treaty's three working groups^[2] convened from 20 to 23 February 2024, and an informal preparatory meeting was held on 16 and 17 May 2024.

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs delivered a [video statement](#) during the opening session of the Conference, emphasizing that the purpose of the Arms Trade Treaty remained as vital as when the Treaty came into force in 2014. Underscoring the staggering human cost of unregulated and irresponsible arms transfers, she urged States parties to deny such transfers when there is an overriding risk that the arms could be used to violate international humanitarian law or international human rights law. To preserve the credibility of the Treaty, the High Representative stressed the need to bridge the gap between its obligations and actual arms transfer practices. She stressed that transparency in arms transfers was a crucial confidence-building measure that could serve to reduce tensions, clarify intentions and ensure accountability. The High Representative also welcomed the priority topic chosen by the presidency: "The role of interagency cooperation in the effective implementation of Arms Trade Treaty provisions".

The Conference began with a high-level discussion marking the tenth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force. While speakers acknowledged the Treaty's many achievements, they reaffirmed the need to advance its universalization, ensure its effective and consistent

implementation, and advance its purpose — namely, to reduce human suffering. The Conference welcomed the political declaration for the next decade of the Treaty, which was introduced by the United Kingdom and endorsed by 73 States parties ([ATT/CSP10/2024/SEC/807/Conf.FinRep](#), annex 2).

The Conference proceeded with a thematic discussion on the role of inter-agency cooperation ([ATT/CSP10/2024/PRES/798/Conf.WP.IAC](#)). Three panellists — Francisca Méndez Escobar (Mexico), Domina Pia Salazar (Philippines) and Lansana Gberie (Sierra Leone) — outlined the strategies of their administrations for increasing national inter-agency cooperation, including good practices for fostering cooperation between various departments and ministries to implement the Treaty. The panellists highlighted that while no “one size fits all” approach exists for achieving effective inter-agency cooperation, commonalities can be found between and across different groupings of States. Their exchange helped to inform a Conference decision, outlined in its final report, that the Treaty's working groups should include the cross-cutting issue of inter-agency cooperation in their agendas where appropriate ([ATT/CSP10/2024/SEC/807/Conf.FinRep](#), para. 26b).

The Conference considered the reports of the working groups on effective treaty implementation, treaty universalization, and transparency and reporting, as well as various documents submitted by the Management Committee (see [ATT/CSP10.WGETI/2024/CHAIR/799/Conf.Rep](#), [ATT/CSP10.WGTU/2024/CHAIR/801/Conf.Rep](#), [ATT/CSP10.WGTR/2024/CHAIR/800/Conf.Rep](#), [ATT/CSP10.MC/2024/MC/796/Conf.Rep](#) and [ATT/CSP10.MC/2024/MC/797/Conf.Prop](#)). Due to the Treaty's financial difficulties and at the recommendation of the Management Committee, the Conference decided to extend the trial period of the revised programme of work which was adopted in 2023. As a result, in 2025, there will again be one in-person session of four days of working groups, rather than two sessions as in previous years, and one in-person session of two days of preparatory meetings for the Conference of States Parties.

During the week, the Diversion Information Exchange Forum (established by the [sixth Conference of States Parties](#)) met with States parties and signatory States to share knowledge concerning concrete cases of detected or suspected diversion, as well as concrete, operational, diversion-related information as contemplated in articles 11 and 15 of the Treaty. The Chair of the Forum, France, briefed the Conference and presented results from a review confirming the Forum's value. The Conference encouraged all States parties and signatory States to present cases of diversion at forthcoming meetings of the Forum, to be organized by the President of the eleventh Conference of States Parties in accordance with the Forum's terms of reference.

The Conference decided to hold the eleventh Conference of States Parties from 25 to 29 August 2025 at the Geneva International Conference Centre. It elected Carlos Foradori

(Argentina) as President, and Australia, Latvia, Namibia and the Republic of Korea as Vice-Presidents. Participants decided that the informal preparatory meetings and the working group meetings of the eleventh Conference would also take place in Geneva, with dates to be confirmed by the President-elect.

Small arms and light weapons

Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons

Illicit flows of small arms and light weapons are a central driver of armed conflict and criminal armed violence worldwide. To address their widespread and devastating impact, Member States established the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects ([A/CONF.192/15\(SUPP\)](#)), in which they committed to strengthening national small-arms legislation, enhancing import and export controls, improving stockpile management, and fostering international cooperation and assistance. This framework was further reinforced in 2005 with the adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (see [A/60/88](#), annex; and [Corr.2](#)).^[3]

Every six years, States convene [to review the progress made in implementing the Programme of Action and its International Tracing Instrument](#). From 18 to 28 June 2024, States held the fourth Review Conference. The process concluded with the adoption of a consensus outcome document ([A/CON.192/2024/RC/3A/CON.192/2024/RC/3](#), annex).

Preparatory process and regional engagement

States convened a Preparatory Committee from 12 to 16 February, electing Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) as its Chair and as President-designate of the upcoming Review Conference.^[4]

The Preparatory Committee provided a platform for States to articulate their priorities and identify key themes for discussion, enabling the President-designate to develop an outline of elements and present a structured plan for the intersessional period ([A/CONF.192/2024/PC/1](#)). In her [closing statement](#), the President-designate presented a road map to the Review Conference, emphasizing her commitment to ensuring a predictable, organized and transparent process. The Committee proceedings were further enriched by several side events, including an event organized jointly by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the International Action Network on Small Arms, which presented [conclusions from an expert seminar series](#) held in preparation for the Review Conference.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs organized five regional preparatory meetings ahead of the Review Conference through its three regional centres, with support from the European Union. These included sessions in Kathmandu for Asia and the Pacific (23–25 January), ^[5] Lomé for West and Central Africa (29 February–1 March), ^[6] and Nairobi for East and Southern Africa (4–5 March), ^[7] accompanied by virtual sessions for Latin America and the Caribbean (11–15 March and 18–22 March, respectively). ^[8] These meetings brought together States and regional organizations to identify area-specific challenges related to illicit small arms and light weapons, as well as exploring opportunities and establishing priorities for the Review Conference. ^[9] Each gathering benefited from high-level participation, with the President-designate attending alongside the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs or the Director and Deputy to the High Representative.

The regional preparatory meetings revealed both common concerns and distinct regional perspectives on illicit small-arms-control challenges. Across all regions, participants addressed shared themes including implementation challenges within the Programme of Action framework, opportunities for international cooperation and assistance, emerging threats in small-arms manufacturing technologies, and the linkages between arms control and sustainable development. Discussions also covered gender perspectives, data-collection mechanisms, and strengthened regional collaboration involving governments, industry and non-governmental stakeholders.

Gathering in January, States in the Asia-Pacific region addressed the rapid proliferation of 3D-printed weapons as an emerging technological challenge, while also exploring opportunities for enhanced South-South cooperation and innovative mechanisms for regional collaboration. Pacific island States highlighted their unique geographic and environmental challenges, particularly emphasizing how climate change considerations intersect with and complicate arms control efforts in the subregion.

African States focused their efforts on developing a [common regional position](#) for the Review Conference, while actively exchanging good practices to counter the illicit proliferation of small arms. Particular attention was devoted to understanding the impact of craft-produced firearms on both levels of violence and socioeconomic development across the continent.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, States emphasized potential synergies among international frameworks, while focusing on operational aspects, such as weapons tracing, border control measures, stockpile management and destruction procedures. The role of private security companies emerged as a significant regional concern.

The preparatory process was further strengthened through extensive consultations held in New York, including 13 informal consultations conducted in regional groups and at the global

level. These were complemented by three specialized consultations designed specifically for regional and international organizations, civil society representatives and private sector actors.

Throughout the preparatory period, participants actively contributed to the substantive discussions by circulating numerous [position and working papers](#). These papers covered a wide range of topics, including gender-transformative approaches to small-arms control, craft manufacturing of small arms, diversion mitigation strategies, responsible industry conduct, environmental and climate impacts, non-industrial small-arms production and international assistance procedures.

The Review Conference process was also informed by substantial national reporting, with the Office for Disarmament Affairs receiving reports from 100 countries on their implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

The reports revealed several encouraging trends in global implementation efforts. Most notably, States reported the collection of 860,000 weapons in 2022–2023, of which 41 per cent had been traced and 65 per cent were destroyed. Progress was also evident in weapons marking practices, with 81 States reporting that they had implemented marking procedures. While numerous States reported difficulties in collecting data on diversion incidents, 36 States reported that they were able to collect information on incidents of diversion from international transfers, representing an increase of 31 per cent from the previous reporting cycle.

Another positive development was the increased integration of gender considerations into implementation efforts. In 2024, 74 per cent of States said that they had incorporated gender perspectives in their small-arms-control activities — a substantial increase from the 49 per cent recorded in 2018.

Fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons

The fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action took place in New York from 18 to 28 June. The Conference opened with a high-level general debate featuring statements from 107 States and groups of States,^[10] followed by negotiations on a [draft outcome document](#) that had been developed during the preparatory period.

The Review Conference concluded with the adoption of a consensus outcome document ([A/CON.192/2024/RC/3](#), annex), which comprised both a political declaration and action-oriented measures designed to guide implementation efforts from 2024 to 2030.

In a major development, States agreed to establish an open-ended technical expert group dedicated to addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the light of developments in manufacturing, technology and design. The group would focus on

challenges involving polymer and modular weapons and 3D printing, as well as related tracing difficulties arising from those innovations. Scheduled to convene informally in 2026 and 2028, the group would draw on expertise from the private sector, academia and civil society to produce consensus-based recommendations by 2030.

States also focused on combating illicit manufacturing through both craft methods and additive technologies, such as 3D printing. They called for engagement with the manufacturing sector to address the misuse of additive technologies, for strengthened information exchange between States, and for the establishment of national regulations to combat illicit online trade, including the distribution of blueprints for illegal manufacturing.

Following extensive discussions, States agreed to establish a structured procedure for international cooperation and assistance. This new framework would feature a dedicated reporting platform, standardized templates for assistance requests, and enhanced facilitation mechanisms to better match assistance offers with requests. Additionally, the Conference agreed to create a complementary funding mechanism that would support States in implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

While States reaffirmed their support for the planned Fellowship Training Programme on Small Arms and Light Weapons Control, many delegations expressed concern about delays in launching the programme, which had been expected to begin in 2024 but was delayed due to resource challenges. In response, States called for expedited implementation in the outcome document, while also committing to providing the necessary yearly financial resources to ensure the programme's sustained operationalization.

Gender-responsive policies were woven throughout the outcome document, with explicit recognition of the differentiated impacts of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on women, men, girls and boys. The final text includes robust commitments to ensuring women's meaningful participation in all decision-making, planning and implementation processes related to the Programme of Action, including in leadership roles. The outcome document also integrated youth perspectives, highlighting the specific impacts of small-arms proliferation on young people and encouraging their inclusion in policymaking processes.

While no agreement could be reached on including specific language on climate, the Conference acknowledged environmental factors as drivers of small arms proliferation. States also established linkages between small-arms control and broader policy areas, such as sustainable development, public health and mental health, proposing preventive strategies and victim support systems.

The Conference outcome reflects recommendations from the Secretary-General's [New Agenda for Peace](#) (p. 23), alongside commitments to link implementation of the Programme

of Action with future sustainable development processes. Despite objection from some States, references to international human rights and humanitarian law were maintained in the final document.

Throughout the two-week Conference, participants engaged in 27 side events covering diverse topics including craft production, youth engagement strategies and the operations of the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR). A dedicated “innovation showcase” presented cutting-edge technical solutions for combating illicit small arms and light weapons trafficking.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs sponsored the participation of 11 representatives from countries heavily affected by illicit small-arms proliferation, helping to ensure that their perspectives were heard during the deliberations.

Security Council

In 2024, while the Security Council did not hold a dedicated debate on small arms and light weapons, it continued to recognize the negative impact of those weapons and their ammunition across various country contexts and thematic discussions. With only 46 resolutions adopted during the year — the lowest number since 1991 — the Council addressed small-arms and light weapons concerns in resolutions on Yemen, South Sudan, the Sudan, Libya, counter-terrorism, the situation in the Middle East, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and Haiti. The Council also addressed issues related to arms and ammunition in the context of countering terrorism through resolution [2734 \(2024\)](#), adopted on 10 June.

Throughout 2024, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Deputy to the High Representative were invited on numerous occasions to brief the Security Council on arms transfers to Ukraine.^[11] During those briefings, they called on producing, exporting, importing and transit States to act responsibly at every step along the arms and ammunition transfer chain to prevent diversion, illicit trafficking and misuse through pre-transfer risk assessments and marking, record-keeping and tracing practices. The Russian Federation, which requested the briefings, criticized Western arms supplies to Ukraine and their impact on the conflict. Several Council members expressed concerns about the risks of weapons and ammunition diversion and its impact on security and stability in other parts of the world, while many also used the meetings to condemn the Russian military aggression in Ukraine.

On 28 June, the High Representative briefed the Security Council on weapon and ammunition transfers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, at the request of France, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States following allegations of transfers to the Russian Federation for use in the conflict in Ukraine.

On 23 April, the Security Council held its annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence, entitled "Preventing conflict-related sexual violence through demilitarization and gender-responsive arms control" ([S/PV.9614](#)). Several States took the floor to urge implementation of the Programme of Action and the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, as reflected by 11 Council members during a joint [media stakeout](#) that followed. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, called for imposing United Nations sanctions regimes to stop the flow of weapons into the hands of perpetrators of sexual violence.

Arms embargoes

To prevent the supply of arms and ammunition to unstable contexts and conflicts, the Security Council continued imposing and extending arms embargoes on several countries.

For the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council extended the arms embargo through the adoption of resolution [2738 \(2024\)](#) on 27 June. It also extended for one year the sanctions regime against the Sudan, including the arms embargo, through resolution [2750 \(2024\)](#) of 11 September. The Council renewed the arms embargo on South Sudan by resolution [2428 \(2018\)](#) until 31 May 2025, while reaffirming provisions facilitating the supply of non-lethal military equipment to support implementation of the peace agreement.

Regarding Haiti, the Security Council remained concerned about illicit small arms and light weapons fuelling gang violence. On 18 October, the Council adopted resolution [2752 \(2024\)](#), renewing the sanctions regime, including the arms embargo on Haiti, for one year and encouraging greater coordination among the Panel of Experts, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and other regional frameworks on the implementation of the arms embargo provisions. The Council expressed deep concern over the illicit trafficking and diversion of arms and ammunition to armed gangs. The Haiti Sanctions Committee presented the final report of its Panel of Experts ([S/2024/704](#)), which found that despite the strengthening of the arms embargo measures, arms trafficking continued unabated, as evidenced by the high levels of armed violence in the country and the new procurement of weapons by gangs, posing greater challenges to the police. The report also found that more civilians had been purchasing weapons, and some private security companies continued to procure illicit small arms and light weapons. Throughout the year, UNODC continued issuing [quarterly reports](#) on the sources and routes of the illicit arms trafficking to and in Haiti.^[12] On 23 December, Council members issued a [press statement](#) in which they expressed grave concern at the continued illicit flow of arms and ammunition to Haiti, which remained a key factor of instability and violence, and reiterated their demand for Member States to take necessary measures to implement the arms embargo.

In one context, the arms embargo was lifted. On 30 July, the Security Council adopted resolution [2745 \(2024\)](#), effectively lifting the arms embargo imposed on the Central African Republic since 2013. However, the Council maintained restrictions on armed groups, requiring Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of arms and related material of all types, including weapons and ammunition. The resolution also extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts to monitor the situation until August 2025.

Peace operations

In line with resolution [2616 \(2021\)](#), as the Security Council renewed the mandates of peace operations in 2024, it considered whether and how the missions could support relevant national authorities in combating the illicit transfer and diversion of arms.

In October, the Council adopted resolution [2755 \(2024\)](#), renewing the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. It also expressed concern at the threat posed by the diversion and proliferation of arms and ammunition in Libya and other countries in the region, which was undermining stability. The Council called on Libyan institutions, with support from the United Nations, to take steps to secure and effectively manage stockpiles, clear explosive ordnance and explosive remnants of war from hazardous areas and protect civilians from the risks of unplanned explosions at munition sites.

On 14 November, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2759 \(2024\)](#), extending the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) for another year. It authorized MINUSCA to provide support to the Government in its efforts to safely, securely and effectively manage weapons and ammunition, including through the National Commission for the Fight against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the implementation of its national action plan.

By resolution [2765 \(2024\)](#), adopted in December, the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The Council called for continued efforts to address the threat posed by the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, as well as by diversions of arms to armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, it emphasized ensuring safe management, storage, monitoring and security of their stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, while fighting against arms trafficking and diversion. The Council also called on the Government to expand its support to the National Commission for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Reduction of Armed Violence, and it encouraged the United Nations and international partners to increase their support to the Government for enhanced weapons and ammunition management.

Other mandate extensions in 2024 did not include explicit reference to weapons and ammunition management, despite having such provisions in their original or previous mandates. In March, by resolution [2727 \(2024\)](#), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). In the original mandate, the Council had asked UNAMA to support regional and international efforts to prevent and address the illicit trade in and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons and their diversion in Afghanistan and the region. In May, the Council adopted resolution [2732 \(2024\)](#), extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. Last year, the missions had been mandated to assist the Government of Iraq on issues related to the clearance of landmines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war.

Through resolution [2742 \(2024\)](#), adopted in July, the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement in Yemen without including weapons and ammunition provisions. In August, the Council adopted resolution [2747 \(2024\)](#), extending the mandate of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). Earlier, it had tasked ATMIS by resolution [2628 \(2022\)](#) to work with Somali authorities and United Nations entities to combat the illicit trade, transfer, diversion and accumulation of small arms and light weapons, to prevent access of unauthorized recipients to all types of explosives and related materials in Somalia, and to ensure their safe and effective management and storage.

In September, the Security Council adopted resolution [2751 \(2024\)](#), reauthorizing the deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti. The Mission, per previous Council resolutions, should cooperate with the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and other relevant United Nations entities to support the efforts of the Haitian National Police in combating the illicit trafficking and diversion of arms and related materiel and to enhance management and control of borders and ports.

General Assembly

In its annual resolution on illicit small arms and light weapons ([79/40](#)), the General Assembly incorporated new language reflecting the mandates arising from the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The First Committee had adopted the resolution in its entirety without a vote, South Africa having led the negotiations as penholder, alongside Colombia and Japan.

The resolution was built upon the consensus outcome document of the Review Conference, in which States reaffirmed their commitment to the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. In line with a key mandate of the Conference, the General Assembly decided to establish an open-ended technical expert group that would convene in 2026 and 2028 during the upcoming Biennial Meetings of States on the Programme of Action.

The Assembly tasked the group with developing consensus recommendations to ensure the full and effective implementation of those frameworks.

On the margins of the First Committee, the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-hosted a side event with Conflict Armament Research, Costa Rica, the Philippines and South Africa to discuss operationalizing the open-ended technical expert group. Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica), who had presided over the Review Conference, said that the new group “could bolster security and improve the overall implementation of the [Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument]”.

Pact for the Future

During the Summit of the Future in September, States adopted the Pact for the Future (resolution [79/1](#)), reinforcing their commitments to combating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In particular, States noted the need to strengthen national and international efforts to combat, prevent and eradicate the illicit trade and address the risks associated with illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, their parts and ammunition, or associated ammunition, including through national prevention strategies and approaches.

Effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context

Throughout 2024, the Department of Peace Operations and the Office for Disarmament Affairs advanced their joint initiative on “Effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context”. The initiative provides a critical interdepartmental bridge between arms control, peacekeeping, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, aligning with the Secretary-General’s New Agenda for Peace and its emphasis on reducing the human cost of weapons. The implementing partners maintained their support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration practitioners through designing and implementing tailored weapons and ammunition management activities, in accordance with international arms control standards and guidelines.

To enhance accessibility to critical resources, the joint project team translated and published the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards modules on disarmament and transitional weapons and ammunition management in Arabic, French and Spanish. The team also published an Arabic translation of module 2.30 of the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), further expanding the reach of those crucial guidance materials.

The partners actively engaged in major international forums to promote understanding of weapons and ammunition management in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

contexts. Through participation in events of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summer School, UNIDIR and the African Union Standing Committee on Regions, they showcased the adaptability of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration approaches and advocated for regional weapons and ammunition management strategies, national ownership and community engagement. Additionally, a dedicated session on small-arms and light weapons control during the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Symposium reinforced the integration of weapons and ammunition management as a key strategy for violence prevention and community security.

In 2024, the Department of Peace Operations and the Office for Disarmament Affairs — in collaboration with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the Folke Bernadotte Academy, and the Ammunition Management Advisory Team — successfully organized the annual training course on "Effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context" in Accra. The course brought together disarmament, demobilization and reintegration practitioners, national authorities, United Nations entities and civil society representatives, providing them with vital knowledge and skills to design and implement weapons and ammunition management initiatives in complex operational environments. Participants strengthened their capacity for cross-sector collaboration and knowledge-sharing, while developing practical approaches to address weapons and ammunition challenges in diverse disarmament, demobilization and reintegration settings.

Meanwhile, the project's joint technical assistance mechanism continued to support regional organizations and their member States. In an important milestone, the implementing partners assisted the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States in developing and validating a regional road map on weapons and ammunition management in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, which received endorsement from all member States. Their endorsement reflected the region's growing political will to harmonize those efforts and represented a critical step towards strengthening regional security and preventing armed violence from recurring.

In Somalia, the team facilitated a study on weapons dynamics within the National Rehabilitation Programme, delivering actionable recommendations for national authorities. Additionally, technical workshops were conducted with MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, enhancing national preparedness and effective engagement with armed groups while reinforcing national coordination efforts on weapons and ammunition management.

Data collection for target 16.4

As co-custodian of the relevant indicator under target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Office for Disarmament Affairs maintained its engagement with UNODC to collect, verify, coordinate and annually submit data about the “significant reduction of illicit arms flows by 2030”.

In 2024, the tracking effort benefited from data contained in 100 national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons during the 2022 and 2023 calendar years. The number of reports submitted during the year represented a modest increase, up from 97 in 2020 and 94 in 2022. Regional disparities persisted, however, with submissions from States in the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean remaining below 40 per cent.^[13]

By 2024, 30 States had established national targets for implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, reflecting a steady increase from 23 in 2020. These targets could be further strengthened through the application of measurable indicators and specific time frames, and by aligning them with national efforts to integrate small-arms control into common country analyses and national development frameworks.

The reports submitted in 2024 offered valuable insights into various aspects of small-arms-control implementation, from collection efforts to international cooperation.

Collecting small arms and light weapons from illicit or uncontrolled contexts — including those seized, surrendered or found — represents a foundational step in curbing their proliferation. Member States have consistently compiled data on such collection efforts, reporting a total of 860,000 weapons collected across 56 States in 2022–2023.

To reduce illicit arms flows and prevent future diversion into illicit markets, States regularly carry out the essential step of destroying collected and stockpiled weapons, thus terminating their life cycles. Member States reported eliminating a global total of 2.5 million weapons between 2016 and 2023. In the previous eight years, States had steadily improved their capacity and sustained weapon destruction efforts.

Beyond collection and destruction, effective small-arms control depends on understanding and preventing weapons diversion. Data related to weapons diversion and tracing enable in-depth analysis to identify points of diversion and trafficking routes, thereby enhancing prevention measures against illicit arms flows. While the number of States collecting data on weapons diversion from national stockpiles or international transfers remained low, recent years have seen progress. The number of States reporting diversion during international

transfers rose from 23 in 2020 to 36 in 2024, while those reporting diversion from national stockpiles increased from 29 to 37 over the same period.

Meanwhile, countries reported significant progress in strengthening international tracing capacities. Seventy-five States had established national tracing procedures; 64 were in cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization; and 37 were using technology to enhance tracing efforts. Notably, in 2024, 21 countries reported for the first time the number of tracing requests submitted or received. Although the number of reporting countries remained limited, the available data indicated that tracing requests had strong bilateral support and often produced successful matches.

The wide-ranging data collected through national reporting remained essential for establishing good practices on marking modular and polymer weapons, facilitating the adoption of advanced technologies, including lasers, QR codes and chemical taggants.

Those enhanced technical and operational capabilities of Member States reflected broader efforts to strengthen international cooperation. The number of States requesting international assistance had grown by 50 per cent, from 32 countries in 2022 to 50 in 2024. The most requested areas for international assistance included tracing, marking and record-keeping, stockpile management, and destruction. Other priority areas included transfer controls, seizure procedures, manufacturing and brokering controls.

Alongside those technical and operational advances, recent years have witnessed remarkable progress in efforts to incorporate gender considerations into small-arms-related policymaking, programming and implementation at the national level. The proportion of States reporting such efforts increased from 40 per cent in 2018 to 74 per cent in 2024. However, the collection of sex-disaggregated data remained limited, showing modest improvement, from 16 per cent in 2018 to 29 per cent in 2024.

Silencing the guns in Africa: Africa Amnesty Month

The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its support for advancing the African Union's Silencing the Guns initiative through their joint Africa Amnesty Month project with the African Union Commission in 2024.

Established by the African Union Assembly in 2017, Africa Amnesty Month promotes the voluntary surrender of illicit small arms and light weapons in accordance with national laws and international agreements, allowing civilians to hand over weapons without fear of arrest or prosecution.

In collaboration with the African Union Commission and the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the project implemented activities in three beneficiary States — Central

African Republic, Djibouti and Rwanda. The aims were to raise awareness of the dangers of illegal arms possession, facilitate weapons collection and strengthen national capacities to combat arms trafficking.

In the Central African Republic, the Africa Amnesty Month was launched in Bangui on 10 September under the theme "Educate and sensitize society on surrendering illicit small arms and light weapons". The event drew senior government officials, civil society organizations and local community members, alongside delegates from the African Union Peace and Security Council, the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The launch held special significance, as the African Union Peace and Security Council had chosen the Central African Republic to host the continental commemoration of the 2024 Africa Amnesty Month. The commemoration included the symbolic destruction of illicit weapons, with active participation from various stakeholders. These activities reinforced the Central African Republic's commitment to regional peace and security, while raising public awareness and engagement in the voluntary surrender of illicit arms.

Rwanda launched its Africa Amnesty Month initiative on 23 September at the Police Training School in Gishari. Participants included the Executive Secretary of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Commandant of the Police Training School Gishari, and the National Focal Person on Small Arms and Light Weapons. A major focus of the project involved improving secure arms storage in remote units, with nearly 100 steel boxes provided to enhance stockpile management and security across the country. The project also included a five-day training course for 40 personnel from the Rwandan Defence Force, the Rwanda National Police, the Rwandan National Intelligence and Security Service, the Rwanda Correctional Service and the Rwanda Investigation Bureau, enhancing their capacity to manage small arms and light weapons and prevent diversion. Additionally, a community-based policing workshop trained 25 personnel from the Rwanda National Police, park rangers from four of Rwanda's national parks and private security providers, fostering stronger collaboration with local communities to curb illicit firearms proliferation. A nationwide media campaign supported these efforts by raising public awareness of voluntary weapons surrender and reinforcing community engagement in disarmament efforts.

Djibouti officially launched the Africa Amnesty Month on 30 October with a ceremony chaired by the Minister of Interior ad interim. Attendees included the President of the Court of Justice, the Director General of the National Police, and representatives from the African Union, the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. A highlight of Djibouti's activities to mark the month was a session focused on the role of youth and women in disarmament. Other activities included a tree planting exercise at Camp Lemonnier, the destruction of obsolete small arms and light weapons, and theatrical performances illustrating the impact of such weapons on communal

violence, while promoting both traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and voluntary arms surrender processes. A notable march to the National Police shooting range drew nearly 300 participants, 15 per cent of them women, reflecting strong support for the initiative. The activities reinforced Djibouti's commitment to combating the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and played a key role in strengthening the country's arms control efforts, particularly given its strategic location in the Horn of Africa. The event provided an opportunity for Djibouti's authorities to engage with United Nations officials on key arms control issues, including capacity-building in ammunition tracing and revising the national action plan on small arms and light weapons.

The Africa Amnesty Month project, as part of the broader Silencing the Guns initiative, continued to play a crucial role in advancing the African Union's vision for a conflict-free continent. Aligned with global frameworks such as Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — particularly Goal 16 on promoting peace, justice and strong institutions — the project contributes significantly to reducing illicit arms flows across Africa. Looking ahead to 2025, the project is expected to focus on encouraging past beneficiary States to expand on previous small arms and light weapons surrender initiatives and advocate for comprehensive arms control measures at the national level. The project would also seek to establish deeper partnerships and synergies with other United Nations offices engaged in arms control and disarmament efforts across Africa, ensuring a coordinated, effective approach to tackling the illicit arms trade and advancing peace and security. The Africa Amnesty Month project contributes to ongoing collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union in supporting broader efforts to promote peace and stability across the continent.

Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium

MOSAIC consists of a series of modules that offer practical guidance on small-arms-control measures. Governments and civil society organizations have made wide use of the publicly available modules, which together provide guidance on managing and controlling small arms throughout their life cycle. Developing and reviewing the modules is the responsibility of technical experts from around the world, including individuals from civil society, industry and international organizations who form a dedicated expert reference group. MOSAIC helps to achieve the objectives of key global agreements aimed at preventing illicit trade, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

In its 2024 resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (79/40), the General Assembly again noted that web-based tools developed by the Secretariat, including MOSAIC, could help to assess progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism adopted one additional MOSAIC module during the year, covering the permanent deactivation of small arms and light weapons ([MOSAIC module 05.55](#)).

United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms

The Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism brings together 24 United Nations entities^[14] aiming to foster a coherent and cohesive approach to small-arms policy and programming within the United Nations system. Since its inception in 1998, the inter-agency coordination mechanism has enabled its partners to share information and lessons learned, as well as plan joint activities on small arms and ammunition control, armed violence reduction and the arms trade. Its membership integrates expertise from diverse fields, including economic and social development, human rights, disarmament, organized crime, counter-terrorism, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, public health, environment, gender, youth and children.

As the designated system-wide focal point, the Office for Disarmament Affairs chaired the meetings of the CASA mechanism, which convened three times in 2024. At the CASA principals' meeting in June, 13 entities agreed at the principal level that United Nations system partners would take a holistic approach to addressing small arms and light weapons control and armed violence reduction. They further decided to help to develop guidance on integrating small-arms control into national development cooperation frameworks, including common country analyses and sustainable development cooperation frameworks. The principals also consolidated support for the [New Agenda for Peace](#), confirming that CASA would remain the primary United Nations forum to advance relevant recommendations emerging both from that policy brief and from the conclusions of the Summit of the Future (resolution [79/1](#)).

CASA continued to fulfil its responsibility of overseeing the development and adoption of MOSAIC modules, while also consulting on operations and progress regarding UNSCAR and the Saving Lives Entity fund (SALIENT).

Task force on Executive Committee decision 2023/46

The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its engagement with other United Nations entities in implementing Executive Committee decision 2023/46. By that decision, the Executive Committee had requested the Office, together with UNODC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to support United Nations country teams, through United Nations resident coordinator offices, in integrating small-arms and light weapons control into national development frameworks, including through SALIENT. The Executive Committee

also requested research on arms flows and export control mechanisms, strengthened capabilities in data analysis and enhanced regional cooperation.

The three implementing entities established a dedicated task force together with UNIDIR, meeting nine times from March to November. The task force conducted an extensive mapping exercise of relevant ongoing work, identifying 112 activities at the national, regional and global levels. It reported on that work to CASA at the principal and working levels.

Firearms Protocol and related intergovernmental processes

The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Firearms Protocol), was adopted on 31 May 2001 by the General Assembly to promote, facilitate and strengthen cooperation among States parties to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition.

The Firearms Protocol had 123 [States parties](#) as at December 2024.

Working Group on Firearms

The open-ended intergovernmental Working Group on Firearms held its [eleventh meeting](#) in Vienna on 3 and 4 April. Established by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime as a standing mechanism that meets annually, the Working Group addressed two key topics at its eleventh session: (a) operationalizing the Firearms Protocol in view of technological developments relating to the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition ([CTOC/COP/WG.6/2024/2](#)); and (b) implementation of article 5 (Criminalization) of the Firearms Protocol ([CTOC/COP/WG.6/2024/3](#)).

Building on the provisions of the Firearms Protocol, the Working Group adopted various recommendations to strengthen international cooperation in combating illicit firearms trafficking (see [CTOC/COP/WG.6/2024/5](#)). After the eleventh session concluded, the [third meeting](#) of the Constructive Dialogue on Firearms facilitated discussions with non-governmental organizations on the same topics.

Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime held its [twelfth session](#) from 14 to 18 October.^[15] Welcoming the recommendations of the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Firearms, the

Conference adopted resolution [12/3](#), providing detailed guidance for States parties on addressing contemporary threats to firearms control regimes.

In the resolution, the Conference called on States to review their national legislation to address emerging threats, including 3D-printed firearms, polymer weapons and the illicit reactivation of deactivated firearms, ensuring those acts are appropriately criminalized in alignment with the Firearms Protocol. It also encouraged States to consider adopting national deactivation standards to prevent reactivation, ensuring weapons are permanently inoperable and compliant with the Protocol. Furthermore, the resolution emphasized the importance of regulating blueprints for 3D printing of firearms and their components, including criminalizing their illicit possession, uploading, downloading and transfer for manufacturing or trafficking purposes.

In addressing transfer controls, the Conference recommended that States enhance oversight of firearms, their parts and ammunition by establishing export, import and transit control systems. It encouraged Governments to adopt adequate regulation for preventing the illicit weapons sales through e-commerce platforms, and postal and courier services.

On criminalization, the resolution includes a call for States to incorporate the provisions of article 5 of the Firearms Protocol into national law, applying them to offences related to light weapons and explosives, while considering them as serious offences under the Convention. States were encouraged to define all offences under the Firearms Protocol as serious crimes, as outlined in article 2 of the Convention, and to strengthen their national legal frameworks to prevent and prosecute the intentional misuse of firearms permits or licences granted to private security companies.

Seeking to strengthen law enforcement capabilities, the Conference highlighted the need to enhance the use of special investigative techniques, including controlled deliveries, undercover operations and artificial intelligence tools, to dismantle organized criminal groups and increase the effectiveness of criminal investigations. Additionally, States were encouraged to promote responsible business practices among manufacturers, dealers, importers, exporters, brokers and commercial carriers of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition to prevent and detect illicit manufacturing and trafficking, in line with relevant United Nations guiding principles.

Resolution 12/3 also provided UNODC with the mandate to support the implementation of the Firearms Protocol. The Office was tasked with providing technical assistance and capacity-building in relation to firearms trafficking in postal and express courier parcels; monitoring and addressing illicit firearms trafficking and diversion risks; and assisting States in their efforts to strengthen firearms control regimes and countering trafficking in view of technological developments. The resolution further mandated UNODC to update its

legislative and technical guides for implementing the Firearms Protocol to reflect new and emerging developments and threats.

Saving Lives Entity: an innovative, comprehensive approach to sustainable security and development

The Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNDP continued to operate their [SALIENT joint initiative](#) under the principle that small-arms control and armed violence reduction must be nationally led, people-centred, and both anticipatory and responsive. In 2024, SALIENT supported multisectoral and sustainable responses by implementing development-oriented projects in six countries: Ghana, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Panama and Papua New Guinea. Implementation in those countries was scheduled for completion in 2025, when SALIENT's first phase was scheduled to conclude. Meanwhile, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNDP worked during 2024 to design and develop the second phase of SALIENT ("SALIENT 2.0").

Programming in SALIENT countries in 2024 involved legislative and policy framework support, including on development of national small-arms action plans, data collection and gender mainstreaming, capacity-building for law enforcement, and sensitization activities that addressed the cultural roots of violence. Those activities were notably focused on the relationship between violence, small arms and masculinity, particularly among youth. Community-based activities emphasized coordination with civil society actors and relevant government entities and line ministries, including school systems.

Weapons proliferation fuels systematic and widespread sexual violence in conflict and violence against women in general, with firearms used in at least 70 per cent of all incidents of conflict-related sexual violence. Accordingly, SALIENT dedicated 31.75 per cent of its original project funding, or \$1.72 million, to activities organized in direct pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment. As at the end of 2024, SALIENT had disbursed approximately \$1.6 million of that amount to activities incorporating a significant gender component.

Country cases

In Jamaica, SALIENT bolstered ongoing efforts to reduce access to firearms and ammunition, undertaken by UNODC, UNDP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Building on previous efforts, SALIENT activities were expanded beyond Kingston to strengthen the interdiction capacity of law enforcement officials at the nation's maritime and seaports, while improving their ability to analyse firearms and ammunition evidence at various ports of entry, exit and transit. SALIENT

supported collaborative development of strategies with teachers to help to prevent conflict and violence in schools, including after-school programmes for youth and discussions on peer-to-peer conflict resolution and mediated exchanges related to masculinity and gun culture.

In Ghana, SALIENT supported activities promoting legal reform and tangible legislative changes to reduce armed violence, including through a law that would bring small-arms-related protocols up to international standards. It also supported capacity-building for more effective lobbying and advocacy by civil society, as well as training for security institutions in the jurisdictions of Elubo, Tema Harbour and Aflao. The National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons worked with SALIENT, UNDP and UNODC to strengthen the country's detection, identification and prevention of illicit small-arms trafficking. Meanwhile, implementing agencies collaborated with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra to conduct a nationwide survey on small arms and ammunition.

In Honduras, SALIENT focused its efforts on prevention strategies addressing the cultural and patriarchal drivers of violence among youth, working with schools, educators and youth to develop conflict resolution and interpersonal skills. Implemented by UNDP and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the project operated in four municipalities: Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Choloma and Choluteca. The implementing partners worked alongside the Ministry of Security and civil society organizations on activities centred around two armed violence reduction campaigns, entitled "Sin armas, más paz" and "Desarmados y educados".

In the Kyrgyz Republic, SALIENT supported capacity-building on oversight and accountability. UNDP, together with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, engaged with the Office of the Prosecutor General to develop a digitized "weapons registry" system for tracking civilian firearms, designed to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of firearms tracing, while contributing to improved control and safety measures. At the end of 2024, the Ministry of Interior was reviewing initial draft modules completed for the system in December before their approval for official handover. Since April, SALIENT had been jointly implemented with the country's Security Council secretariat, beginning with a national workshop on the control of small arms and light weapons in July that marked the start of practical preparations for Kyrgyzstan's national action plan on small arms and light weapons. To foster a programmatic approach, organizers explored South-East Europe's small-arms-control experience through the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In Panama, SALIENT implementation began in the Colón District with a field visit aimed at mapping both the actors and the social, economic and cultural developments impacting Barrio Norte in the city of Colón. In implementing the project, UNDP, UNODC and the United

Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) initiated preparations for dialogue between authorities, school personnel, civil society organizations, youth groups and other relevant actors to jointly identify and address challenges and solutions related to the presence of weapons in schools and their surroundings.

Papua New Guinea developed a national survey on small arms, enabling the country to both obtain quality data for evidence-based public policy and inform its draft national action plan on small arms and light weapons. Representing Papua New Guinea's first effort to collect such data since 2005, the project was implemented by UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. With a scope initially limited to the country's Southern Highlands and Hela provinces, the project was later expanded to Enga after its provincial administration requested support from the United Nations in a written call to action. The project was launched in April with a national workshop, which was followed by a technical risk assessment on stockpile management. At the end of 2024, participatory research was still under way on the impact of armed violence on women and girls in Papua New Guinea, as well as the contribution of social and gender norms to the prevalence of toxic masculinity in the country.

High-level engagement

On 18 June, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNDP convened a group of high-level officials to showcase SALIENT's achievements and capitalize on momentum from the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The participants celebrated SALIENT's holistic approach to small-arms control and armed violence reduction, while underscoring the need to scale up operations to sustain its impact.

The meeting opened with remarks from the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Associate Administrator of UNDP, followed by panel briefings from SALIENT donors and country case presentations by governmental representatives, from Ghana's Minister for Interior and Papua New Guinea's Acting Deputy Secretary. The President of the Review Conference, Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica), who continued to advocate strongly for SALIENT and integrated approaches, delivered closing remarks. More than 100 participants from over 30 Member States attended, including 10 ambassadors and 15 high-level ministry officials. An additional 44 expert participants, including three resident coordinators, attended remotely.

In its outcome document, the Review Conference referred specifically to SALIENT as one of the international assistance instruments for ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument ([A/CON.192/2024/RC/3](#), annex, paras. 199 and 212). Member States urged States in a position to do so to make financial contributions to SALIENT.

United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation

Since its establishment in 2013, UNSCAR has served as a multi-donor funding mechanism supporting quick-impact, short-term, small-scale and theme-focused projects that promote and support the implementation of multilateral conventional arms, ammunition and transparency instruments and initiatives. Administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, UNSCAR has successfully mobilized international assistance, particularly in support of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

As at the end of 2024, UNSCAR had benefited a total of 148 countries in all regions. It allocated a total of \$13 million through 133 projects, which were selected through an annual competitive application process and implemented in partnership with civil society organizations. The 2024 funding cycle was supported by Australia, Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, Germany, the Philippines and Slovakia. Notably, the Philippines transitioned from a multi-year UNSCAR recipient to a donor, exemplifying how successful assistance can inspire former beneficiaries to contribute as new donors.

Key achievements and impacts

UNSCAR projects implemented in the 2023–2024 cycle delivered significant results across multiple areas of arms control and disarmament. In the realm of global and regional coordination, UNSCAR strengthened implementation of regional small-arms instruments, road maps and mechanisms in Africa, the Western Balkans and South-East Asia, while promoting national reporting on the Programme of Action, the Kinshasa Convention and the Nairobi Protocol. The facility also supported capacity-building and outreach for United Nations resident coordinator offices in integrating small-arms control into sustainable development processes, including common country analyses and United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks.

Stockpile management initiatives formed another cornerstone of UNSCAR activities. UNSCAR supported Somalia's national weapons and ammunition management strategy, including the identification, documentation and tracing of weapons seized from terrorists. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNSCAR marked and registered 257 service weapons and 312 confiscated or non-serviceable weapons under the police jurisdiction of Posavina Canton, while also registering stockpiled weapons in Canton 10. Additionally, UNSCAR constructed and renovated weapons storage facilities in the Western Balkans, as well as Northern, Eastern and Central Africa; procured security devices and storage equipment; and provided training for stockpile management in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Libya.

Transparency in armaments remained a key focus area, with UNSCAR supporting the development of key [findings and lessons](#) learned on States' practices in South-East Asia

regarding the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Furthermore, UNSCAR helped to promote the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures in West Africa.

UNSCAR supported data collection for target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals through relevant projects, including updating the global and regional database on armed violence to feature over 200,000 global data points, with a focus on the Pacific and Africa, and collecting data on exports of conventional explosive weapons and associated civilian harm in line with the Arms Trade Treaty.

In the area of proactive research and technologies, UNSCAR supported the preparation of a study report on explosive weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty, including an [assessment of its effectiveness](#) in reducing civilian harm, as well as the development of an artificial intelligence-powered ammunition identification tool.

Civil society activities with gender and youth dimensions were another significant focus area for UNSCAR, which requires all of its projects to incorporate gender-responsive approaches. Through awareness-raising, advocacy and policy support, UNSCAR facilitated civil society participation in global small-arms processes, including the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action. Through enhanced parliamentary support, UNSCAR contributed to increased engagement by women parliamentarians in 11 countries on issues related to the Programme of Action, the women, peace and security agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, or armed violence reduction. It also strengthened women's full, effective and meaningful participation and representation in national security policies, including small arms and light weapons control, in East Africa, the Western Balkans and Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, UNSCAR promoted synergies between gender and youth initiatives and established a regional youth platform to providing disarmament training for youth leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Operational framework and future directions

In response to its 2024 call for proposals, UNSCAR received 60 applications and selected 10 projects for implementation in 2025. Additionally, one special circumstances project was approved in the emergency response to an unplanned munitions site explosion in Chad in June 2024. UNSCAR funding proposals are required to promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (i.e. Goals 5 and 16); integrate arms control into national development frameworks; comply with MOSAIC and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG); support action 7 of the New Agenda for Peace (Reduce the human cost of weapons); and incorporate gender-responsive approaches in line with the women, peace and security agenda.

UNSCAR continued to uphold the principle of national ownership by prioritizing partnerships with civil society organizations, recognizing their essential roles in advancing arms control at the global, regional and national levels. However, concerns were raised regarding the sustainability of UNSCAR operations if current funding levels are not maintained, underscoring the need for continued donor support.

Throughout 2024, UNSCAR actively coordinated with the Arms Trade Treaty Voluntary Trust Fund and the SALIENT trust fund to avoid duplications in funding and ensure complementarity among relevant funding mechanisms.

During the fourth Review Conference, Australia, Czechia, Finland, Germany and Slovakia recommended in a joint [working paper](#) that UNSCAR, in collaboration with civil society, should play a key function in an envisaged structured procedure for international cooperation and assistance for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. In line with the working paper, the Review Conference urged States to make financial contributions to UNSCAR, and to promote it as a supporting mechanism for States to access and encourage projects in partnership with relevant stakeholders ([A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3](#), paras. 199 and 212 (l), (m) and (n)).

The Office for Disarmament Affairs organized a side event of the Review Conference, entitled “UNSCAR at 10: A decade of international assistance to the Programme of Action”. The event commemorated UNSCAR's tenth anniversary, showcasing key achievements from its 133 funded projects and highlighting its contributions to the implementation of the Programme of Action in the previous decade.

Ammunition

Throughout 2024, incidents of unplanned explosions at ammunition sites in various regions underscored the persistent safety risks associated with [inadequate ammunition management](#). The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to promote the IATG through the United Nations SaferGuard programme, helping States to manage ammunition safely and securely.

Following the 2023 adoption of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management ([A/78/111](#), annex), States and other stakeholders in various subregions discussed implementing the new political commitments to comprehensively address illicit trafficking, diversion and unplanned explosions of conventional ammunition.

Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management

The Pact for the Future (resolution [79/1](#)) acknowledged the critical importance of addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition as an integral element of

conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. It also committed to bridging existing gaps in through-life conventional ammunition management to mitigate the dual risks of unplanned explosions and diversion of conventional ammunition.

Through resolution [79/54](#), the General Assembly reaffirmed its adoption of the Global Framework in 2023 and decided to convene the first Preparatory Meeting of States in June 2025. Member States also reiterated the request to implement the mandates assigned to the Secretariat under the Global Framework.

To support those efforts, the Office for Disarmament Affairs began designing a new global assistance mechanism for through-life ammunition management. The process involved both stakeholder consultations and research into good practices and lessons learned from other assistance mechanisms to ensure effectiveness and relevance. As part of the initiative, the Office partnered with Switzerland to convene an informal stakeholder dialogue in Geneva in October. The meeting convened experts from Member States, United Nations entities, and international, regional and non-governmental organizations to gather input for the mechanism's design and management.

The Office also organized informal regional meetings to promote awareness and engagement with the Global Framework. Organized through its three regional centres, the meetings took place in Lima for Latin America and the Caribbean; in Lomé for West and Central Africa; in Gaborone for East and Southern Africa; and in Kathmandu for Asia and the Pacific.

Those meetings brought together representatives of States, United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, and civil society. Participants exchanged views on opportunities, challenges, gaps and needs for implementing political commitments ahead of the 2025 Preparatory Meeting of States. They highlighted the role of existing regional and subregional mechanisms in implementing the Global Framework, while emphasizing the importance of tailored and needs-driven international assistance in through-life conventional ammunition management. Discussions underscored the need to further integrate gender considerations in conventional ammunition management and promote women's meaningful participation. The meetings also provided a platform for sharing experiences and practices on the safety and security of conventional ammunition, including risk reduction processes for stockpiles, supply chain transparency, and marking and tracing.

International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and United Nations SaferGuard activities

The Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Mine Action Service of the United Nations launched their jointly developed [Specialized Training Materials on Weapons and Ammunition Management in Peace Operations](#) in 2024, completing a collaboration with the Ammunition

Management Advisory Team, the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peace Operations, and the Office of Military Affairs. Guided by the IATG and MOSAIC, the training package was designed to enhance the capacities of troop- and police-contributing countries to safely and securely manage deployed weapons, weapons-related equipment and ammunition. It focuses on supporting those countries in implementing the Weapons and Ammunition Management Policy and the United Nations Manual on Ammunition Management.

The Ammunition Management Advisory Team, a joint initiative of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, continued to provide technical advice and assistance in ammunition management in accordance with the IATG. The Team supported Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jordan, Mozambique, Peru, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in assessing and strengthening national capacities for the safe, secure and sustainable management of conventional ammunition stockpiles. These activities contributed to implementing the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management.

Following a June explosion at an ammunition depot in Chad, the Office for Disarmament Affairs activated the SaferGuard quick-response mechanism.^[16] At the Government's request, the Office deployed a team in September comprising personnel from the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the United Nations Office for Project Services, Peace and Security Cluster. The mission team assisted the Government in assessing what caused the incident in N'Djamena and in developing effective risk reduction strategies in line with the IATG to mitigate dangers from unexploded ordnance.

Improvised explosive devices

Throughout 2024, the threat of [improvised explosive devices](#) continued to receive attention from Member States and the United Nations, as well as humanitarian organizations and other civil society actors. Incidents involving such devices occurred across multiple regions in the context of armed conflict, crime and terrorism, with further severe impacts in countries such as Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, the Niger, Nigeria, the Philippines, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic ([S/2024/385](#)). According to the non-governmental organization Action on Armed Violence, casualties from improvised explosive device attacks [surged by 167 per cent](#) in 2024 compared with the previous year, even as the total number of incidents dropped by 27 per cent. Afghanistan continued to experience particularly severe civilian harm from improvised explosive devices, with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reporting that attacks using such devices, including suicide attacks, were the leading cause of civilian casualties in 2024 (see [A/79/675-S/2024/876](#), [A/78/914-S/2024/469](#) and [A/78/789-S/2024/196](#)).

Security Council

In 2024, the Security Council addressed the threat posed by improvised explosive devices through both thematic discussions and country- and region-specific deliberations on multiple occasions.

In December, the Council held an Arria-formula meeting entitled "[Safeguarding lives, sustaining peace: Enhancing mine action for stabilization, protection, recovery and inclusion](#)". Numerous delegations underscored the severe threat that improvised explosive devices posed to civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian workers. States stressed the importance of strengthening international cooperation and training to address the threat in both peacekeeping and humanitarian contexts. Discussions also highlighted the need for improved weapons and ammunition management to prevent the diversion and misuse of materials in improvised explosive device production, as well as the integration of proactive measures such as risk education and victim assistance into peacekeeping mandates. Many States stressed the necessity of fostering regional collaboration and enhancing technical capabilities to effectively detect and neutralize improvised explosive devices.

In November, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the Central African region ([S/PRST/2024/7](#)), expressing deep concern about the increasing use of explosive ordnance by armed groups and terrorist groups, including improvised explosive devices and landmines. The Council stressed the need to further investigate and combat this threat.

The Security Council also addressed the use of improvised explosive devices in the context of terrorism. Through resolution [2734 \(2024\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of the Monitoring Team of the sanctions regime against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida, including to promote awareness of and enhance compliance with the arms embargo, with particular emphasis on measures to counter production and use of improvised explosive devices. Similarly, resolution [2763 \(2024\)](#), adopted in December, extended the mandate of the Monitoring Team of the sanctions regime against the Taliban, including to consult with relevant stakeholders on the threat posed by improvised explosive devices to peace, security and stability in Afghanistan, to raise awareness of the threat and to develop recommendations for appropriate countermeasures.

General Assembly

In July, the Secretary-General submitted the fourth substantive report to the General Assembly on the implementation of its resolution entitled "Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices" ([A/79/211](#)).

In the report, the Secretary-General underscored the devastating humanitarian toll of improvised explosive devices, including their gendered impacts. He reiterated his call to Member States to stop the use of improvised explosive devices by terrorist groups and non-State actors, and to endorse and implement the 2022 [Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#). The Secretary-General addressed new developments in improvised explosive device manufacture and deployment, including the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, the diversion of commercial products, and the increasing sophistication of such devices. On emerging threats, he highlighted the growing use of drones to deliver improvised explosive devices and the international transfer of related knowledge via the Internet.

The Secretary-General noted that significant discussions had taken place under frameworks such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, emphasizing the humanitarian impact of improvised explosive devices and calling for increased awareness and adherence to international obligations. He referenced the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, adopted by the General Assembly in 2023, as a tool to prevent ammunition diversion for improvised explosive device manufacture. He added that the first follow-up conference of the Political Declaration had flagged the use of improvised explosive devices by non-State armed groups in populated areas as a matter of particular concern.

The Secretary-General reported on progress made by the United Nations Coordinating Task Force on a Whole-of-System Approach to Improvised Explosive Devices, including the development of an interactive toolbox to enhance coordination and improve collective responses to the threat.

He also underscored the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations to support Member States across the improvised explosive devices response cycle, including awareness-raising initiatives, prevention and preparedness strategies, and mitigation and response efforts.

The report's recommendations emphasized opportunities for coordinated, comprehensive and multifaceted approaches to countering improvised explosive devices. The Secretary-General encouraged Member States to strengthen the global architecture to address the threat, leveraging United Nations processes across humanitarian disarmament, arms control, counter-terrorism and trade control instruments. In line with the New Agenda for Peace, he advocated for integrated approaches that bridge security responses with conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development efforts. Additionally, he called for enhanced collection and analysis of gender- and age-disaggregated data to inform strategies and programmes; strengthened participation of women and diverse stakeholders; tailored risk education and

victim assistance initiatives; the development of national, subregional and regional strategies; bolstered intelligence capabilities in United Nations peace operations; and strengthened regulations around dual-use chemicals and improvised explosive device components.

In December, the General Assembly adopted the sixth iteration of its resolution entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices” (resolution [79/53](#)), tabled by Australia, France and Nigeria. In the resolution, the Assembly noted relevant recent policy developments, including the New Agenda for Peace and the adoption of the Global Framework. Based on observations and recommendations in the Secretary-General’s report, the General Assembly newly expressed concern over the use of new technological advancements to design, manufacture and deliver improvised explosive devices. In another new paragraph, it encouraged the development and implementation of regional and subregional strategies. The General Assembly requested the Secretariat to maintain and regularly update its [online information hub](#) on improvised explosive devices and to submit the Secretary-General’s next report in 2026. The open, informal consultation process under the resolution was broadened to include mitigation and response, in addition to prevention and awareness-raising.

Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

States also took up the issue of improvised explosive devices at two meetings held in the framework of the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-traps and Other Devices, as amended on 3 May 1996, also known as Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (for more information, see the section “Amended Protocol II” below).

Mine Action Service of the United Nations

In 2024, the Mine Action Service of the United Nations continued to advance policy and doctrine development to address explosive threats. It contributed to the development of the [United Nations Peacekeeping Missions Military Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit Manual](#), which defines the roles and responsibilities of conventional munitions disposal and improvised explosive device disposal teams. Additionally, it supported the creation of the [United Nations Improvised Explosive Device Threat Mitigation Handbook](#), a comprehensive guide designed to help commanders, staff and peacekeepers to navigate and survive in environments with improvised explosive device threats. The Mine Action Service also oversaw the implementation of the [counter-improvised explosive device for peacekeeping operations](#) strategy.

The growing threat of uncrewed aerial systems, particularly those carrying explosive devices, poses significant risks to peacekeeping missions and global security. The Mine Action Service

played a critical role in advancing the United Nations counter-uncrewed aerial systems policy and advocacy efforts. As a member of the United Nations working group on counter-uncrewed aerial systems, the Mine Action Service provided expert insights into the use of improvised explosive devices in uncrewed aerial systems, helping to shape effective countermeasures.

In 2024, the Mine Action Service trained 133 peacekeepers, including 67 instructors, in essential counter-improvised explosive device skills. Those training sessions were delivered in Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Malawi, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. In support of the Office of Military Affairs and the Integrated Training Service, the Mine Action Service achieved a significant milestone by integrating training on planning responses to improvised explosive devices into peacekeeping training packages. This integration included force protection training, United Nations Infantry Battalion train-the-trainer programmes, and leadership courses such as the United Nations Battalion Commander Course and the United Nations Sector Commander and Force Chief of Staff Course. This initiative equips peacekeeping personnel with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address improvised explosive device threats and mitigate associated risks.

Explosive weapons in populated areas

Throughout 2024, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas remained a key concern for States, civil society and the United Nations, as the practice increasingly resulted in devastating harm to civilians and extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure. According to [Action on Armed Violence](#), the global rate of explosive weapon incidents increased by 29 per cent from the previous year, while global civilian casualties ballooned by 69 per cent, making 2024 the deadliest year for such weapons since the independent research organization began keeping records in 2010. Explosive violence affected 69 countries and territories during the year, with Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar, the Sudan and Ukraine among the worst affected.

In his annual report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict ([S/2024/385](#)), the Secretary-General expressed grave concern about the deteriorating state of civilian protection. He underscored his call to States and parties to armed conflict to redouble their efforts to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law and to ensure accountability for violations. The Secretary-General noted that protecting civilians, including from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, is first and foremost the responsibility of parties to conflict.

Meanwhile, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its efforts to promote the universalization and effective implementation of the [Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of](#)

[Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#) to enhance civilian protection amid the increasing urbanization of armed conflict globally. Additionally, the Office assumed the role of support entity for implementing the Political Declaration.

States participating in the Political Declaration held their [first international follow-up conference](#) in Oslo on 23 April. The conference brought together 245 participants from 81 States, as well as 41 international, regional and civil society organizations (for the list of participants, see annex IV of the [Chair's summary](#)). The gathering aimed to take stock of the Political Declaration's implementation, discuss progress and challenges, and explore areas for further advancing the Political Declaration's commitments. The conference fostered exchanges on the central commitments of the Political Declaration to help to build a shared understanding of the priority areas and key issues in implementing the Political Declaration, including different regional experiences and approaches.

The conference held panel discussions on three core areas: military policies and practices; understanding direct and indirect effects; and assisting conflict-affected communities. The conference concluded with the issuance of an [outcome statement](#) containing recommendations for the way forward, issued by the past, present and incoming Chairs of the process: respectively Ireland, Norway and Costa Rica.

In the Pact for the Future ([79/1](#)), adopted at the 2024 Summit of the Future, world leaders decided to take concrete and practical measures to protect all civilians in armed conflict; and to restrict or refrain from, as appropriate, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas when their use may be expected to cause harm to civilians or civilian objects, including essential civilian infrastructure, schools, medical facilities and places of worship, in accordance with international law. Those commitments represent a milestone for better civilian protection and align fully with the Political Declaration.

Data collection and civilian casualty recording

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, serving as the custodian agency for indicator 16.1.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals on conflict-related deaths, continued to report documented casualties in internationally recognized armed conflicts. It collected data disaggregated by sex, age and cause of death for a range of purposes, including preventing human rights violations, supporting accountability and promoting data-driven decision-making.

Available data showed that at least 48,384 lives were lost in 2024, amid at least 14 of the world's deadliest armed conflicts. While the focus of the data is on civilian casualties, intense hostilities often obscure the categorization of victims.^{[\[17\]](#)} With a growth of 40 per cent

compared with the previous year, 2024 marked the third consecutive year of steep rises in conflict-related deaths, with at least one life lost every 12 minutes.

When it was possible to classify the primary cause of deaths in 2024, heavy weapons and explosive munitions were the foremost tools of lethal violence in North America and Europe and in Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia. In Central and Southern Asia, planted explosives and unexploded ordnance continued to pose significant threats, underscoring the long-term dangers of protracted conflicts.

About four times more children (+337 per cent) and women (+258 per cent) were killed in 2023–2024 than in the previous biennium. Of those, 8 in 10 children and 7 in 10 women fatalities happened in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the Gaza Strip.

Export controls

Wassenaar Arrangement

The twenty-eighth Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary meeting was chaired by Debora Lepre (Italy) and held in Vienna on 4 and 5 December.

In 2024, the Wassenaar Arrangement continued to enhance global and regional security and stability by advocating for transparency and increased responsibility in the transfer of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilizing accumulations. Its control lists underwent further updates and improvements, in line with international security developments, technological advancements and market trends. In addition, the Wassenaar Arrangement promoted effective export controls worldwide through outreach activities with non-participating States and relevant international and regional organizations.

Participating States continued to exchange information on transfers of arms and dual-use goods and technologies, as well as the risks associated with potentially destabilizing arms flows to specific geographical regions, including areas of conflict. They also reaffirmed the important role of strong export controls and close cooperation in preventing arms diversion and the acquisition of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies by terrorists; continued a comprehensive and systematic review of the Wassenaar Arrangement control lists to ensure their ongoing relevance; adopted new controls, including concerning sub-orbital spacecraft and their components in the munitions list, as well as production technologies for metal alloy powders used in high-performance additive manufacturing in the list of dual-use goods and technologies; and clarified control list entries, including those covering control systems for submersible vehicles, directed energy weapons and epitaxy-covered substrates for semiconductor manufacturing.

Furthermore, participating States shared experiences in national export control implementation, including with respect to licensing and enforcement practices, maintained informal technical contacts with the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Nuclear Suppliers Group on control list issues, and reviewed the progress of current membership applications.

On 1 January 2025, Japan becomes the Chair of the Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary, Australia becomes the Chair of the General Working Group and the Kingdom of the Netherlands becomes the Chair of the Experts Group. Canada would continue to serve as Chair of the Licensing and Enforcement Officers Meeting.

The Wassenaar Arrangement planned to hold its next regular Plenary meeting in Vienna in December 2025.

Transparency in conventional arms and military expenditures

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

Within the framework of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Member States continued to report their imports and exports of conventional weapons in seven categories: battle tanks; armoured combat vehicles; large-calibre artillery systems; combat aircraft and uncrewed combat aerial vehicles; attack helicopters and rotary-wing uncrewed combat aerial vehicles; warships; and missiles and missile launchers. States also submitted information on their imports and exports of small arms and light weapons under the "seven plus one" option, as recommended by the 2019 Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. States were requested to provide background information on national arms transfer policies, as well as additional data on military holdings and procurement through national production.

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to publish reports submitted by States in the Register's dedicated database (www.unroca.org). The "Transparency in the global reported arms trade" platform features information dating back to 1992.

In May, the Office partnered with UNIDIR to hold two virtual training [workshops](#) on preparing submissions for the Register. Intended for national points of contact and staff from permanent missions of Member States, the workshops helped to raise awareness about the importance of transparency in armaments, while building relevant States' reporting capacity. More than 50 government representatives attended the workshops.

The Office also held periodic meetings with the informal group of friends of the Register, a mechanism created upon the recommendation of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts

on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development ([A/77/126](#)). The informal group was established to support the Secretariat and Member States in implementing the other recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts, as well as in revitalizing the Register.

Group of Governmental Experts

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/69](#) on “Transparency in armaments”, the first session of the [2024–2025 Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development](#) convened in New York from 9 to 13 December, chaired by Jimena Schiaffino (Argentina).

The Group, which composed of 19 Experts,^{[\[18\]](#)} was scheduled to meet again in February and May 2025.

Annual reporting to the Register

In 2024, 69 Member States (36 per cent) submitted reports on their transfers of conventional arms in the previous calendar year. Reports submitted by the deadline were added to the relevant report of the Secretary-General ([A/79/216](#)), as well as reflected in the aforementioned [electronic database](#). Notably, participation in the Register in 2022–2024 reflected an increase from the prior three years, owing partly to the information-sharing arrangement between the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, by which States parties to the Treaty can share their annual reports with the Office to be considered a submission to the Register.

Of the 69 reports received in 2024, 8 were “nil” reports, indicating that the reporting Member States had not undertaken any transfers of arms in the Register’s seven categories in 2023. Among the other 61 reports, 35 contained information on exports and 32 contained information on imports of major conventional arms. In addition, 15 States provided background information on military holdings, 5 States submitted details on procurement of weapons through national production, and 56 States shared information concerning international transfers of small arms and light weapons.

Regarding participation in the Register, a long-standing pattern of regional variation continued in 2024. The number of reports submitted by African States increased from 7 in 2023 to 8 in 2024, while the figure for Asia and the Pacific decreased from 9 to 7. The number of reporting Eastern European States decreased from 17 to 15, and the submissions of Latin America and the Caribbean decreased from 15 to 13. Meanwhile, Western European and other States submitted 26 reports, one fewer than in 2023.

Trends in global arms transfers

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which maintains a database on the global arms trade, the volume of [international transfers of major arms](#) in 2020–2024 was 0.6 per cent lower than in 2015–2019, while imports of major arms to Europe increased by 155 per cent between the 2015–2019 and 2020–2024 periods. The five largest exporters during the most recent five-year period were the United States, France, the Russian Federation, China and Germany. The five largest importers of major arms were Ukraine, India, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures

United Nations Report on Military Expenditures

The General Assembly created the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures in 1980 to enhance transparency in military spending. States are requested to provide information on their annual military expenditures using templates developed by the United Nations Secretariat. Member States that do not allocate any funds to military activities may submit a nil report. Those that do maintain armed forces are encouraged to submit either a standardized or simplified form, both of which disaggregate spending by service branches and function. Member States wishing to report only total military expenditure may complete the “single figure” form, which was adopted following a recommendation by the 2017 Group of Governmental Experts.

In April 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with SIPRI, held virtual training workshops for national points of contact and staff from permanent missions of Member States on preparing submissions to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures. The training workshops contributed to raising awareness of the importance of transparency in military expenditures and building the reporting capacity of States. The workshops were designed on the basis of a practical guide on how to leverage public national budgets to prepare national reports for submission to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures instrument, published by SIPRI and funded through UNSCAR. More than 60 government representatives attended the training workshops.

The reports submitted by Member States are made available by the Office for Disarmament Affairs through a report of the Secretary-General and via an interactive, online database (<https://milex-reporting.unoda.org>).

Annual reporting on military expenditures

In 2024, 57 States or 30 per cent of all Member States submitted information to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, compared with 64 received in 2023. Of the reports submitted in 2024, 4 were nil forms and 4 provided a single figure for military expenditures. The majority of reporting States (26) used the simplified form, with the remaining 23 reports based on the standardized form.

The participation rate continued to vary by region. The number of reports submitted by African States decreased from 1 in 2023 to 0 in 2024. Participation among Asian-Pacific States decreased from 11 submissions in 2023 to 10 in 2024. The number of reports submitted by Eastern European States in 2024 decreased to 17 reports, from 18 reports in 2023. Of the States in Latin America and the Caribbean, 9 provided information in 2024, compared with 13 in 2023. Submissions among Western European and other States remained steady, with 21 reports submitted in both 2023 and 2024.

Trends in global military spending

According to data published by SIPRI, [global military spending rose to \\$2.7 trillion in 2024](#), a record amount for the tenth year in a row. This represented a real-term increase of 9.4 per cent compared with the previous year and an increase of 37 per cent over the previous decade. The top military spenders in 2024 were the United States, China, the Russian Federation, Germany and India. Together, those States accounted for 60 per cent of total military expenditures.

Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms

Military confidence-building measures are planned procedures involving the national defence organizations of States that aim to prevent hostilities, avert escalation, reduce military tension, and ultimately build mutual trust and strong and secure relations between countries. As such, military confidence-building measures continue to be recognized as an essential tool for preventing and resolving conflict.

In accordance with the General Assembly's biennial resolution entitled "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms" ([79/59](#)), the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to engage with interested Member States and regional organizations to develop and advance military confidence-building measures, as well as strengthening understanding of the topic. The Office also maintained its online repository of military confidence-building measures, providing a list of the most tested and trusted measures in the areas of communication and coordination, observation and verification, military constraint, training and education, and cooperation and integration.

In the context of action 23 of the Secretary-General's [Agenda for Disarmament](#), the Office for Disarmament Affairs sustained its engagement with regional organizations to equip those entities and their member States with skills and expertise to enhance their understanding and generate momentum around transparency and confidence-building measures within their respective regions.

For example, the Office co-organized a workshop with the Organization of American States (OAS) secretariat on "[Promoting military confidence-building measures in the OAS region](#)",^[19] developed in collaboration with the Inter-American Defense Board and held from 31 January to 1 February at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C. The hybrid event attracted 160 in-person and remote participants, including senior civilian and military officials from all OAS member States and several permanent observer States. The activity enabled regional and subregional organizations to further develop their understanding of the benefits of integrating military confidence-building measures into ongoing activities, while identifying concrete opportunities to build trust on military matters through regional dialogue.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects ([Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons](#)) entered into force in 1983 with the aim of banning or restricting for humanitarian reasons the use of weapons considered to be indiscriminate or to cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering. By allowing the negotiation of further protocols, the Convention provides unique flexibility to address new weapon technologies or developments in armed conflict.

In 2024, Singapore became the 127th High Contracting Party to the Convention and its Protocols I and III, having acceded to them the previous year. Trinidad and Tobago acceded to the Convention and all of its Protocols in 2024. It would become a High Contracting Party in 2025, six months after the date of its accession.

Reporting remained steady in 2024, with High Contracting Parties submitting 55 annual compliance reports, the same number as in 2023.

The Convention's office holders and the Office for Disarmament Affairs strengthened their universalization and outreach efforts throughout 2024, organizing well-attended workshops for non-High Contracting Parties and other events on issues related to the Convention.

2024 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

The [2024 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties](#) took place in Geneva from 13 to 15 November, chaired by Yuri Sterk (Bulgaria). The Meeting drew participants from 92 High Contracting Parties and two observer States. Also taking part in its work were one United Nations entity, three international organizations and 10 non-governmental organizations and other entities (for the list of participants, see [CCW/MSP/2024/INF.1](#)). The Meeting concluded with the adoption of a final report by consensus ([CCW/MSP/2024/7](#)).

The Meeting of the High Contracting Parties was not able to confirm its rules of procedure following objections raised by one High Contracting Party over the modalities for observer participation. Following extensive informal consultations, the Meeting ultimately decided to proceed in an informal format, with delegations delivering general statements and exchanging views on various issues related to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.

In its final report, the Meeting recommended that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the elected Chairperson of the 2025 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties work towards achieving the goal of universality of the Convention and its Protocols; reiterated the call for all High Contracting Parties to submit national compliance reports in accordance with the decision taken at the sixth Review Conference; urged all High Contracting Parties to honour their financial obligations under the Convention; and reiterated that the Implementation Support Unit is an essential element for the Convention's effective implementation and operational continuity.

The Meeting decided to nominate a representative of the Non-Aligned Movement as Chair of the 2025 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention.

Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

The [Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems](#) met in Geneva for 10 days in 2024, in accordance with the decision taken by the 2023 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons ([CCW/MSP/2023/7](#), para. 24(c)). Robert in den Bosch (Kingdom of the Netherlands) chaired the Group's meetings in 2024.

In accordance with its mandate and agenda ([CCW/GGE.1/2024/1/Rev.1](#)), the Group commenced its work to consider and formulate, by consensus, a set of elements of an instrument, without prejudging its nature, and other possible measures to address emerging

technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems. As part of that work, it considered various oral and written proposals structured around the following topics suggested by the Chair to streamline discussions: characterizations and definitions; application of international humanitarian law, including the relation of international humanitarian law with the concept of human control, judgment and/or involvement; and risk mitigation and confidence-building.

On the basis of those exchanges, the Group then commenced its consideration of a rolling text proposed by the Chair, which contained draft elements on the following: (a) a working characterization of lethal autonomous weapons systems for the purpose of the work of the Group; (b) application of international humanitarian law to lethal autonomous weapons systems; (c) prohibitions and restrictions; (d) other measures to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law; and (e) accountability.

The Group did not adopt a final report with the expectation that it would continue to consider the rolling text in 2025, in line with its mandate to submit a report to the seventh Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, scheduled to take place in 2026, and to complete its work as soon as possible, preferably before the end of 2025 ([CCW/MSP/2023/7](#), para. 20).

Amended Protocol II

The Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-traps and Other Devices, as amended on 3 May 1996, also known as [Amended Protocol II](#), was designed to limit indiscriminate harm from such weapons by requiring all feasible precautions by parties to protect civilians from their use. At the end of 2024, the Protocol had 107 High Contracting Parties.

Group of Experts

On 3 and 4 September, the Amended Protocol II [Group of Experts](#) met in preparation for the twenty-sixth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II. Building on its work on the matter since 2009, the Group, under the overall responsibility of the Coordinators, France and Peru, held discussions on improvised explosive devices, including a general exchange of views and thematic panel discussions on new types of improvised explosive devices, methods of clearance, risk education and other methods to protect civilians, updates on relevant developments in other forums addressing the threat posed by improvised devices, and national and regional responses. As the Coordinators, France and Peru issued a report on the meeting following its conclusion ([CCW/AP.II/CONF.26/2](#)).

During the discussions, delegations expressed deep concern about the proliferation of and serious threat posed by improvised explosive devices, highlighting their increasing use by non-State actors and criminal organizations. Participants emphasized the devastating humanitarian consequences of improvised explosive devices, particularly in urban and densely populated areas, and their far-reaching impacts on security, political stability and socioeconomic development. Many delegations reiterated the importance of sustained international and regional cooperation to address these threats comprehensively.

Experts highlighted key strategies for combating improvised explosive devices, including the development of multi-stakeholder approaches and the promotion of international cooperation and knowledge-sharing. Specific measures welcomed by participants included (a) convening international seminars and workshops on counter-terrorism and improvised explosive device mitigation, such as those focused on the latest technological advancements like drone-enabled improvised explosive devices; (b) strengthening regional partnerships and providing specialized training for armed forces, law enforcement and improvised explosive device experts; (c) collaborating with civil society and international organizations to enhance capacity-building and victim assistance efforts; and (d) supporting international demining initiatives, including innovative methods like animal detection systems (e.g. trained rats and dogs) and artificial intelligence-driven technologies for urban clearance.

The discussions also underscored the importance of risk education, particularly for vulnerable populations such as women and children, and the use of digital tools to complement traditional education methods. They focused on the growing use of drones for improvised explosive device deployment and the necessity of coordinated global actions, such as those recommended in the 2024 report of the Secretary-General ([A/79/211](#), paras. 82–92).

Twenty-sixth Annual Conference

On 12 November, Tsholofelo Tsheole (South Africa) presided over the [twenty-sixth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II](#). Sixty-eight of 107 High Contracting Parties to the Protocol participated in the Conference, along with eight High Contracting Parties to the Convention. Other participants included the Mine Action Service of the United Nations, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (for the list of participants, see [CCW/AP.II/CONF.26/INF.1](#)).

The Annual Conference could not commence its substantive work due to disagreement over the participation of observers. Given that no consensus could be found on the confirmation of the rules of procedure, the Conference concluded with the adoption of a procedural final document ([CCW/AP.II/CONF.26/5](#)), ensuring the continuity of the work under the Protocol in

2025. The Conference decided that the Group of Experts would continue in 2025 to convene its sessions for a duration of two days. The Annual Conference also decided to nominate Carlos Mario Foradori (Argentina) as President-designate of the twenty-seventh Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties, scheduled for 2025.

Protocol V

The Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War ([Protocol V](#)) to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons was adopted in 2003 to prevent and minimize the humanitarian impact of unexploded ordnance and abandoned explosive weapons, including through provisions on clearing and destroying explosive remnants of war, protecting civilians, recording the use of explosive ordnance and providing international cooperation and assistance. Following the accession of the United Kingdom, the Protocol had 98 High Contracting Parties at the end of 2024.

Meeting of Experts

In preparation for the eighteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, a [Meeting of Experts](#) on the Protocol took place on 2 September. The discussions were chaired by the President-designate of the eighteenth Annual Conference, Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa (Iraq). The Coordinator on Clearance and Technical Assistance, Hannah Abubakar (Philippines), and the Coordinator on Victim Assistance, Andreas Bilgeri (Austria), moderated thematic discussions on their respective topics. The Coordinators issued a report on the discussions following the meeting ([CCW/PV/CONF/2024/2](#)).

During the first thematic discussion, on victim assistance, delegations heard from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Fondation suisse de déminage, Humanity and Inclusion, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The panel highlighted the critical role of physical rehabilitation services in supporting victims of explosive remnants of war. Furthermore, experts emphasized that explosive remnants of war continue to threaten lives and affect socioeconomic conditions long after hostilities cease.

In the second thematic discussion, focusing on clearance of explosive remnants of war and technical assistance, representatives from the Swiss Drone and Robotics Centre, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, and Australia emphasized the importance of technology in facilitating land-release processes. All of them stressed that demining processes must be inclusive in order to build trust with local communities, further underscoring the need to train mixed-gender demining teams.

Throughout the meeting, delegations underscored significant challenges in clearing explosive remnants of war, including large quantities of unexploded ordnance, the lack of

precise information about their locations — especially in urban areas — and difficulties in deploying clearance equipment across varied terrains. States emphasized the importance of adopting innovative methods, such as drones and artificial intelligence, to enhance clearance operations and address obstacles effectively. Delegations also highlighted the critical need for sharing best practices and advancing international cooperation, particularly within the framework of Protocol V, to improve clearance procedures and mitigate the socioeconomic and humanitarian impacts of explosive remnants of war.

Eighteenth Annual Conference

On 11 November, Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa (Iraq) presided over the [eighteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V](#). Sixty-three of the 97 High Contracting Parties to Protocol V^[20] participated in the Conference, along with nine additional High Contracting Parties to the Convention and one observer State. Other participants included the Mine Action Service of the United Nations (on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action), the European Union, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and the International Committee of the Red Cross (for the list of participants, see [CCW/PV/CONF/2024/INF.1](#)).

The Annual Conference could not commence its substantive discussions due to procedural disagreement on the participation of observers. Nonetheless, the Conference adopted a final document ([CCW/PV/CONF/2024/5](#)), deciding that the 2025 Meeting of Experts would have a duration of one day and should continue to focus on victim assistance and clearance of explosive remnants of war and technical assistance. It nominated a representative of the Western European and Others Group as President-designate of the nineteenth Annual Conference, scheduled for 2025.

Work of the Implementation Support Unit

The Implementation Support Unit was fully staffed in 2024. The Unit's full staffing, effectiveness and functionality continued to rely on sustainable, timely and predictable receipt of funds.

During the year, the Unit provided substantive and logistical preparations for the eighteenth Annual Conference of Protocol V, the twenty-sixth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II and the 2024 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties. During those meetings, it advised the office holders on substantive and procedural matters and supported them in fulfilling their duties, including the preparation of the final documents. The Unit supported and facilitated informal consultations, negotiations and bilateral exchanges, in addition to providing technical, logistical and administrative support to the three

intergovernmental meetings. Its work for the two meetings of experts included preparing and circulating documents; identifying panellists; and briefing office holders and coordinators.

The Unit assisted the office holders in communicating with High Contracting Parties on national annual reporting responsibilities, including by providing substantive background information, analysis and briefings, as well as preparing letters to permanent missions. It promoted the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols, including through outreach to non-High Contracting Parties, often in collaboration with the office holders.

The Implementation Support Unit continued to receive and process national implementation reports submitted annually by High Contracting Parties.^[21] When the High Contracting Party agreed, the Unit made the reports available online. The Unit also organized a series of reporting workshops for national points of contact and other experts working on reporting matters at capitals and permanent missions.

The Unit continued to play an important role in administering the Convention's Sponsorship Programme. It worked closely with the Steering Committee to designate a coordinator, launch a call for applications and select awardees. In addition, it worked with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to coordinate with sponsored delegates.

International cooperation in support of the Convention

The Geneva branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs conducted numerous activities in 2024 under the two-year project pursuant to Council of the European Union decision [2021/1694](#) supporting the universalization, implementation and strengthening of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Its work included improving the quality and quantity of national reports, facilitating discussions on underexplored, emerging and cross-cutting issues, organizing regional universalization workshops, and developing and updating educational and outreach materials.

During the year, the Office for Disarmament Affairs published an [introduction to the Convention and its Protocols](#), aimed at improving understanding among States not yet parties to the instruments; a "ratification kit" for [becoming a High Contracting Party to the Convention](#); and an updated [brochure](#) containing essential information about the Convention and its meetings. The Office also developed an interactive e-learning course on the Convention and its Protocols and a series of [information notes](#) to support public information, awareness-raising and outreach efforts.

To assist States in fulfilling their reporting obligations under the Convention, the Office prepared a [guide to reporting on Convention compliance](#), an [Amended Protocol II guide to reporting](#), and a [guide to national reporting under Protocol V](#), including French and Spanish

translations. The Office also compiled a comprehensive [list of national points of contact](#) to strengthen information-sharing and contribute towards the Convention's implementation.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs coordinated the publication of two studies: *The Regulation of Incendiary Weapons under International Humanitarian Law* and *Protection of the Environment in the Context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols*.

It convened three regional workshops — two in Geneva and one in Lomé — to discuss the Convention's universalization, as well as regional concerns related to the weapon systems it covers.

In addition, the Office developed and published a series of [explainer videos](#) to help to enhance understanding of the Convention among High Contracting Parties, States not parties and the general public.

Cluster munitions

The [Convention on Cluster Munitions](#) entered into force in 2010, prohibiting the use, development, production, transfer or stockpiling of cluster munitions under any circumstances. It also created a framework for clearing contaminated areas and destroying stockpiles, as well as providing risk reduction education in affected communities.

In 2024, Lithuania notified the Secretary-General that it would withdraw from the Convention the following year, in accordance with article 20.^[22] At the end of 2024, the total number of States parties remained at 112.

Twelfth Meeting of States Parties

The [twelfth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions](#) took place from 10 to 13 September 2024 in Geneva, pursuant to the decision of the second Review Conference ([CCM/CONF/2021/6](#), para. 84). Francisca Elizabeth Méndez Escobar (Mexico) presided over the Meeting, with Iraq, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and the United Kingdom elected as Vice-Presidents. The participants comprised 70 States parties, four States signatories and 13 observers, while the Office for Disarmament Affairs served as secretariat (for the list of participants, see [CCM/MSP/2024/INF.1](#)). The Meeting concluded by issuing a final report ([CCM/MSP/2024/11](#)).

On its [opening day](#), the Meeting heard video messages from the Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights of Mexico, Joel Antonio Hernández García, and the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Gilles Carbonnier. The High

Representative for Disarmament Affairs delivered two recorded statements, one of them on behalf of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Department of Peace Operations and UNICEF, in addition to the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The opening ceremony also included remarks by Julien Thoeni (Switzerland), Habbouba Aoun^[23] on behalf of the Cluster Munition Coalition and a representative of cluster munition victims, Raed Mokaed. The Meeting also heard from the winner of a youth multimedia contest entitled "[Youth for humanitarian disarmament: advancing the goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions](#)", organized by the Mexican presidency with support from the European Union, the Implementation Support Unit and the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The Meeting viewed the winning [video project](#) as part of the opening ceremony.

As reflected in its final report, the Meeting reaffirmed States parties' determination to end the unacceptable harm caused by cluster munitions and underscored their obligation to never under any circumstances use, develop, produce cluster munitions, or otherwise to acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer them. In that connection, the Meeting expressed grave concern about the significant increase in civilian casualties and the humanitarian impact resulting from the repeated and well-documented use of cluster munitions since the second Review Conference, in particular the use of cluster munitions in Ukraine. In keeping with the Lausanne Action Plan, the Meeting underlined that cluster munitions kill, injure and destroy indiscriminately, causing unacceptable harm, due to their wide area impact and the high level of remaining unexploded ordnance.

Emphasizing that the humanitarian harm of cluster munitions ultimately outweighs any perceived military utility, the Meeting expressed deep regret over Lithuania's decision to denounce the Convention, pursuant to article 20. It urged Lithuania to reconsider its decision, noting it had been a responsible State party to the Convention since 1 September 2011. Furthermore, the Meeting expressed concern that this first-ever case of a State withdrawing from a multilateral treaty prohibiting a whole class of weapons creates a precedent that would have long-term repercussions for the integrity of the Convention itself and for the sanctity of international humanitarian law.

Taking stock of progress made in the Convention's implementation, States parties welcomed the [progress report](#) on the implementation of the [Lausanne Action Plan](#), covering the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([CCM/MSP/2024/7](#)). In that connection, they warmly welcomed the destruction of the cluster munitions stockpiles of South Africa and Peru, marking the completion by all States parties of their article 3 obligations. In the same context, the Meeting welcomed Belgium's announcement of the neutralization of all of its cluster munitions retained for training purposes. Delegations emphasized that retaining explosive submunitions for the development of and training in cluster munition and explosive submunition detection,

clearance or destruction techniques, or for the development of cluster munition countermeasures, should be maintained at the strict necessary minimum.

The Meeting considered the requests submitted by Chad, Germany and the Lao People's Democratic Republic for extensions of their respective deadlines for completing the clearance and destruction of cluster munition remnants in accordance with article 4.1 of the Convention. It agreed to extend the deadline of Chad for two years, until 1 October 2026, the deadline of Germany for five years, until 1 August 2030, and the deadline of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for five years, until 1 August 2030.

The Meeting decided to appoint a dedicated coordinator for risk education within the Convention's machinery, as proposed by the Coordinators of the Working Group on Clearance and Risk Reduction Education, Norway and Italy, in their working paper on explosive ordnance risk education in the Convention on Cluster Munitions ([CCM/MSP/2024/WP.1](#)). It further decided to introduce a separate agenda item on risk education, separated from clearance, in the agendas of future meetings of States parties to the Convention.

States parties acknowledged the efforts of Austria and Panama as Coordinators on Victim Assistance, including their ongoing work on an integrated approach to victim assistance. The Meeting also noted the submission of a working paper submitted by Belgium and Germany ([CCM/MSP/2024/WP.2](#)) in their role as focal points of the Convention to provide advice on gender mainstreaming and ensuring that matters related to gender and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities are considered in the implementation of the Lausanne Action Plan.

Taking note of the substantive details of the 2023 annual report, and the proposal made by the President's proposal to debate recent challenges to the norm established by the Convention, particularly Lithuania's notification of withdrawal, the Meeting thanked the Convention's Implementation Support Unit for convening a stakeholder dialogue on the implications of such challenges for wider humanitarian disarmament, peace and development goals. It expressed appreciation to the President for presenting the outcome of that dialogue, as contained in [CCM/MSP/2024/WP.3](#).

States parties expressed deep concern about the continuing unstable financial situation resulting from late payments and arrears of assessed contributions, which had forced them to shorten the Meeting's duration and affected multilingualism. They underlined the importance of ensuring compliance by all States parties with their article 14 obligations.

On its last day, the Meeting confirmed that Carlos D. Sorreta (Philippines) would be the President of the thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, to be held in Geneva from 16 to 19 September 2025.

Anti-personnel mines

Anti-personnel mines are delayed-action, victim-activated weapons that kill and maim indiscriminately many years after the end of armed conflicts. Most of the victims of anti-personnel landmines are civilians. A complete prohibition on this category of weapons took effect with the entry into force, on 1 March 1999, of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction ([Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention](#) or Ottawa Convention).

The Convention also provides for positive obligations for the States parties, namely to destroy existing mine stocks and to clear all mine-contaminated areas within established deadlines; to promote cooperation and assistance for achieving its goals; and to address the needs of survivors, their families and affected communities within the Convention's strong victim assistance framework. At the end of 2024, the Convention had 164 States parties.

Intersessional working programme

The Convention's intersessional activities in 2024 included two preparatory meetings, held on [20 June](#) and [18 September](#), as well as work by the Convention's four committees.^[24] The President of the fifth Review Conference, Ly Thuch (Cambodia), convened the Convention's ninth [Pledging Conference](#) in Geneva on 1 March, seeking to bolster the financial stability of the Convention's Implementation Support Unit and the implementation of its 2024 workplan, as well as securing funds for the Convention's Sponsorship Programme and the fifth Review Conference.

During the two preparatory meetings, States parties considered and exchanged views on the documents to be adopted at the fifth Review Conference, including the draft Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 2019–2024 ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.2/5](#)), the draft Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025–2029 ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.2/2](#)), the draft Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration on a Mine-Free World ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.2/3](#)) and the draft Recommendations on a Meeting Programme and Machinery 2025–2029 ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.2/4](#)). The meetings also considered and approved the fifth Review Conference's provisional agenda ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.1/2](#)) and provisional programme of work ([APLC/CONF/2024/PM.1/3](#) and [Corr.1](#)). They further took note of the status of preparation of the Implementation Support Unit's workplan and budget 2025–2029. Informal thematic discussions took place on 1 March as a complement to the formal preparations for the Review Conference, helping to inform the development of its outcome documents.

Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention

Pursuant to article 11 of the Convention and the relevant decisions of its fourth Review Conference ([APLC/CONF/2019/5](#)) and twenty-first Meeting of the States Parties ([APLC/MSP.21/2023/18](#) and [Add.1](#)), the [fifth Review Conference](#) of the States parties took place from 25 to 29 November in Siem Reap. Ly Thuch (Cambodia) presided over the Conference with support from eight Vice-Presidents: Algeria, Colombia, Japan, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden and Zambia. It adopted a final document at the conclusion of its deliberations ([APLC/CONF/2024/15](#) and [Add.1](#)).

Pursuant to established practice, the Review Conference commenced with a high-level opening ceremony that featured the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet; the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, who conveyed a message from the Secretary-General; the Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Gilles Carbonnier; and representatives of landmine survivors and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Adopting the Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration on a Mine-Free World ([APLC/CONF/2024/15/Add.1](#)), the Conference reaffirmed the determination of States parties to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, including mines of an improvised nature, and their commitment to strengthen their efforts to achieve the common goal of a mine-free world, and the full and equal inclusion of mine victims.

Aiming to support enhanced implementation and universalization of the Convention, the Review Conference adopted the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025–2029 ([APLC/CONF/2024/15/Add.1](#)), while condemning the use of anti-personnel mines by any actor.

Furthermore, States parties took stock of the current status of the Convention's implementation, the progress made since the fourth Review Conference and the remaining challenges to reach a mine-free world. Accordingly, the Conference adopted the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 2019–2024 ([APLC/CONF/2024/15/Add.1](#)).

In discussing the general status and operation of the Convention, the Review Conference focused on requests by States parties to extend their respective deadlines for destroying mines in mined areas under article 5. Following the established procedure, it granted the extension requests of Afghanistan, Chad, Cyprus, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, the Niger, Peru and Serbia. Furthermore, in the context of considering the Convention's general status and operation, the Conference invited the President of the twenty-second Meeting of the States Parties to establish a working group to support the implementation of action 44 of the Siem

Reap-Angkor Action Plan.^[25] Taking note of the updates provided by Greece and Ukraine, which are in non-compliance with their article 4 obligations to complete the destruction of their stockpiles, the Conference appealed to those States to intensify their efforts. As no additional States had joined the Convention since 2017, the Conference called upon all States that had not yet done so to accede to or ratify the Convention as soon as possible. It also took note of the activities of the Universalization Coordination Group established by the President of the twentieth Meeting of the States Parties.

With respect to the operation of the Convention, the Review Conference took note of the proposals regarding the Convention's meeting programme and machinery 2025–2029 (APLC/CONF/2024/3). It decided on the following actions: (a) continue to hold meetings of the States parties annually for up to five days leading to the sixth Review Conference in 2029; (b) continue to include the financial status of assessed contributions as an agenda item of those meetings; (c) continue to include a thematic discussion of interest to the States parties and of relevance to the implementation of the Convention and the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan (e.g. addressing improvised anti-personnel mines, gender and the diverse needs of mine-affected communities and environmental matters); and (d) include a sub-agenda item under article 5 on mine risk education and risk reduction.

The Review Conference decided on several additional actions concerning the Convention's intersessional meetings:

- Continue to hold intersessional meetings annually in Geneva for a minimum of three days of plenary meeting.
- In order to allow ample time for discussions between the Convention's machinery and the representatives of States parties, States not parties and other stakeholders on matters related to the implementation of the Convention and the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan, consider adding one day annually to dedicate to bilateral meetings or to discuss thematic matters related to implementation.
- The President will consider and decide on these options in consultation with the Coordinating Committee.
- Include a sub-agenda item under article 5 on mine risk education and risk reduction.

On the Convention's machinery, the decisions of the Review Conference included the following.^[26]

- The mandate of the President to "Propose, if deemed necessary, one or more members of the Coordinating Committee to provide support on any issue of the President's mandate, which may require particular attention, including on financial matters" should highlight support for universalization efforts of the President.

- Appoint a focal point on mine risk education and risk reduction under the Committee on Article 5 Implementation.

The Conference welcomed the interest expressed by States parties in serving as new members of the Committees and decided on the following membership:

- Committee on Victim Assistance: Burkina Faso and the Kingdom of the Netherlands until the end of the twenty-second Meeting of the States Parties, and Austria and Sri Lanka from the fifth Review Conference to the end of the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties.
- Committee on Article 5 Implementation: Thailand and the United Kingdom until the end of the twenty-second Meeting of the States Parties, and Algeria and Norway from the fifth Review Conference to the end of the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties.
- Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance: Denmark and Türkiye until the end of the twenty-second Meeting of the States Parties, and Cameroon and Switzerland from the fifth Review Conference to the end of the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties.
- Committee on Cooperative Compliance: Germany and Peru until the end of the twenty-second Meeting of the States Parties, and Belgium and Cambodia from the fifth Review Conference to the end of the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties.

On its last day, the Review Conference decided to convene the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties in November and December 2026 and to elect Eunice Tembo Luambia (Zambia) as its President. The Conference further adopted the estimated costs of the twenty-third Meeting of the States Parties, as contained in [APLC/CONF/2024/14](#).

Footnotes

[1] The Arms Trade Treaty entered into force on 24 December 2014.

[2] Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation; Working Group on Transparency and Reporting; and Working Group on Treaty Universalization.

[3] The General Assembly adopted the International Tracing Instrument by resolution [60/71](#) of 8 December 2005.

[4] The Committee elected Vice-Chairs from Argentina, Australia, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Indonesia, Latvia, Nepal, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, South Africa and Switzerland.

[5] Participants comprised 23 States, as well as civil society organizations and relevant United Nations entities: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam; Ban Landmines Campaign Nepal, Mines Advisory Group, Nepal Center for Security Governance, Nonviolence International Southeast Asia, Small Arms Survey, Sustainable Peace and Development Organization, Women for Peace and Democracy Nepal, and the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe.

[6] Participants comprised 23 States, as well as international, regional and subregional organizations: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo; African Union, Economic Community of West African States, West African Economic and Monetary Union, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Lake Chad Basin Commission, Economic Community of Central African States, Mines Advisory Group, WAANSA TOGO, European Union, and UNIDIR.

[7] Participants comprised 21 States, as well as United Nations entities and civil society organizations: Botswana, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe; Office for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, UNREC and UNIDIR, the African Union Commission, East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Mines Advisory Group (MAG).

[8] Participants comprised 26 States and the following regional organizations: Organization of American States (OAS), Central American Integration System (SICA) and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS).

[9] Additional information on the preparatory meetings for [Africa](#), [Latin America and the Caribbean](#), and [Asia and the Pacific](#) is available online.

[10] For the written statements, see *Journal of the United Nations*, "United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects" ([Part 1](#), [art 2](#), [part 3](#), [part 4](#) and [part 5](#)), 18–20 June 2024. For all statements as delivered, see United Nations Web TV, "Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons — Fourth Review Conference (RevCon4)" ([part 1](#), [part 2](#), [part 3](#), [part 4](#) and [part 5](#)), video, 18–20 June 2024.

[11] 22 March (S/PV.9585), 20 May (S/PV.9629), 14 June (S/PV.9658), 25 July (S/PV.9693), 30 August (S/PV.9716), 13 September (S/PV.9724), 31 October (S/PV.9769) and 20 December (S/PV.9827).

[12] S/2024/79 (January), S/2024/320 (April), S/2024/554 (July) and S/2024/752 (October).

[13] The data featured in a [presentation](#) by the Office for Disarmament Affairs on progress, trends, challenges and opportunities related to implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, delivered during the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action, in June.

[14] Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Department of Global Communications; Department of Peace Operations; Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; International Civil Aviation Organization; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; Office for Disarmament Affairs; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide; Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; Office of the Special Adviser on Africa; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Human Settlements Programme; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research; Mine Action Service; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Office of Counter-Terrorism; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; World Health Organization.

[15] The session featured an exhibition on 3D printing of firearms, serving to highlight emerging technological challenges.

[16] The SaferGuard quick-response mechanism was established to facilitate the rapid deployment of ammunition experts to assist States, upon request, in the urgent management of ammunition stockpiles, including in the aftermath of unintended explosions of ammunition.

[17] Although most recorded deaths are of civilians, determining the victims' status is not always possible, especially during intense hostilities. Between 2015 and 2022, the proportion of conflict-related deaths with undetermined status fluctuated between 4 and 8 per cent. However, this figure surged to nearly 30 per cent in 2023 and 2024.

[18] The participating experts were from the following countries: Argentina, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, Japan, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation, Serbia, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, and United States.

[19]The Republic of Korea supported the workshop in its capacity as “champion” of confidence-building measures within the framework of action 23 of the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament.

[20]The United Kingdom officially became a High Contracting Party to Protocol V after the eighteenth Annual Conference.

[21]Pursuant to the decision on compliance of the third Review Conference of the Convention (CCW/CONF.III/11 (Part II) , annex II, para. 5); article 13(4) of Amended Protocol II; and article 10(2)(b) of Protocol V.

[22]See C.N.347.2024.TREATIES-XXVI.6 (depository notification).

[23]Director of the Landmines Resource Center, University of Balamand, Lebanon.

[24]Committee on Article 5 Implementation; Committee on Cooperative Compliance; Committee on Victim Assistance; and Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

[25]Action 44 reads: “States Parties in a position to provide assistance will strengthen efforts to effectively coordinate their support for the effective implementation of Convention obligations by affected States Parties, including in areas of stockpile destruction, mine clearance, risk education and reduction, and victim assistance. As part of this effort, States Parties will explore the feasibility of establishing a voluntary trust fund to support affected States Parties struggling to secure international assistance for their legal and time-bound commitments under Article 5 of the Convention, with a view to reporting on the progress made to the Twenty-Second Meeting of the States Parties and to taking a decision thereon by no later than the Twenty-Third Meeting of the States Parties.”

[26]For further details pertaining to decisions on the Convention’s machinery, see APLC/CONF/2024/15, para. 40.



States have pledged to build and sustain peace and uphold their disarmament obligations and commitments. ... Regional approaches and roadmaps are essential pathways to achieving these goals and require support from the international community and effective cooperation and coordination at all levels.

— [Izumi Nakamitsu](#), High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Developments and trends, 2024

In 2024, despite protracted crises in the Middle East, Haiti, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Ukraine, regional activities to sustain peace and support disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control goals demonstrated effectiveness and resilience. The aims of those initiatives included preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and countering the illicit manufacturing of and trade in conventional arms, particularly small arms, light weapons and their ammunition. The United Nations actively engaged in such efforts with States, regional and subregional organizations, relevant international organizations and civil society, through various means including exchanges and dialogues, capacity-building projects and information campaigns.

Multilateral arms regulations and disarmament agreements on weapons of mass destruction achieved notable advances in 2024 across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was ratified by four States: Indonesia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands. Papua New Guinea ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, while Mozambique, Palau and

Seychelles ratified the [International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism](#). The Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu acceded to the Biological Weapons Convention. In addition, Colombia ratified the [Outer Space Treaty](#); Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates acceded to the [Antarctic Treaty](#); Gambia and Malawi became parties to the [Arms Trade Treaty](#); and Trinidad and Tobago joined the [Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons](#) and its Protocols. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia withdrew from the [Moon Treaty](#).

The Office for Disarmament Affairs, for its part, worked through its three regional centres throughout the year to deepen collaboration with various regional and subregional organizations, both identifying new opportunities and reinforcing existing mechanisms for regional dialogue on security and arms control.



Soledad Urruela, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, speaks in Kingston at the award ceremony of the “Music and Visual Art for Change: Preventing Firearm Violence in Schools” competition.

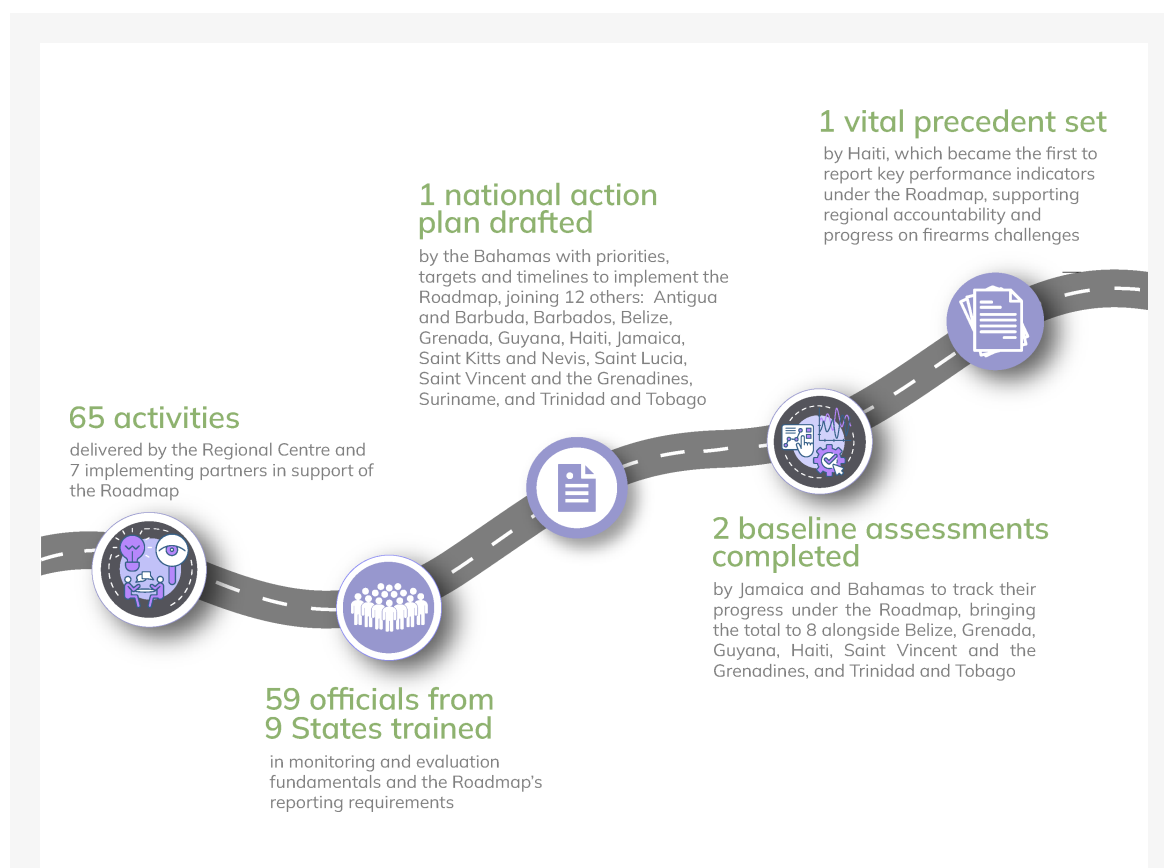
The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, located in Togo, provided targeted support against the widespread proliferation of small arms and light weapons, a trend driven by violent extremism, political instability, porous borders and weak state control. In December, the Regional Centre conducted its first [assessment mission](#) in Burundi in support of the Modular Small-arms- control Implementation Compendium

(MOSAIC). The five-day technical mission supported the Government in preparing a national action plan against illicit firearms proliferation, while also assessing challenges around arms marking and the country's progress in implementing the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Marking a milestone in the African Union's cooperation with the United Nations on small arms control, the Regional Centre supported a [commemoration of Africa](#) Amnesty Month in Bangui in September (for more information on Africa Amnesty Month, see chap. 3). Held in partnership with the African Union Peace and Security Council, the two-day event celebrated the broader annual initiative declared in 2017 to raise awareness about the dangers of illicit small-arms proliferation and to encourage the voluntary surrender of small arms and light weapons illegally held by civilians. The commemoration included the ceremonial destruction of 144 AK-47 rifles in support of the wider effort to reduce the availability of illicit arms. Similar activities in support of Africa Amnesty Month also took place in Djibouti and Rwanda with the Regional Centre's support.

Based in Lima, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean continued leading efforts to advance regional small-arms-control mechanisms, including implementation of the Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 ([Caribbean Firearms Roadmap](#)), and the development of a [similar initiative](#) in Central America. To help advance the Caribbean initiative, the Centre continued to support States in conducting baseline assessments and pursuing implementation. One State — the Bahamas — drafted its national implementation action plan for the Roadmap, bringing to 13 the total number of States to have done so since the Roadmap's adoption in 2020.^[1] In 2024, as Caribbean States placed a specific focus on data collection and reporting under the Roadmap, the Regional Centre offered support in the form of newly launched [guidance](#) on monitoring and evaluation. During the [fourth Annual Meeting of States](#) in November, Caribbean States reviewed progress under the Roadmap, discussed challenges and achievements, and established priorities for the Roadmap's 2025 midterm review.

Figure 4. The Caribbean Firearms Roadmap: 2024 in numbers



The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, based in Nepal, continued bringing together States to discuss issues such as conventional arms control, weapons of mass destruction and emerging technologies. The Centre implemented multiple projects in partnership with the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit to assist Governments in the region with biosafety and biosecurity challenges. In October, with support from China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Centre facilitated a biosecurity discussion among member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in [Shenzhen](#), China. The following month, in collaboration with the Republic of Korea, the Centre held the twenty-third [Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues](#), focusing on the fiftieth anniversary of the Biological Weapons Convention. In December, the Centre and the Implementation Support Unit co-hosted a side event on the margins of the Working Group on the strengthening of the Convention to share outcomes and insights from the previous events with all Member States.

Additionally, all three regional centres supported a new pilot initiative, funded by UNSCAR, aimed at strengthening the disarmament-development nexus in line with the Pact for the Future and the New Agenda for Peace. The centres planned to continue expanding their support to United Nations country teams to help to integrate arms control into common country analyses and country development frameworks.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones

Nuclear-weapon-free zones provide a regional approach to strengthening global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms, while simultaneously fostering peace and security at both the regional and international levels. Such zones derive their legal foundation from the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations on “regional arrangements or agencies” for maintaining international peace and security. The significance of the zones is reaffirmed in article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the NPT), which preserves “the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories”. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons recognizes nuclear-weapon-free zones as measures that enhance global and regional peace and security, strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contribute towards realizing the objective of nuclear disarmament.

In 2024, more than 100 States were parties or signatories to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties — approximately 60 per cent of United Nations Member States. Each of the five regional nuclear-weapon-free zones is underpinned by its respective treaty: (a) the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco, 1969); (b) the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty, 1986); (c) the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty, 1997); (d) the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty, 2009); and (e) the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (2009). The General Assembly also continued to recognize Mongolia's self-declared nuclear-weapon-free status, having reaffirmed that position for the thirteenth time since 1998 through resolution [79/30](#) of 2 December 2024.

The General Assembly adopted two resolutions related to specific zones during its seventy-ninth session: “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty” ([79/15](#)) and “Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia” ([79/24](#)). Additionally, the Assembly adopted a resolution on a “Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects” ([79/241](#)), seeking to update the 1974–1975 study on the subject.

In 2024, the five NPT nuclear-weapon States maintained varying positions on the relevant protocols to each of the five nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. Under those protocols, the nuclear-weapon States commit to respecting the nuclear-weapon-free status of the corresponding regions and undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States parties to the agreements. All five nuclear-weapon States adhered to Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Four of the five States ratified Protocols 1, 2 and 3 to the Rarotonga Treaty; Protocols I and II to the Pelindaba Treaty; and the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (the United States had signed those protocols but not yet ratified them). None of the five nuclear-weapon States had signed the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty by the end of 2024.

The following table presents the status of adherence to the protocols.

Status of ratification of the protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, as at 31 December 2024

Protocol	Status	China	France	Russian Federation	United Kingdom	United States
Additional Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco	Signed Ratified	21 Aug. 1973 2 June 1974	18 July 1973 22 Mar. 1974	18 May 1978 8 Jan. 1979	20 Dec. 1967 11 Dec. 1969	1 Apr. 1968 12 May 1971
Protocol 2 to the Rarotonga Treaty	Signed Ratified	10 Feb. 1987 21 Oct. 1988	25 Mar. 1996 20 Sept. 1996	15 Dec. 1986 21 Apr. 1988	25 Mar. 1996 19 Sept. 1997	25 Mar. 1996 --[a]
Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty	Signed Ratified	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Protocol I to the Pelindaba Treaty	Signed Ratified	11 Apr. 1996 10 Oct. 1997	11 Apr. 1996 20 Sept. 1996	5 Nov. 1996 5 Apr. 2011	11 Apr. 1996 12 Mar. 2001	11 Apr. 1996 --[b]
Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia	Signed Ratified	6 May 2014 17 Aug. 2015	6 May 2014 21 Nov. 2014	6 May 2014 22 Jun. 2015	6 May 2014 30 Jan. 2015	6 May 2014 --[c]

NOTE: The status of signature and ratification of the treaties and protocols is available from the Treaties Database of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. [a] The Protocol was submitted on 2 May 2011 to the United States Senate for its consent to ratification (United States, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Protocols 1, 2, and 3 to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, Signed on Behalf of the United States at Suva on March 25, 1996 (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 2011)). [b] The Protocol was submitted on 2 May 2011 to the United States Senate for its consent to ratification (United States, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Protocols I and II to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, Signed on Behalf of the United States at Cairo, Egypt, on April 11, 1996, Including a Third Protocol Related to the Treaty (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 2011)). [c] The Protocol was submitted on 27 April 2015 to the United States Senate for its consent to ratification (United States, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, Signed at New York on May 6, 2014 (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 2015)).

On 27 and 28 August, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and Kazakhstan co-organized a workshop in Astana on [fostering cooperation and enhancing consultation mechanisms among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones](#). The workshop considered ways to further strengthen cooperation and enhance consultation, coordination and institutional measures. It also identified opportunities and ideas for future nuclear-weapon-free zones, explored pathways for the zones to work with other United Nations entities and organizations, and examined means of strengthening complementarity between the zones and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Furthermore, participants discussed strategies for strengthening security assurances to zone members by accelerating the ratification and implementation of relevant protocols by nuclear-weapon States.

Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)

On 14 February, the [member States](#) of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) issued a communiqué ([Inf.01/2024Rev](#)) commemorating the fifty-seventh anniversary of the [Treaty of Tlatelolco](#). Later in the year, on 26 September, OPANAL released a declaration ([Inf.47/2024Rev2](#)) to mark the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

On 28 November, OPANAL held the [twenty-eighth special session](#) of its General Conference in Mexico City, with related documents and resolutions made publicly available on OPANAL's website.

OPANAL engaged in other international forums throughout the year. In July, it attended the [second session of the Preparatory Committee](#) for the 2026 NPT Review Conference, submitting a working paper on nuclear risk reduction and a [communiqué on the threat of use of nuclear weapons](#). The following month, it presented remarks at the sixty-eighth session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference ([Inf.48/2024](#)).

The OPANAL Secretary-General issued a [statement](#) to the General Assembly, First Committee, during its general debate and participated in an [exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs](#) and other high-level officials.

The Committee adopted a draft resolution introduced by Mexico and Brazil on behalf of OPANAL member States ([A/C.1/79/L.68/Rev.1](#)), calling for a new comprehensive study on

the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The General Assembly subsequently adopted the text as resolution [79/241](#).

Continuing its educational initiatives, OPANAL co-organized the tenth edition of the [summer school on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for diplomats from Latin America and the Caribbean](#), held in Mexico City from 1 to 5 July. Participants from 26 countries attended the event, held with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the Matías Romero Institute and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. Additionally, OPANAL conducted a course on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in [Mexico from 15 to 25 January](#), in [Colombia from 27 to 29 May](#) and in [Guatemala from 12 to 14 August](#).

OPANAL worked throughout the year to strengthen its cooperation with other nuclear-weapon-free zones. On 2 May, the [OPANAL Council and ASEAN member States organized a virtual workshop](#) focused on sharing experiences related to the signing and ratification of the Additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Bangkok Treaty by nuclear-weapon States. OPANAL later participated in the [workshop on fostering cooperation and strengthening consultation mechanisms](#) among existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, held in Astana on 27 and 28 August.

In December, OPANAL took part in [a virtual meeting](#) with the President of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCON). OPANAL also [signed a memorandum of understanding](#) to foster cooperation and enhance information exchange with the States parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia.

Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)

In 2024, the [Bangkok Treaty](#), signed on 15 December 1995, remained the key instrument of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the forty-fourth and forty-fifth ASEAN summits, held in Vientiane on 9 October, the ASEAN Leaders [reiterated](#) their commitment to preserving South-East Asia as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Bangkok Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. They also reaffirmed their commitment to continuously engage the nuclear-weapon States and to intensify ongoing efforts to resolve all outstanding issues in relation to their accession to the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty, in accordance with its objectives and principles. To that end, ASEAN began exploring the possibility of allowing individual nuclear-weapon States, which are willing to sign and ratify the Protocol without reservations and provide prior formal assurance of this commitment in writing, to proceed with the signing. At the twenty-seventh ASEAN-China Summit, convened in Vientiane on 10 October, [Leaders welcomed](#) China's willingness to sign and ratify the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty without reservations.

ASEAN achieved further progress in 2024 under the [Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone \(2023–2027\)](#). Under the Plan, ASEAN continued to actively promote nuclear safety, security and safeguards through the work of its relevant sectoral bodies, including the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy and the ASEAN Nuclear Energy Cooperation Sub-Sector Network. Efforts are currently under way to facilitate [Timor-Leste's accession to the Bangkok Treaty](#), which will further strengthen its implementation and reinforce the region's commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear safety, security and safeguards remained an important area of cooperation between ASEAN and the IAEA. The [Practical Arrangements between ASEAN and the IAEA](#), which aim to promote cooperation in nuclear science, technology and applications, as well as nuclear safety, security and safeguards, were renewed for a five-year period, from 2024 to 2029. Work was also under way to ensure that ASEAN and its sectoral bodies could further benefit from the Practical Arrangements, especially in the areas of capacity-building, education and training, sharing information and best practices.

ASEAN maintained its efforts to enhance the Bangkok Treaty's global profile, having tabled the most recent biennial General Assembly resolution on the Treaty in 2023 (78/39). ASEAN continued to strengthen its cooperation with other nuclear-weapon-free zones, and notably with OPANAL, on the goal of complete disarmament and promotion of international peace and security.

South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty)

The [Rarotonga Treaty](#) established a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific region, contributing to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament at the regional level, while reinforcing the legally binding commitments made under the NPT. The Secretary General of the [Pacific Islands Forum](#),^[2] acting as the depositary, is obligated under the Rarotonga Treaty to report annually to Forum Leaders on matters related to its implementation.

Leadership changes marked the year for the Pacific Islands Forum, with Baron Waqa succeeding Henry Puna as Secretary General of the Forum in May. On 1 March, the outgoing Secretary General delivered [remarks](#) on Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day in the Marshall Islands, underscoring the region's ongoing commitment to addressing nuclear legacy issues.

Regional cooperation on disarmament expanded beyond nuclear matters. On 12 March, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat partnered with the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and supporting organizations to host [a subregional workshop](#) aimed at advancing legislation to implement the Chemical Weapons

Convention. The event brought together relevant experts to exchange experiences, share good practices and identify challenges in developing national implementing legislation.

The region's commitment to nuclear disarmament was further reinforced on 13 March when Papua New Guinea [became the 178th State to ratify](#) the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, reinforcing the Pacific's long-standing commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Nuclear legacy issues remained a priority throughout the year. The [Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific](#) Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues convened its fifth meeting on 15 March, with participants discussing key updates, membership issues and workplan arrangements. The meeting also addressed preparations to conduct a preliminary independent review of nuclear contamination in the Pacific, including at the former nuclear test site at Runit, in the Marshall Islands.

The release of water treated by Japan's Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant remained a key focus of diplomatic engagement between Pacific Island nations and Japan. The tenth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting with Japan, held from 16 to 18 July, adopted a [declaration](#) and a [joint action plan](#) addressing Japan's planned release of ALPS-treated water, among other matters. Pacific Islands Forum members received a briefing on the ALPS issue on the margins of the meeting.

In parallel with those developments, the Treaty's institutional mechanisms continued to evolve. On 12 July, the Consultative Committee mechanism under the Rarotonga Treaty held its second meeting in virtual format, discussing rules of procedure, modernizing and updating the Treaty, and interzonal cooperation.

At the international level, New Zealand delivered a [joint statement](#) on behalf of the States parties to the Rarotonga Treaty on 22 July, at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

During the fifty-third Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, held from 26 to 30 August, Secretary General Baron Waqa submitted his annual report pursuant to the Rarotonga Treaty, addressing numerous issues including the Treaty's operationalization, nuclear legacy concerns and the ALPS issue. In that context, the Leaders [expressed continued support](#) for bilateral, regional and multilateral actions to support the Marshall Islands in its efforts to engage with the United States towards a justified resolution to the consequences of nuclear testing.

On 26 September, Secretary General Baron Waqa delivered [remarks](#) at United Nations Headquarters in New York, marking the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear

Weapons at a high-level plenary meeting held on the margins of the General Assembly's seventy-ninth session.

African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty)

AFCONE continued to strengthen implementation of the [Pelindaba Treaty](#) in 2024, prioritizing outreach, capacity-building and engagement with African States parties across the Treaty's three pillars: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

A key focus for AFCONE was raising awareness about the Pelindaba Treaty's governance framework to facilitate effective implementation. It undertook discussions under its [cooperation agreement](#) with the European Union and Finland's Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority to launch a summer school in 2025 for African government officials and diplomats involved in multilateral affairs.

AFCONE and the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority continued implementing their [Uplifting Nuclear Safeguards in Africa](#) programme, organizing three training courses while strengthening engagement with States parties on reporting under the Treaty. These capacity-building efforts yielded significant results, with reporting under the Treaty increasing more than threefold in 2024 compared with the previous year. The enhanced quality of reporting also had spillover effects, fostering greater cooperation among African States under other multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation arrangements.

At the international level, AFCONE actively participated in key forums throughout the year. During the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference, AFCONE contributed to a [side event](#) on "The importance of expanding nuclear-weapon-free zones and the role of single States in a shifting world order", sharing insights from the African experience. AFCONE also joined a workshop in Astana on 27 and 28 August entitled "Fostering cooperation and enhancing consultation mechanisms among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones", continuing its efforts to strengthen interzonal cooperation.

AFCONE advocated for nuclear energy development in Africa through its participation in several high-profile conferences. At the 2024 [Roadmaps to New Nuclear](#) ministerial conference in Paris on 19 and 20 September, hosted at the headquarters of the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, AFCONE emphasized the potential of nuclear energy to address energy poverty in Africa while meeting growing global demands. In March, AFCONE had participated in the Africa Energy Indaba week in Cape Town, addressing strategies for enhancing regional regulatory frameworks.

From 30 October to 1 November, AFCONE took part in the twenty-third [Dialogue Forum of the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles](#). The Forum covered nuclear energy innovations needed to accelerate the transition to net-zero emissions, with particular attention to small modular reactors.

Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia

In February 2024, Turkmenistan assumed the rotating chairpersonship within the [Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia](#), taking over from Tajikistan.

During the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference, held under Kazakhstan's chairmanship, Central Asian States maintained an active presence in nuclear disarmament discussions. On 22 July, Tajikistan delivered a [statement](#) on behalf of all States parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia during the Committee's general debate. The following week, on 31 July, on the margins of the Preparatory Committee session, representatives from the region participated in an informal breakfast discussion focused on universalizing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The event was co-organized by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Building on momentum from a 2019 [workshop](#), Kazakhstan and the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-organized a second [workshop](#) on 27 and 28 August, entitled "Fostering cooperation and enhancing consultation mechanisms among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones". The event brought together delegates from States parties and the secretariats of all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, along with representatives from United Nations entities and specialized international and regional organizations. Delegations from the five NPT nuclear-weapon States and representatives of international non-governmental and academic organizations participated as observers.

The workshop's opening ceremony featured remarks from the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; the First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Akan Rakhmetullin; and an anti-nuclear activist, Karipbek Kuyukov. Participants discussed measures to further deepen cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones and strengthen interaction with other United Nations disarmament platforms, aiming to reinforce the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Kazakhstan prepared a [Chair's summary](#) containing key recommendations from the meeting.

At the international level, Turkmenistan introduced the traditional resolution entitled "Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia" ([79/24](#)) on behalf of the five Central Asian States during the First Committee of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, in October. The resolution was adopted by consensus.

On 5 December, Turkmenistan hosted a [meeting](#) of the States parties to the Treaty in Ashgabat to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force. The commemorative event aimed to strengthen cooperation among existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and brought together senior officials from Central Asian States and Mongolia, regional diplomats, United Nations representatives, and disarmament and non-proliferation experts. A [memorandum of understanding](#) between OPANAL and the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty was signed during the meeting.

The same day, Kazakhstan and the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-organized the 2024 Nuclear Discussion Forum in New York under the theme "Strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones: enhancing regional stability and global security". The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs delivered a [statement](#) at the forum.

Establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

The [fifth session](#) of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction convened in New York from 18 to 22 November under the presidency of Mauritania. The session drew participation from 22 of the Conference's 24 members,^[3] four of its five observer States^[4] and three relevant international organizations (for the list of participants, see [A/CONF.236/2024/INF/3](#)). The session concluded with the adoption of a substantive report ([A/CONF.236/2024/3](#)).

The overarching theme of the session concerned reflections and thoughts on previous and future sessions of the Conference and its working committee. Participating States welcomed the progress and achievements made to date by those bodies on both procedural and substantive aspects. They commended successive presidents for their leadership in achieving progress and sustaining the political momentum of the process.

Participating States recognized that constructive approaches had proved effective in achieving incremental and systematic substantive progress towards the elaboration of a draft legally binding instrument for the Middle East zone. During the session, delegations engaged in substantive deliberations on key aspects of the future treaty.

As part of its work, the Conference incorporated into its substantive report ([A/CONF.236/2024/3](#)) an annex containing both a summary of the working committee's substantive work in 2024 and an index of thematic topics that could be addressed by future sessions. Amid ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon, participating States reaffirmed their commitment to multilateral diplomacy as the path to strengthening regional and international peace and security.

On procedural aspects, the Conference completed implementation of the decision adopted at its fourth session ([A/CONF.236/2023/DEC.3](#)). Looking ahead, delegations endorsed Omar Hilale (Morocco) as President of the sixth session, scheduled for November 2025.

Office for Disarmament Affairs regional centres

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa advanced efforts throughout 2024 to promote disarmament and arms control across the continent. Building on its mandate to address the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons alongside new and emerging challenges, the Centre collaborated with governments, regional stakeholders and civil society partners to tackle complex security challenges through collective action.

Programme of Action implementation support

The Centre continued its work to advance implementation across Africa of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. To prepare for the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action, the Centre convened two regional preparatory meetings. The first took place in Lomé from 29 February to 1 March for West and Central Africa, and the second was held in Nairobi on 4 and 5 March for East and Southern Africa. Both meetings facilitated exchanges of lessons learned, good practices and regional priorities to guide Review Conference negotiations.

Building on its commitment to inclusive approaches, the Centre organized several events emphasizing gender perspectives and youth engagement in small-arms control. On 7 November, it hosted a webinar entitled “Integrating gender considerations into disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes”, as part of a series launched the previous year. The event engaged national commissions for the control of small arms and light weapons, alongside civil society organizations, emphasizing the importance of gender considerations in fostering inclusive and effective post-conflict recoveries.

In collaboration with the International Action Network on Small Arms, the Centre held a webinar on 5 December exploring linkages between small arms and light weapons and conflict-related sexual violence. Key participants included national commissions, civil society organizations and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

The Centre further highlighted the contributions of women and young people to arms-control efforts through a hybrid conference hosted on 6 December in collaboration with the Institute for Strategic Studies at the University of Lomé. The event mobilized over 100 young participants as “peace ambassadors”, while raising awareness around the tragic

consequences of small-arms and light weapons misuse. On 19 December, the Centre organized another hybrid event entitled “Women and youth participation in disarmament processes: challenges and opportunities”, engaging civil society stakeholders in a discussion on concerns around small arms and light weapons. The exchange fostered collaboration and promoted coordination between non-governmental organizations and national commissions.

From 9 to 13 December, the Centre conducted its first assessment mission in Burundi for the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), providing technical support for the Government to develop a national action plan to combat illicit small-arms and light weapons proliferation. The mission assessed challenges in arms marking and took stock of Burundi's progress in implementing the Programme of Action.

Ammunition management initiatives

In collaboration with the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Centre co-hosted two key regional meetings in 2024 to raise awareness about the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. The first meeting, held on 4 and 5 September in Lomé, gathered representatives and practitioners from 21 countries, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to discuss challenges including cross-border trafficking, inadequate tracing and the safe disposal of expired ammunition. Participants emphasized the need for national alignment with international standards, regional cooperation and gender inclusion in ammunition management.

The [second meeting](#) took place in Gaborone on 24 and 25 September, focusing on Eastern and Southern Africa. Co-organized with the Southern African Development Community, the event convened representatives from 19 countries and regional organizations to address challenges and identify opportunities for sustainable ammunition management. The findings of both meetings were expected to inform work on a forthcoming research paper.

Africa Amnesty Month assistance

In 2024, the Centre provided substantial support for Africa Amnesty Month commemorations across the continent, contributing to the African Union's “Silencing the Guns by 2030” initiative. The campaign aims to reduce the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons by encouraging voluntary disarmament with amnesty and immunity from prosecution for those surrendering arms (for more information, see chap. 3).

In partnership with the African Union Peace and Security Council, the Centre supported the commemoration in Bangui on 9 and 10 September. During the event, 144 AK-47 rifles were destroyed as part of efforts to reduce the availability of illicit arms. The campaign also

featured public awareness initiatives to highlight the dangers of illicit arms proliferation and its impact on peace and security.

Similar activities took place in Djibouti from 29 to 31 October, organized in collaboration with the Government and the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA). The event included public marches, tree planting and the destruction of illicit firearms. In Rwanda, the Ministry of Internal Security worked with RECSA to launch Africa Amnesty Month activities, including public awareness campaigns and firearms collection efforts.

Other regional cooperation and capacity-building

Building on a December 2023 regional seminar, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa partnered with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and UNIDIR to launch an empirical study on integrating weapons and ammunition management practices and violent extremism prevention measures into national and regional frameworks. The study, expected to continue into 2025, aimed to identify best practices and explore innovative solutions for action in West Africa.

The Centre also partnered with Office for Disarmament Affairs teams in Lima, Kathmandu and Vienna to launch a project funded by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR). The initiative aimed to build capacity among United Nations resident coordinator offices to integrate arms control into common country analyses and United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. Consultations, pilot missions and other preparatory activities were carried out across the beneficiary countries in Africa, setting the stage for enhanced arms-control integration in development planning.

United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

The United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa convened two ministerial meetings in 2024 to address evolving security challenges across the region. During the sessions, Committee members exchanged views on the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa, exploring collective approaches to tackle both persistent and emerging peace and security concerns. Participants also assessed progress on implementing recommendations from previous Committee sessions.

The Committee's fifty-seventh session took place in Luanda from 20 to 24 May, focusing on "Mediation initiatives in Central Africa: challenges and opportunities" as its overarching theme. A significant portion of the discussions centred on advancing the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their

Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly ([Kinshasa Convention](#)). Cameroon, which hosted the inaugural conference of signatories in Yaoundé in 2018, provided an update on implementation progress and advocated for organizing a second conference of signatories. A follow-up conference had originally been scheduled for 2020 but was postponed due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Republic of the Congo reaffirmed its commitment to hosting this second gathering in collaboration with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). Several Committee members, including Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, renewed their appeals to ECCAS for support in establishing national commissions dedicated to small-arms and light weapons control.

The fifty-eighth session, convened in Bangui from 25 to 29 November, examined the impact of economic development on reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in post-conflict contexts. Building on earlier discussions, the Committee formally recommended proceeding with the second ministerial conference of Kinshasa Convention signatories, designating Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo to coordinate its organization with ECCAS and UNOCA.

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Throughout 2024, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean provided sustained support to States in implementing international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control commitments. The Centre organized over 100 technical, legal and policy-focused activities in various formats, reaching nearly 1,000 participants — over a third of them women.

Regional engagement with global frameworks

The Centre played a vital role in connecting regional priorities with global disarmament processes. In March, it hosted two [regional preparatory meetings](#) for the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, where States from Latin America and the Caribbean discussed regional priorities, alongside challenges and opportunities in combating small-arms trafficking.

In parallel, the Centre convened representatives from the region in Lima in May for a focused exchange on implementing the newly adopted Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. The [meeting](#) provided a crucial platform for identifying regional priorities and needs, while exploring specific challenges and opportunities for translating the framework's political commitments into concrete actions.

Regional road map implementation, monitoring and development

The Centre maintained its leadership in advancing both the Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 ([Caribbean Firearms Roadmap](#)) and efforts towards a similar initiative in Central America.

Its support for the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap included assisting States in developing national action plans and baseline assessments, as well as implementation. The Bahamas drafted its national action plan in 2024, bringing the total number of States that had done so since the Roadmap's adoption in 2020 to 13. Of those States, 8 had approved their national action plans by year end. The Centre supported implementation through 35 capacity-building initiatives benefiting armouries, forensic laboratories, police forces and border security units.

Strengthening data collection, monitoring and evaluation systems was a particular focus in 2024. The Centre launched the "Roadmap to Reporting: a Sensitization and Training Series for Monitoring and Evaluation under the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap" and issued a [guidance document](#) on monitoring and evaluation, providing Caribbean States with practical tools to streamline their fulfilment of reporting obligations.

In their [fourth annual meeting](#) on the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap, Caribbean States reviewed their progress, discussed challenges and achievements, and established priorities for the 2025 midterm review. All Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member States and the Dominican Republic continued to implement the Roadmap with ongoing support from its two co-custodians — the Centre and the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security — as well as partners, donors and supporting States.

For Central America and the Dominican Republic, the Centre continued to collaborate with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Central American Integration System on developing a comprehensive regional approach. Partnering with the OAS Department of Public Security, the Centre co-led a consultative multi-stakeholder process throughout 2024 that engaged Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama.

The process culminated in a consolidated [Central America and Dominican Republic Roadmap to Prevent Illicit Trafficking and Proliferation of Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives](#), scheduled for adoption in early 2025. Building on common subregional challenges and opportunities, the Roadmap is structured around four thematic pillars: (a) reinforcing regulatory frameworks and inter-agency coordination; (b) preventing violence with firearms and firearms misuse; (c) life-cycle management of weapons, ammunition and

explosives; and (d) investigation and criminal prosecution of trafficking, manufacture, possession and illicit use of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

National capacity-building and technical assistance

The Centre delivered nationally tailored capacity-building courses to authorities in Panama, [Paraguay](#), Peru and [Trinidad and Tobago](#) on combating arms and ammunition trafficking. The courses aimed to deepen national stakeholders' understanding of illicit firearms and ammunition manufacturing, including challenges posed by new technologies, such as 3D printing.

In Peru, the Centre implemented a decentralized approach for the first time, delivering training to security, border and customs officials, as well as prosecutors and judges in strategic locations, including [Puno](#), Trujillo and [Iquitos](#). Additionally, the Centre organized training for officials in [Costa Rica](#) and [Suriname](#) on interdicting small arms, ammunition, parts and components.

Armed violence reduction and youth engagement

The Centre sustained its backing for regional initiatives under the Saving Lives Entity fund ([SALIENT](#)), jointly administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for Disarmament Affairs to catalyse more comprehensive approaches to small-arms control and armed violence reduction (for more information, see chap. 3). In Jamaica, a partnership with the Government led to a [music and visual arts competition](#) aimed at creatively engaging young people in the work of preventing firearms violence in schools. Honduras hosted a broader programme encompassing workshops on firearms legislation, controls on illicit manufacturing and international transfers, assessments of judiciary depots for international standards compliance, and gender-focused activities.

The Centre partnered with UNDP Peru to launch "[GenerAcción Paz](#)", an innovative programme empowering Latin American youth to foster a region free from armed violence and promote a culture of peace. In July, 10 selected participants embarked on a five-month online learning journey covering illicit arms trafficking, the gendered impacts of armed violence, the contribution of arms control to development, and project presentation and design skills. The programme included a study visit to Lima in December and three months of supervised project implementation in 2025, contributing to General Assembly mandates on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation while aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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

In 2024, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific delivered a wide range of technical assistance, capacity and confidence-building activities across the region. The Centre's activities reached diverse stakeholders, including government officials, civil society representatives, youth advocates and academic communities, fostering collaborative approaches to the region's security challenges.

Conventional arms and ammunition control

The Centre delivered the regional component of a [global project](#) in support of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, with a focus on facilitating successful preparations for the fourth Review Conference. This wide-ranging project spanned multiple regional activities throughout the year, from preparatory meetings and capacity-building initiatives to partnership development and technical assistance.

From 23 to 25 January, the Centre hosted a [regional preparatory meeting](#) in Kathmandu that brought together 85 participants from 23 countries (31 women and 54 men) representing government agencies, civil society organizations and United Nations entities. The meeting addressed critical themes, including international cooperation and assistance, emerging technologies, linkages between small-arms control and sustainable development, and target-setting approaches. Building on that foundation, the Centre provided tailored support to enhance national reporting on Programme of Action implementation, while facilitating delegate participation in the Review Conference in New York.

The Centre fostered dialogue and collaboration through bimonthly meetings of the regional cooperation mechanism on small arms and light weapons in Asia and the Pacific, launched under the global project in late 2023 as a platform for information exchange, partnership development and coordination among civil society and intergovernmental stakeholders. The mechanism yielded practical results in February, when the Centre and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) co-organized an awareness-raising activity conceptualized in discussions that began on the platform. The joint [side event](#) of the eleventh Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development addressed progress on indicator 16.4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals relating to reducing illicit firearms in circulation.^[5]

Practical capacity-building activities included a [physical security and stockpile management project](#) in Sri Lanka, implemented in partnership with the Government and a collective of technical assistance partners, including the Mines Advisory Group. Upon request by the Sri Lankan authorities, the project delivered tangible infrastructure improvements: construction of a container armoury at Paranagama Police Station in Uva Province; installation of 17 weapon cabinets at Kalutara Police Training College; and specialized training for armoury

storekeepers and managers at the Deputy Inspector General's Office in Badulla. Similar support was extended to Nepal, focusing on enhanced reporting practices, record-keeping systems and legislative frameworks.

The Centre applied a gender lens to conventional arms issues through multiple collaborations with UNIDIR. In February, the Centre and UNIDIR co-led an online regional briefing on "[Fostering gender-responsive small arms control: perspectives from the Asia-Pacific region on the United Nations Programme of Action and the Arms Trade Treaty](#)". In August, the Centre joined a UNIDIR side event during the Arms Trade Treaty's tenth Conference of States Parties, examining approaches to [addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence through Treaty framework](#).

The global project also allowed eight representatives of Cambodia's Ministry of Interior to travel to North Macedonia and Serbia in support of Cambodia's efforts to establish a national coordination mechanism and national strategy to tackle small arms and light weapons. The study visit was also intended to strengthen Cambodia's leadership in implementing the [ASEAN Declaration on Combating Arms Smuggling](#). The Centre co-organized the trip in partnership with UNDP's South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC).

As part of global SALIENT programming, the Centre engaged with United Nations country teams in [Papua New Guinea](#) and [Kyrgyzstan](#) to conduct legislative analysis, foster inter-agency collaboration and integrate considerations around small arms and light weapons into national action plans on women, peace and security, as well as other relevant instruments.

In December, the Centre hosted an informal regional meeting on the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, hosting representatives from 19 Asia-Pacific States in Kathmandu, alongside United Nations entities, international, regional and civil society organizations, to strengthen regional understanding and prepare for the June 2025 Preparatory Committee.

Weapons of mass destruction

The Centre maintained robust support for regional efforts to prevent weapons of mass destruction proliferation through strategic partnerships and targeted initiatives. Collaborating with the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the Centre implemented multiple projects addressing biosafety and security challenges across the region.

In October, with support from China and Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Centre and the Implementation Support Unit facilitated a meeting of ASEAN member States on

biosecurity, in [Shenzhen](#), China. That was followed in November by the twenty-third [Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues](#), co-facilitated by the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Centre. It focused on "The Biological Weapons Convention at 50". The Centre and the Implementation Support Unit then co-hosted a discussion on the margins of the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, in Geneva, to identify common threads from both events and shared outcomes and insights with all Member States.

Nuclear risk reduction received attention through a February dialogue in Seoul, facilitated jointly with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and UNIDIR. The discussion addressed regional perspectives on nuclear risk reduction in outer space, examining the space-nuclear nexus and potential escalation pathways stemming from outer space developments.

Youth, disarmament education and outreach

The Centre's participation in the Youth Champions for Disarmament Training Programme, supported by Germany, demonstrated its commitment to empowering the next generation of advocates (for more information, see chap. 8).

In July, celebrating World Youth Skills Day, the Centre joined the wider Office for Disarmament Affairs to host the [Asia-Pacific segment of the Regional Youth Forum](#), introducing the Asia-Pacific Youth Champions cohort and gathering recommendations for them to present at the General Assembly in October. The session engaged 108 registered participants in interactive discussions on key disarmament issues. The Youth Champions took part in multiple high-level events over the months, culminating in their in-person participation at the twenty-third Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, including its dedicated youth session on the Biological Weapons Convention and broader biosecurity topics.

Educational outreach continued through the Centre's partnership with the Prajnya Trust, an India-based civil society organization, on the third iteration of the [Disarmament Toolkit](#) series. The six-day online course explored conceptual, political and technical dimensions of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, attracting over 600 student and professional registrants in the peace and security sector across more than 80 countries.

To commemorate the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness on 5 March, the Centre collaborated with the United Nations resident coordinators in [Nepal](#), [Indonesia](#), [Papua New Guinea](#) and Kyrgyzstan to disseminate their personal messages about the Day's importance on social media. The Centre also produced several interviews with

women leaders in Asia-Pacific disarmament for International Women's Day, highlighting diverse perspectives and experiences in the field.

Disarmament and arms regulation at the regional level

Africa

Economic Community of West African States

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission maintained its activities to facilitate the implementation of international arms-control instruments in West Africa, enhance transparency and accountability in arms transfers, and strengthen member States' capacities to combat illicit arms proliferation in line with the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Activities related to conventional arms

The ECOWAS arms transfer regime, also known as the ECOWAS exemption procedure, remained operational throughout 2024. The Commission processed numerous requests from member States for the procurement and importation of arms, ammunition and related materials, issuing ECOWAS exemption certificates to requesting States that fulfilled the provisions stipulated in the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. This process assisted the Commission in monitoring compliance with the prohibition on arms transfers to non-State actors and unlicensed groups, facilitated transparency in arms acquisition and trade practices, and supported the ongoing management of the ECOWAS arms transfer database.

Working with the Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies, the ECOWAS Commission delivered weapons marking machines to Cabo Verde in 2024, with procedures finalized for similar deliveries to Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria. The initiative supported beneficiary member States in implementing a standardized system for marking all State-owned and civilian-owned weapons in accordance with the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The standardized marking system enhances compliance with the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, which require all weapons to have unique serial numbers and identifiable markings, thereby enhancing the capacity of recipient States to track weapons and prevent diversion.

The Commission organized in-country training on physical security and stockpile management in three member States: Benin, Sierra Leone and Togo. Personnel from defence and security agencies acquired skills in categorization, modernized accountability and inventory control, physical security, surveillance, and assessing the stability and reliability of

arms and ammunition. The training programmes, aligned with the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and MOSAIC, contributed towards reducing diversion from State armouries, enhancing inventory management of government stocks and reducing the risk of accidental ammunition explosions.

The Commission expanded its weapons and ammunition baseline assessments to include the Gambia, bringing the total number of assessed States to 13. It conducted the assessment in partnership with UNIDIR, aiming to facilitate the development and implementation of a national framework addressing current priorities, needs, capacities and challenges related to managing the entire life cycle of arms and ammunition.

Activities related to peace, security and disarmament in general

Personnel from all 15 ECOWAS member States received level 2 training on explosive ordnance disposal over six months. Participants enhanced their skills to safely manage, neutralize and dispose of explosive threats, including unexploded ordnance, improvised explosive devices and abandoned explosive stockpiles. The training programme covered mitigation strategies emphasizing both prevention and response, approaches particularly relevant to the security challenges posed by violent extremism and terrorism in the region.

ECOWAS established a pool of instructors on physical security and stockpile management, comprising senior instructors who successfully completed six years of rigorous training under the ECOWAS road map on physical security and stockpile management. The instructors convened in Cabo Verde to review current training modules, identify areas for improvement, and update materials based on evolving challenges, emerging trends, international standards and best practices, and regional experiences.

Other relevant activities or institutional developments

The Commission organized the Annual Coordination Meeting of the National Commissions on Small Arms and Light Weapons of ECOWAS member States, providing a platform to assess national measures, examine emerging trends, review national needs and priorities, and harmonize national initiatives for implementing regional best practices. The 2024 meeting reviewed two critical regional instruments: a regional strategy on countering improvised explosive devices and a study on controlling craft weapons production in the ECOWAS region. Once finalized, the instruments will consolidate efforts to address improvised explosive device contamination and effectively control artisanal weapons production in the region.

Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States

In 2024, RECSA remained steadfast in its mission to coordinate action against small-arms and light weapons proliferation. RECSA focused its interventions on building the capacity of member States in the control and management of small arms and light weapons, physical security and stockpile management, weapons marking and record-keeping, and cooperation with government agencies and strategic partners.

Capacity-building for weapons and ammunition management

RECSA co-hosted two regional physical security and stockpile management trainings at the Humanitarian Peace Support School in Kenya. Grounded in international best standards, the courses emphasized the importance of countering the diversion of small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition, while ensuring accountability from manufacturer to legal end user. As of 2024, the programme had trained 13 senior instructors, 34 instructors and 451 students, fostering knowledge-sharing and capacity-building across RECSA member States. The instructors subsequently enhanced training at the national level.

In partnership with the HALO Trust, RECSA continued to support member States in bolstering safe storage of government stockpiles through the provision of containerized modular armouries. In 2024, Kenya's National Police Service received two armouries at high-security threat locations, significantly improving safe storage and management capabilities where diversion had been rampant.

To enhance institutional development, two RECSA staff members participated in an executive-level weapons and ammunition management course organized by the Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies from 26 November to 6 December. The objective was to strengthen technical understanding, while covering critical institutional, political and socioeconomic dimensions of small-arms and light weapons interventions.

Support for the implementation of international instruments

On 4 and 5 March, RECSA co-hosted a regional preparatory meeting in Nairobi for the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action. Organized in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, the meeting was attended by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the President of the fourth Review Conference, and various national officials addressing small-arms and light weapons issues in East and Southern Africa. The meeting objective was to foster information-sharing and brainstorming on the state of the implementation of the Programme of Action and its related International Tracing Instrument. Participating States adopted a common regional African

position, which RECSA's Executive Secretary, Jean Pierre Betindji, and RECSA member States reaffirmed during the Review Conference.

At the tenth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, RECSA emphasized the importance of responsible arms transfers and the key role of implementing agencies. RECSA intensified efforts to promote the Treaty across its member States that had not yet ratified it. Through technical support and high-level meetings, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan and the Sudan aligned their laws with the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty. In Ethiopia, awareness-raising and capacity-building workshops were held among decision makers. The United Republic of Tanzania received assistance in developing a project proposal submitted to the Treaty secretariat for the 2024 Voluntary Trust Fund.

From 19 to 21 November, RECSA held a workshop on the Harmonized Regional Reporting Framework/Tool on Implementation of the Nairobi Protocol. Following its development in consultation with a technical working group of experts from RECSA member States, all 13 countries adopted the Framework. It is intended to bolster reporting on the implementation of small-arms and light weapons interventions and the Protocol's provisions, promote standardized data-collection methods and support evidence-based programming, while minimizing duplication of efforts. The Framework would facilitate the development of a comprehensive regional outlook report to serve as a scorecard on RECSA member States' implementation of the Protocol and related mechanisms.

Engagement on regional disarmament initiatives

RECSA continued its collaboration with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the African Union Commission in advancing the African Union Agenda 2063 flagship project "Silencing the Guns by 2030". In 2024, three RECSA member States — the Central African Republic, Djibouti and Rwanda — received support to observe Africa Amnesty Month, held annually in September to encourage the voluntary surrender of illicit small arms and light weapons in African Union member States (for more information, see chap. 3). The three beneficiary countries implemented various activities encompassing sensitization and public awareness campaigns on the effects of illicit small arms and light weapons, capacity-building activities (including trainings for security agencies on weapons and ammunition management), community-based policing, and the collection and destruction of surrendered weapons.

On 18 November, RECSA collaborated with the Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies to hold a validation workshop on the Regional Action Plan on Weapons and Ammunition Management in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Contexts for the RECSA region. The workshop followed RECSA member States' unanimous adoption of the Regional Action Plan, which was developed through two round-table discussions with regional stakeholders that brought together national focal points on small arms and light weapons,

national institutions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and technical and policy experts.^[6]

Other relevant activities and developments

In October, RECSA and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining co-hosted a three-day workshop in Nairobi on implementing the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. They aimed to increase awareness of the Global Framework, highlight RECSA's mandate as the subregional focal point and develop a workplan to support the Global Framework's implementation and 2025–2027 review process.

RECSA participated in the ninety-second International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) General Assembly in Glasgow, United Kingdom, which brought together representatives from its member countries on 4–7 November. The Executive Secretary highlighted RECSA's efforts to combat small-arms and light weapons proliferation, and RECSA engaged with key partners to establish and strengthen law-enforcement collaboration on arms control.

In November, the RECSA Secretariat and Kenya co-hosted the fifteenth Technical Advisory Committee meeting in Nairobi. The attendees included Kenya's Prime Cabinet Secretary, as well as various permanent secretaries or their senior-level representatives. The meeting also attracted police chiefs and small-arms and light weapons experts from all 15 RECSA member States. Delegates reaffirmed their shared commitment to tackling illicit arms flows in the region, particularly in view of emerging security challenges and ongoing conflicts.

Americas

Implementation Agency for Crime and Security

The CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security continued to lead regional efforts to combat firearms trafficking and enhance public safety throughout 2024. Working in close collaboration with international partners, the Implementation Agency executed high-impact initiatives to strengthen institutional capacity, enhance intelligence-sharing and support law enforcement efforts.

Strategic policy development and research

The Implementation Agency for Crime and Security partnered with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to provide technical assistance to CARICOM member States in developing national firearms action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks under the Caribbean

Firearms Roadmap. Their collaboration ensured structured and measurable progress on firearms control across the subregion.

The Implementation Agency produced two situation updates in 2024: one assessing [the threat of 3D-printed and computer numerical controlled milled firearms](#) to inform detection and enforcement policies, and another analysing the [movement of weapons from the United States to the Caribbean](#) to strengthen counter-trafficking strategies.

Enhanced intelligence and investigation capabilities

The Implementation Agency expanded its Crime Gun Intelligence Unit in 2024, serving to strengthen firearms tracing, investigations and prosecutions through enhanced analysis of crime gun data and trafficking patterns. In addition to the Unit's enhancement — completed in collaboration with the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Bureau of Industry and Security; Homeland Security Investigations; and Customs and Border Protection — the Implementation Agency facilitated country-level sensitization seminars to improve regional tracing capabilities, reinforcing intelligence-driven responses to gun crimes throughout the Caribbean.

At the end of its annual review, the Implementation Agency admitted the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation and United States National Central Bureau (INTERPOL Washington) as partners, recognizing the need to develop specialized law-enforcement capacity addressing the close linkage between gangs, organized criminal groups and firearms trafficking.

To strengthen forensic investigations and cross-border intelligence-sharing, the Implementation Agency deployed automated ballistic identification equipment to three CARICOM member States and the Crime Gun Intelligence Unit, enhancing crime-solving capabilities and regional cooperation.

Weapons and ammunition management

In partnership with Mines Advisory Group, the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security undertook extensive weapons and ammunition management, destruction and stockpile security initiatives to prevent illicit proliferation and unplanned explosions. The Implementation Agency achieved significant results: destroying 3,290,000 rounds of ammunition and 3,089 firearms, safely disposing of 6,700 pyrotechnic pieces, eliminating 4,757 kg of quarry explosives, and educating more than 250 personnel in proper handling and disposal procedures.

Capacity-building and training

The Implementation Agency for Crime and Security collaborated with the World Customs Organization to conduct specialized training and operational exercises designed to strengthen firearms detection and interdiction at border entry points. In addition, the Implementation Agency partnered with the United States Customs and Border Protection to build the capacity of law enforcement and border security personnel to identify and intercept privately made firearms, firearms parts and components.

Working with the Trinidad and Tobago Forensic Science Centre and with support from the Government, the Implementation Agency trained member States in serial-number restoration, while supplying the necessary chemicals to perform such procedures.

International engagement and advocacy

The Implementation Agency for Crime and Security actively participated in the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, contributing to three side events that highlighted regional challenges and innovative solutions. These events focused on the [public health dimensions](#) of small-arms trafficking and violence in the Caribbean, the role of CARICOM's Crime Gun Intelligence Unit as a regional mechanism in reducing gun crime,^[7] and the development of Caribbean and Central American road maps for addressing firearms trafficking.^[8]

Organization of American States

Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials

The [Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials](#) maintained broad support in 2024, with 31 of the 34 OAS member States remaining parties to the instrument, according to the Convention's Technical Secretariat.

Those States coordinated through the twenty-fourth regular meeting of the Convention's Consultative Committee and the sixth Conference of States Parties, conducted in succession on 23 and 24 May with Mexico as Chair. The Technical Secretariat — jointly operated by the OAS Department against Transnational Organized Crime and the OAS Department of Public Security — provided support for the hybrid meetings.

Countering firearms trafficking

OAS sustained its comprehensive assistance to member States throughout 2024, focusing on capacity-building against illicit firearms and ammunition proliferation and trafficking. With support from the European Union, the Department of Public Security delivered technical and material assistance, through its Program of Assistance on Control of Arms and Munition, to 23 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean.

The year's capacity-building achievements included training 534 national personnel, enhancing security conditions in two storage areas, donating two marking machines, and installing inventory control software in six national defence and security institutions. Additionally, authorities destroyed 13,589 firearms and 18.3 tons of ammunition as part of stockpile management efforts. Through a partnership with Spain, 15 military and police officers from seven Latin American countries received certification in level 3 explosive ordnance disposal.

The Convention's institutional framework benefited from the development and approval of new standard operating procedures in 2024. The Consultative Committee finalized two manuals during the year, one covering physical security and stockpile management of small arms and light weapons, and the other focusing on their destruction.

Armed violence prevention initiatives

The Department of Public Security's armed violence prevention efforts reached 1,310 vulnerable youth through the Program of Assistance on Control of Arms and Munition. Using the methodology of [OAS OASIS](#), the initiative fostered life skills through music and facilitated violence prevention workshops in Honduras and Peru. Notably, the effort included targeted interventions for 38 young people with criminal histories.

Community-level support took place through the Program's Center for Psychosocial Support of Victims of Armed Violence, which assisted 150 families and reached more than 2,400 citizens through local events. The Consultative Committee approved the *Regional Guidelines for the Prevention of Gender-based Violence Committed with the Use of Firearms in the Americas*, providing a framework for developing gender-focused policies and interventions on gun violence.

Regional coordination mechanisms

Collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean culminated in the finalized [Central America and Dominican Republic Roadmap to Prevent Illicit Trafficking and Proliferation of Firearms](#),

Ammunition and Explosives. The European Union-backed initiative incorporated multiple rounds of awareness-raising and dialogue sessions with national authorities, concluding with an in-person validation workshop. The Roadmap was scheduled for **adoption** at a high-level session in February 2025 at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., with the participation of the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Humanitarian demining

OAS partnered with the Colombian Mine Action National Authority to jointly organize and chair a side event of the fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention), focusing on article 5 completion in the Americas.

The Department of Public Security's comprehensive mine action programme continued supporting 32 of the 34 OAS member States that are States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, with particular emphasis on addressing explosive ordnance contamination in Colombia in line with a 2012 bilateral agreement. In 2024, the programme supported quality management for seven humanitarian demining operators, comprising two State/military entities and five humanitarian non-governmental organizations. The Department conducted 592 evaluations of operational elements, developed four standard procedure documents and carried out 3,483 field monitoring visits, verifying the decontamination of 107,186 square metres of land.

Direct public engagement remained a cornerstone of mine action efforts in Colombia, where the Department's programme delivered explosive ordnance risk education to communities. During the year, 5,623 people across six municipalities in six departments participated in regular explosive ordnance risk reduction activities. The participants comprised 936 women, 550 men, 1,928 girls and 2,209 boys.

Support for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

The Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism maintained its leadership role in supporting Security Council resolution **1540 (2004)** across the Americas.^[9]

As Hemispheric Coordinator for the resolution, the Committee facilitated the final phase of an implementation peer review exercise between Brazil, Chile and Mexico, focusing on the non-proliferation of biological weapons in particular.

National capacity-building efforts included supporting Ecuador in the development of its national action plan through virtual and in-person workshops held in Quito in June. The

Committee also commemorated the resolution's twentieth anniversary by hosting a side event during the open briefing consultations at United Nations Headquarters on 9 and 10 October, where Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Paraguay highlighted OAS member States' implementation efforts.

In 2024, the Committee focused its technical cooperation initiatives on strengthening biosafety and biosecurity measures, countering proliferation financing and advancing strategic trade controls across 12 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. With support from the European Union and the United States Department of State, the Committee helped to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity measures through: (a) legislative assistance to harmonize legal frameworks with international standards; (b) training courses on laboratory biosafety techniques and dual-use research security; and (c) regional cooperation supporting implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention.

The Committee worked to counter the financing of proliferation in Brazil, Chile, Panama and Peru through awareness-raising and technical training for public sector representatives. To advance strategic trade controls, it assisted Panama in drafting regulations for Executive Decree 81, which establishes a licensing system for dual-use goods, and trained Panamanian and Costa Rican officials on export controls for emerging technologies. The Committee also collaborated with Brazil and Peru to host a side event of the fifth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, held in Geneva on 12 December.

Strengthening non-proliferation efforts in the Americas was the goal of the Committee's third implementers conference, which brought together representatives from 12 countries and 25 organizations in Washington, D.C., on 20 and 21 February.

Additionally, the Committee contributed to the "1540 Compass" electronic journal of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the electronic newsletter of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

Asia and the Pacific

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

The Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty), signed on 15 December 1995 by the 10 South-East Asian countries, continued to be ASEAN's most important instrument on disarmament and non-proliferation. At the fifty-seventh ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held in Vientiane on 25 July, the Ministers **stressed** the importance

of the Treaty's full and effective implementation, including through the [Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone \(2023–2027\)](#). At the forty-fourth and forty-fifth ASEAN Summits, held in Vientiane on 9 October, the ASEAN Leaders [reiterated](#) their commitment to preserving South-East Asia as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Bangkok Treaty and the ASEAN Charter.

The issue of non-proliferation and disarmament was also discussed at the ASEAN Regional Forum through its Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. As an ASEAN-led mechanism and as part of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament serves as a platform for its 27 participants to exchange views and share information on non-proliferation and disarmament. During the fifteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting — held in May in Honolulu, Hawaii — ASEAN Regional Forum participants deliberated on key issues such as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, highlighting rising regional interest in advanced nuclear technologies for clean energy transitions and sharing the view that such efforts should be undertaken in parallel with developing safety, safeguards and regulatory capacities. They [emphasized](#) the importance of strengthening safety measures and public engagement to overcome challenges in public acceptance of nuclear power and its non-power uses, such as in medicine and agriculture.

ASEAN Regional Forum participants also examined the implications of advancement in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology and quantum technologies, stressing the need to ensure equitable access and improved governance to manage associated risks.

Under the ambit of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, practical cooperation to address arms smuggling in the region is guided by the arms smuggling component of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime [work programme](#) to implement the [ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime \(2016–2025\)](#).^[10] The implementation of activities under the work programme is monitored through the annual convening of the Working Group on Arms Smuggling of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime, which has served, since its 2018 establishment, as a platform for ASEAN member States to exchange information and collaborate on capacity-building and training related to combat arms smuggling. As the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime would approach expiration in 2025, discussions to renew it were under way within the framework of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime. Renewal would include its arms smuggling component, ensuring the continuity and enhancement of ASEAN's coordinated efforts to address arms smuggling in the region.

Pacific Islands Forum

Nuclear legacy issues in the Pacific

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders continued to address the ongoing consequences of nuclear testing in the region through sustained advocacy and institutional mechanisms, including the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific.

The Council convened the fifth meeting of its Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy Issues on 15 March. In addition to discussing key updates, membership issues and its workplan, the Taskforce considered arrangements for conducting a preliminary independent review on nuclear contamination in the Pacific, including at the former nuclear test site at Runit, in the Marshall Islands. The Taskforce finalized the arrangements and next steps for the preliminary independent review at a special meeting on 22 June.

From 26 to 30 August, at their fifty-third meeting, Forum leaders agreed to continue supporting bilateral, regional and multilateral action to assist the Marshall Islands in its efforts to engage the United States towards a justified resolution to its nuclear weapons testing programme ([PIFS\(24\)5](#), para. 65). Leaders also considered submitting another letter to the United States urging the Government to take action to meaningfully address the lingering needs resulting from the nuclear weapons testing programme.

Japan's release of treated water

The tenth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting with Japan, held from 16 to 18 July, produced a [declaration](#) and a [joint action plan](#) addressing the release of water treated by ALPS from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, among other regional priorities. A briefing on the ALPS issue took place on the margins of the meeting for Pacific Islands Forum members.

The tenth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting with Japan was preceded on 12 February by [discussions](#) between the Pacific Islands Forum foreign ministers and their Japanese counterparts at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat's headquarters in Suva.

Multilateral treaty engagement and capacity-building

On 12 March, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat hosted a subregional workshop in partnership with the OPCW Technical Secretariat and relevant partner organizations. Select States parties in the Pacific joined their regional counterparts to share experiences, good practices and challenges around the development of implementing legislation for the Chemical Weapons Convention, including key messages to support the adoption of such legislation at the national level.

On 13 March, Papua New Guinea became the 178th State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Europe

European Union

The European Union's non-proliferation and disarmament activities remained anchored in its Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (15708/03) and its strategy entitled "Securing arms, protecting citizens" (13581/18), addressing illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. In "A strategic compass for security and defence" (7371/22), adopted in 2022, the European Union and its member States committed to upholding, supporting and further advancing the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control architecture in coordination with international partners.

Activities related to weapons of mass destruction, including the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

The European Union and its member States participated actively in multilateral disarmament forums throughout 2024.

At the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, the bloc submitted three working papers: one on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.1), one on enhancing transparency and accountability in the implementation of NPT obligations and commitments (NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.6), and a third on a prospective fissile material cut-off treaty (NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.12) that gained endorsement from eight other NPT States parties. The European Union also organized two side events,^[11] while joining its member States to endorse joint statements addressing the North Korean nuclear challenge and supporting Ukraine in ensuring safety and security in its nuclear facilities.

The European Union's support for the IAEA remained robust across multiple dimensions. The bloc maintained its advocacy for universal adherence to IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which together constitute the standard for verifying that declared nuclear material or technology is used only for peaceful purposes. Under Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/656, the European Union allocated €7.2 million for the period 2024–2027 to support the IAEA's nuclear security work, assisting in the universalization of relevant legal instruments, advancing relevant international cooperation and increasing public awareness.

The European Union and its member States continued to rank among the largest contributors to the IAEA technical cooperation programme, recognizing its vital role in enabling safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technology applications in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They made substantial contributions to both the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund and the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative. Together with its member States, the European Union also remained the second-largest donor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

The entry into force and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remained important objectives for the European Union. Beyond participating in the eleventh ministerial meeting of the Friends of the Treaty in September, through Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/2064](#), the bloc sustained its support for strengthening the monitoring and verification capabilities of the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. Through technical support and advice to the Preparatory Commission's Working Group B on verification issues and participants in various training programmes, the European Union and its member States reinforced their commitment to maintaining and strengthening the Treaty's verification regime.

The bloc's efforts to combat nuclear terrorism continued through ongoing support for UNODC and the Office of Counter-Terrorism in promoting the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, under Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/1187](#). The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy maintained diplomatic coordination with all parties to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the United States to preserve channels for potential future nuclear talks.^[12]

Implementation of Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) received continued backing through Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/654](#), covering 2023–2026 and aimed at enhancing national and regional efforts and capabilities through training, capacity-building and coordinated assistance.

Support for The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation continued under Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/124](#), with the [Fondation pour la recherche stratégique](#) implementing targeted outreach and other activities to promote universalization and full implementation.

The European Union maintained its strong commitment to global biosafety and biosecurity initiatives. It continued to support the Biological Weapons Convention's full and effective implementation, as well as its universalization and confidence-building mechanisms, through dedicated projects under Council Decisions (CFSP) [2019/97](#) and [2021/2072](#), extended to 2027 under Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/349](#). Additional funding strengthened biological safety and security in Latin America through Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/645](#), in line with

Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). The bloc also sustained its support for the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.

The European Union's engagement with the OPCW encompassed multiple areas of support. Council Decisions (CFSP) [2021/1026](#) and [2023/1515](#) supported the OPCW's cybersecurity, resilience and business continuity, while Council Decision (CFSP) [2021/2073](#) enhanced operational effectiveness through satellite imagery. Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/1344](#) strengthened the Technical Secretariat's implementation and mandate fulfilment capabilities. An additional €1.6 million under Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/1984](#) supported the OPCW in integrating expertise from non-routine investigations, including by its Investigation and Identification Team, into permanent Technical Secretariat capacities, supporting the attribution mechanism mandated by the fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties ([C-SS-4/DEC.3](#)).

Activities related to conventional weapons

Throughout 2024, the European Union continued its long-standing support for conventional weapons control through multi-year programmes with particular emphasis on small arms and light weapons. Regional initiatives included support for the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/1965](#), which benefited Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Asia-Pacific region through activities undertaken by the three United Nations regional centres for disarmament. In Latin America and the Caribbean, collaboration with OAS continued under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/847](#).

South-East Europe received substantial attention. Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/3006](#) supported SEESAC activities in the western Balkans, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, while Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/3097](#) enabled efforts by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of small arms, light weapons and conventional ammunition. Under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/2321](#), the European Union backed efforts by SEESAC to assist in implementing the [*Roadmap for a Sustainable Solution to the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons \(SALW\) and Their Ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024*](#). OSCE provided support for Ukraine through Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/3003](#), while the member States and secretariat of the League of Arab States benefited under Council Decision (CFSP) [2024/2500](#).

Global tools development included continued support for the internationally recognized arms and ammunition management validation system under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/2275](#) through the Ammunition Management Advisory Team. The fifth phase of iTrace proceeded under Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/387](#) through Conflict Armament Research,

providing a global reporting mechanism on illicit small arms and light weapons, as well as other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition in conflict-affected areas.

Promoting the Arms Trade Treaty remained a priority for the European Union, which offered technical assistance to countries in Africa, Latin America, Central and South-East Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus in support of the Treaty's universalization and effective implementation. Financial support for the Treaty's implementation support programme continued under Council Decision (CFSP) [2021/2309](#), implemented by Expertise France and Germany's Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control, while Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/2296](#) maintained support for the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat. Effective arms export controls advanced across Southern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Middle East and North Africa, and Central Asia, thanks to Council Decision (CFSP) [2023/2539](#), which financed specialized support by Germany's Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control.

The European Union maintained strong engagement on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, supporting the Oslo Action Plan 2020–2024 under Council Decision (CFSP) [2021/257](#). In 2024, the bloc continued to be one of the world's largest donors for mine clearance, mine risk education, capacity-building and victim assistance.

Activities in the area of emerging technologies and arms control

The European Union continued to address the security implications of new and emerging technologies, notably artificial intelligence, through targeted capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives. Two projects advanced those objectives: "Promoting responsible innovation in artificial intelligence for peace and security", implemented by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and SIPRI under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/2269](#), and "Unlocking innovation: enabling technologies and international security", implemented by UNIDIR under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/2320](#).

Other relevant activities or institutional developments

The European Union Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium of think tanks received ongoing support under Council Decision (CFSP) [2022/597](#), covering 2022–2025. The [thirteenth European Union Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference](#) was convened in Brussels on 12 and 13 November.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

At the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit in Washington, D.C., on 10 July, Heads of State and Government [reaffirmed their commitment](#) to NATO's nuclear deterrence

and arms control policy decisions, principles and commitments, as well as its non-proliferation and disarmament objectives established in the 2022 Strategic Concept and 2023 Vilnius Communiqué. The allies stated that arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation had made and should continue to make an essential contribution to achieving NATO's security objectives and to ensuring strategic stability and collective security.

The allies reiterated their strong and enduring commitment to the NPT and its full implementation across its three pillars. In 2024, they actively supported progress towards the Treaty's full implementation and universalization in the context of its review process. NATO sought to support the creation of a security environment for a world without nuclear weapons, including by supporting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and early negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty to halt fissile material production for nuclear weapons.

The allies pursued numerous initiatives and sought dialogue with all interlocutors to promote peace and reduce nuclear risks. However, the Russian Federation continued to weaponize nuclear risks in support of its coercive policies and refused to engage on a follow-on agreement to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START), due to expire in February 2026. The North Atlantic Council denounced the irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and coercive nuclear signalling, including the announcement of stationing nuclear weapons in Belarus, as a means of strategic intimidation.

On 8 November, NATO [condemned](#) the decision by the leaders of the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dangerously expand the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. In declaring the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to be "[off the table](#)", the Russian Federation directly contradicted relevant Security Council resolutions and exacerbated regional tensions to further undermine the global non-proliferation regime, according to the allies.

China maintained its reluctance to take part in discussions on reducing nuclear risks. NATO remained open to constructive engagement with China on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, consistent with its Strategic Concept, including to build reciprocal transparency to safeguard NATO's security interests.

Meanwhile, NATO staff continued to work with the allies, partners and other international organizations to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to deter and defend against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. Beyond the NPT, the allies sustained their support for the full implementation and strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as Security Council

resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), viewing them as pillars of the international non-proliferation architecture.

The nineteenth [NATO Conference on Arms Control, Disarmament and Weapons of Mass Destruction Non-Proliferation](#), held in Warsaw in October, provided a platform for allies and partners to discuss ways to uphold multilateral regimes against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Participants also considered challenges concerning the outer space domain; military applications of artificial intelligence; the impact of emerging and disruptive technologies on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence; and current geopolitical challenges to arms control and disarmament.

The ongoing damage to Euro-Atlantic security from the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine included further erosion of the conventional arms control architecture in Europe. Throughout 2024, the allies pursued efforts to implement their conventional arms control obligations and commitments in the Euro-Atlantic area, despite the Russian Federation's withdrawals from the Open Skies Treaty in December 2021 and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in November 2023.

NATO and its allies continued supporting implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, helping States to manage weapons and ammunition stockpiles and destroy surplus material. Beneficiary States developed their capacities through tailored projects to combat the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

NATO, together with Jordan, hosted the first [international conference on the challenges of small-arms and light weapons control in the Middle East and North Africa](#). The event, held in Amman on 3 and 4 October, facilitated the identification of synergies, the exchange of best practices and networking opportunities.

NATO continued to serve as a forum for allies and partners to exchange information on their mine action efforts, with particular focus on raising awareness about contamination from mines and unexploded remnants of war in Ukraine resulting from the Russian aggression. In 2024, NATO launched a new multi-year project to support Ukraine's humanitarian demining capacity and capabilities.

In support of the women, peace and security agenda, NATO launched an online training course on the *NATO Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Small Arms and Light Weapons Projects*, designed for use in member and partner countries.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Weapons of mass destruction non-proliferation

In 2024, OSCE maintained its assistance to participating States in implementing Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). The Organization successfully completed a [biological safety and security project in Ukraine](#) with European Union support, while continuing to provide technical assistance and raise awareness about the resolution's requirements. OSCE carried out that work in cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Small arms, light weapons and conventional ammunition

OSCE participating States advanced their commitments to strengthening controls on small arms and light weapons, while enhancing the safety and security of conventional ammunition stockpiles. Information exchange remained a cornerstone of those efforts, with 70 per cent of participating States sharing data related to small arms and light weapons, stockpiles of conventional ammunition, and the implementation of relevant OSCE commitments, including those under the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

OSCE played an active role at the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action, delivering a [statement](#) and organizing a [side event](#) to showcase relevant efforts.

OSCE mobilized over €55 million in 2024 to support participating States through 19 assistance projects spanning Eastern Europe, South-East Europe and Central Asia. The assistance involved destroying surplus conventional ammunition, explosive materials and detonators; disposing of rocket fuel components and hazardous waste; upgrading physical infrastructure and security practices for stockpile management; building mine action capacity for clearing explosive hazards; and combating the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Regional security dynamics and institutional responses

The year 2024 saw OSCE continuing to navigate profound geopolitical tensions within an unprecedented regional security environment. The ongoing war in Ukraine significantly affected the security architecture throughout Europe and beyond, reinforcing the critical importance of the Forum for Security Co-operation as a platform for participating States to exchange information and perspectives on political-military security matters. The Forum remained particularly vital for discussions concerning the conflict in Ukraine and other regional disputes.

Amid those challenging circumstances, OSCE fulfilled the Forum's mandates by supporting participating States through an extensive range of programmatic activities.

Capacity-building initiatives

The Organization's Conflict Prevention Centre made further progress in developing the capabilities of the OSCE [Information Management and Reporting System](#). The platform is designed to assist in implementing agreed confidence- and security-building measures and their transparency instruments, enhance situational awareness and strengthen early warning mechanisms through geospatial analysis of military information exchanged among participating States. Available to all participating States through the OSCE secure communications network, the system was also adopted by the States parties to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Agreement) as their primary information management and analysis tool for implementing the Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control in the western Balkans.

The Conflict Prevention Centre also conducted the 2024 edition of its [Scholarship for Peace and Security](#) programme, focusing on conflict prevention and resolution through arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation within the OSCE area. Designed to promote women's and youth participation in related policymaking, planning and implementation, the programme attracted substantial engagement. Its online training component, launched on 6 May and concluded on 10 July, brought together 151 participants — 86 per cent women — from 50 OSCE participating States and 10 Partners for Co-operation.

The programme's impact was notable, with all 42 women participants in the training component (9–13 December) reporting that the experience enhanced their commitment to professional development in conflict prevention and resolution. Participants particularly valued how the scholarship expanded their knowledge of multilateral security dialogue, international organization operations and arms control instruments. Additionally, a capacity-building workshop on negotiation skills for conflict prevention and resolution was organized in Vienna on 15 and 16 July, exclusively for female scholarship graduates, further strengthening the programme's focus on empowering women in the security sector.

South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Throughout 2024, [SEESAC](#) demonstrated an unwavering commitment to fostering a safer South-East Europe. The organization strengthened institutional capacities through strategic interventions, tailored support and enhanced regional cooperation, contributing to more inclusive and accountable security sector institutions.

Activities related to conventional arms

SEESAC enhanced regional cooperation on policy and operations by facilitating biannual gatherings that brought together [small-arms and light weapons commissions](#) and the [South East Europe Firearms Experts Network](#). The meetings connected representatives from the western Balkans, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The organization advanced legislative and policy alignment with the European Union acquis in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo,^[13] [Montenegro](#), [North Macedonia](#), [Serbia](#) and Ukraine. Its contributions included drafting new laws and control strategies for small arms and light weapons, conducting gap analyses, and organizing a [regional workshop](#) in Brussels to discuss legislative frameworks related to firearms and explosives.

Institutional capacity-building remained a cornerstone of SEESAC's approach to combating arms trafficking and enhancing criminal investigations. The organization supported the operationalization of firearms focal points through expert advice, technical assistance and specialized training programmes. Its educational initiatives included [workshops](#) to strengthen collaboration with ballistic laboratories and prosecution offices, courses on the use of the [Analyst Notebook](#), [investigative skills-building for firearms focal points](#), and strengthening [open-source intelligence](#) capacities. Additionally, SEESAC delivered over [€5.5 million in equipment](#) to law enforcement agencies across the region, together with specialized [training programmes](#) to maximize operational effectiveness.

Crime scene investigation capacities received particular attention through comprehensive needs assessments conducted across six jurisdictions. The assessments resulted in detailed action plans and guidelines for ISO/IEC 17020:2012 accreditation, supported by a regional workshop and tailored assistance for forensic practices. Furthermore, SEESAC fostered operational cooperation and institutional capacity-building through regional meetings of [border](#) and [criminal](#) police, alongside an annual [workshop for firearms focal points](#) from the western Balkans, the Republic of Moldova and the European Union.

Gender perspectives in small-arms and light weapons control advanced with the launch of two key publications: [Guidelines for Assessing and Addressing Risks Related to the Firearms Misuse in Domestic Violence](#) and [Guidelines for Gender Responsive Firearms Licence Approval](#). [Regional train-the-trainer efforts](#) on the new guidance equipped participants to [disseminate institutional knowledge](#) effectively. An "[Advanced regional gender and small arms and light weapons](#)" training further strengthened capacities for gender-responsive policymaking and inter-institutional cooperation.

SEESAC enhanced regional outreach both by facilitating meetings of the [Regional Awareness-Raising Task Force](#) and by conducting [tailored training activities](#) for interior ministry officials,

police and journalists. Follow-up [educational initiatives](#) across six jurisdictions targeted prosecutors and news media to help strengthen ethical reporting practices around gender-based violence. SEESAC issued two new print resources on the topics: *[Analysis of Media Reporting on Firearm Misuse in Male Gender-based Violence against Women in the Western Balkans](#)* and *[Guidelines for Officials of the Ministries of Interior and Police Services for Communication with the Media in cases of Firearm Misuse in Gender-based Violence](#)*. Additional awareness campaigns in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo tackled [pyrotechnics misuse](#), weapons destruction, celebratory shooting, and small-arms and light weapons misuse, further promoting regional safety and accountability.

The [Armed Violence Monitoring Platform](#) continued to provide real-time data and insights to inform evidence-based policies and actions to enhance regional safety. SEESAC published four quarterly issues of *[Armed Violence Monitor](#)*, as well as three issues of *In Focus* addressing [weapon seizures](#), [statistics on victims](#) and the use of firearms in [domestic violence](#).

Physical security and stockpile management of small arms, light weapons and ammunition saw substantial progress through multiple initiatives. Kosovo received assistance in destroying [993 small-arms and light weapons pieces](#), while Bosnia and Herzegovina eliminated [1,958 weapons and 1,981 weapon parts](#). Security improvements included finalizing the storage location of the Republic of Moldova's Ministry of Interior and General Police Inspectorate, as well as completing upgrades to 12 evidence rooms across Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia. Upgrades to an additional 18 evidence rooms and the construction of a safekeeping facility in Albania remained under way at the end of 2024. Regional stockpile management capacities benefited from a specialized [workshop on weapons and ammunition management](#) for armed forces personnel from the western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova.

The [western Balkans road map](#) on small arms and light weapons maintained its role as a transformative regional framework throughout 2024, advancing alignment with European Union and international security standards. With support from France, Germany and the European Union, SEESAC facilitated coordination, monitored progress and fostered cooperation to achieve the road map's strategic objectives. Two [regional coordination meetings](#) during the year were complemented by six local-level meetings and [biannual progress reports](#) on implementation across participating countries. Following extensive consultations, the [revised road map for 2025–2030](#) received endorsement from western Balkans Ministers of Interior during the [European Union-Western Balkans Ministerial Forum](#).

The road map's impact gained further recognition at the [Berlin Process summit](#) and the [European Union-western Balkans summit](#), where participants praised its contribution to regional coordination and alignment with European Union security standards. In three side events of the [fourth Review Conference](#) of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light

Weapons, SEESAC showcased the role and impact of road maps in small-arms and light weapons control, the added value of integrating gender perspectives, and best practices for enhancing investigations into firearms-related crimes.^[14]

As the secretariat of the [Western Balkans Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#), SEESAC provided effective coordination and monitoring while supporting the decision-making processes of its steering committee. The Trust Fund received \$1 million in new contributions, increasing its value to \$29 million. Eight projects launched in late 2023 advanced legislative alignment with the Firearms Protocol alongside infrastructure upgrades, gender-responsive operations, crime-scene investigations and community outreach on firearm misuse. In September 2024, the steering committee approved a new phase of the project Hermes to counter firearms trafficking through postal mail, raising the total number of supported projects to 25 over five years. The Trust Fund published its [2023 annual report](#) in May 2024, highlighting progress towards the Roadmap's goals.

Activities related to peace, security and disarmament in general

SEESAC sustained its support for ministries of defence and armed forces in the western Balkans in 2024, focusing on evidence-based policy development and implementation to improve women's integration in line with the women, peace and security agenda.

The organization convened the ninth [regional meeting of gender military trainers](#), bringing together representatives from the ministries of defence and armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Participants shared knowledge on sex-disaggregated data collection and gender-inclusive responses to climate-induced disasters.

A specialized [workshop on gender-responsible leadership](#) for high-level security officials took place in Montenegro, fostering cross-institutional dialogue and facilitating the exchange of best practices on mitigating gender stereotypes and supporting equal opportunities for women in security institutions. SEESAC also completed the eighth cycle of the Gender Coach Programme for the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Montenegro, strengthening leadership skills and commitment to advancing gender equality within military structures.

The organization supported the completion and promotion of an online gender equality course for defence personnel, standardizing knowledge on the importance of gender equality. This initiative was built upon the regional baseline study on integrating a gender perspective in military education.

Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre - Centre for Security Cooperation

Throughout 2024, the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre - Centre for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC-CSC)^[15] organized nine activities in support of its mission to promote security cooperation and dialogue in South-East Europe. The activities drew over 325 experts and participants and featured lectures and presentations, discussions, practical exercises, exchanges of experience and table-top simulations.

Activities related to weapons of mass destruction

The "Chemical Weapons Convention Workshop" took place on 20 and 21 February in partnership with the OPCW. Building on successful previous collaboration, the 2024 workshop concentrated on chemical emergency preparedness and response. Participants worked to enhance national protection programmes against toxic chemicals and strengthen international chemical terrorism countermeasures. The aim was to identify critical needs related to national preparedness and response capabilities, including by investigating member States' capacity to address threats from chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The event brought together 32 participants from 10 countries.

On 26 and 27 March, the RACVIAC-CSC hosted an "Insider Threats Roundtable" as part of the Regional Nuclear Security Cooperation Initiative, conducted in partnership with the International Nuclear Security Program of the United States Department of Energy. The event convened experts, professionals and stakeholders in the nuclear industry to discuss the critical importance of addressing insider threats. Participants explored ways to support partner countries in developing, implementing and maintaining systems and measures to mitigate insider threats in nuclear security contexts. The dialogue attracted 49 attendees from 12 countries.

The Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction (C-WMD) network conference, entitled "Annual regional forum on analysis of weapons of mass destruction and chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threats and risks trends" took place from 16 to 18 April 2024 in Sarajevo. The conference provided an annual platform for South-East European network countries to analyse and discuss regional trends in weapons of mass destruction proliferation threats and risks. It drew 43 participants from 11 countries and organizations.

RACVIAC-CSC partnered with the IAEA to hold the "Regional Workshop on the Evaluation of Nuclear Security Detection Architecture" from 9 to 13 December, highlighting the need to develop measures and criteria for evaluating that architecture's effectiveness. Participants gained familiarity with assessment and evaluation methodologies related to nuclear security

detection architecture for nuclear and other radioactive material out of regulatory control. The workshop gathered 15 participants from eight countries, involved in national policy development, strategy, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Activities related to conventional arms control

The "Open Skies Treaty Aerial Observation Course" took place from 4 to 8 March at Pápa Air Base in Hungary. Organized in collaboration with Hungary and Romania, the course had become one of RACVIAC-CSC's most distinctive offerings through its demonstration of effective institutional synergy. Hungary hosted the course, Romania provided the AN-30 aircraft and crew, and Germany contributed financial support. The course's unique blend of theory and practice combines theoretical lectures, mission planning and observation flights to offer participants a comprehensive understanding of the Open Skies Treaty. The event gathered 34 participants from 13 countries and organizations.

The "Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control (Dayton Article IV) – Orientation Course" was held from 17 to 22 March with the aim of instructing participants on performing their duties as inspectors and escorts, according to the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control. Montenegro hosted the course, which received funding from Austria, Croatia and Germany, and was conducted in the official languages of the Agreement's parties. The objectives were to educate participants on the Dayton Peace Agreement, with particular emphasis on the subregional arms control agreement, while training them in their roles as inspectors and escorts. The event brought together 53 participants, lecturers and speakers from 16 countries and organizations.

Activities related to peace, security and disarmament

The "Course on Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament" took place on 18 and 19 June, in partnership with the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Italy. The course provided participants with political, legal and historical perspectives on the regulatory framework, strategies and techniques for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Participants had opportunities to develop skills in analysis, presentation and argumentation within negotiating and debating contexts on international security issues. A simulation exercise allowed participants to represent different States and groups of States in a mock NPT Review Conference, providing practical experience in diplomatic negotiations and international security debates. The course gathered 30 lecturers and participants from 11 countries.

From 17 to 19 September, RACVIAC-CSC partnered with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to organize the "Small Arms and Light Weapons Workshop". This event formed part of RACVIAC-CSC's ongoing efforts to address security challenges in South-East Europe through improved control and management of small arms and light weapons. Its goal was to identify key

priorities for implementing the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, particularly considering outcomes of the fourth Review Conference. Participants worked to enhance technical capacity for preventing and combating illicit small arms and light weapons, promote regional and international standards, and discuss challenges and opportunities related to new technologies in small-arms manufacturing and design. The workshop brought together 26 lecturers and participants from 19 countries and organizations.

RACVIAC-CSC carried out its "Arms Control Symposium" on 22 October, organized with support from Germany and Croatia. A cornerstone in RACVIAC-CSC's annual calendar for over 16 years, the symposium featured high-level presentations by renowned experts and subject matter specialists. Participants engaged on key topics, including the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the Open Skies Treaty, the NPT, as well as global compliance with the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions. Discussions also explored arms control challenges related to the Dayton Peace Agreement, the impact of emerging technologies on international security, international arms transfers, and small arms and light weapons. The symposium brought together 43 participants from 15 countries.

Middle East

League of Arab States

The League of Arab States maintained its efforts to coordinate and develop a unified regional and international position among its 22 member States on matters related to disarmament and arms control.

Activities related to weapons of mass destruction

Based on the recommendations of the Arab Senior Officials Committee in Charge of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction Issues, the League's Ministerial Council adopted resolution 9016 of 6 March, entitled "Establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East". In the resolution, the League addressed arrangements for its participation in the eleventh NPT Review Conference and the second session of its Preparatory Committee, the sixty-eighth IAEA General Conference, and the fifth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The League of Arab States partnered with Qatar to co-organize the third Arab forum on disarmament and non-proliferation, held in Doha in June. The event drew 120 participants from 17 Arab States, including high-ranking officials and experts, as well as representatives of the United Nations, the IAEA, the ICRC, the European Union, NATO and various research centres.

Conventional arms

The League's regional focal point on small arms and light weapons convened the fourteenth meeting of Arab national points of contact on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, at its Cairo headquarters in May. The meeting encouraged member States to submit national reports and participate actively in the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action.

The League and the European Union launched the third phase of their joint project entitled "Combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the member States of the League of Arab States", with implementation support from INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization and the Small Arms Survey. As the project's second phase concluded, the partners organized four in-depth training sessions and one regional workshop, in addition to several national training courses.

Emerging, cross-cutting and other issues

The League's Ministerial Council adopted resolution 9017 of 6 March, entitled "Strengthening Arab cooperation in the field of cybersecurity and information and communications technologies in the context of international security".

The League of Arab States partnered with the ICRC to host a conference on "New technologies and international humanitarian law: military operations and humanitarian implications", at the League's headquarters in December. Experts from 13 Arab States attended, along with representatives of the United Nations and SIPRI.

Other relevant activities or institutional developments

In cooperation with the Department of Peace Operations and the Folke Bernadotte Academy, the League convened a workshop on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, at its headquarters in October. The event brought together experts from 15 Arab States.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The Firearms Trafficking Section of UNODC maintained its support for Member States in implementing the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Firearms Protocol). Throughout 2024, UNODC provided technical assistance to countries in West and Central Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central Asia, and Eastern and South-East Europe. These efforts advanced target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals on reducing illicit arms flows.

UNODC support for intergovernmental processes included organizing the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Firearms, in Vienna. Participants examined how to operationalize the Firearms Protocol in response to emerging threats linked to technological developments, while also sharing national experiences in implementing offences outlined in the instrument.

As part of its legal and policy work, UNODC assisted countries seeking to accede to the Firearms Protocol and provided legislative advice to strengthen firearms control regimes and criminal offences related to firearms criminality. During the reporting period, UNODC offered pre-ratification support to four States,^[16] as well as tailored legislative assessments, gap analyses and drafting workshops that helped to reinforce legal frameworks in 18 States.^[17]

UNODC strengthened national capacities to detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate firearms trafficking and related crimes in 23 countries across Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean.^[18] Through those efforts, it aimed to disrupt the participating firearms trafficking networks and bring perpetrators to justice. In Ukraine, UNODC provided detection equipment and training to railway authorities to identify illicit circulation of firearms and ammunition, yielding steady increases in detections at strategic train stations. Additionally, UNODC partnered with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, and cooperated with OSCE, to host training sessions in Central Asia on applying international standards in firearms detection and preventing further diversion to organized criminal groups and terrorists. UNODC also collaborated with the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security to support implementation of the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap through training programmes focused on detection, investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking.

UNODC continued to promote regular exchanges between practitioners in firearms control and criminal justice. UNODC organized eight subregional meetings in the western Balkans, as well as several meetings of the Community of Practitioners against Firearms Trafficking and Related Crimes, to discuss lessons learned in addressing the transnational dimension of firearms trafficking. That work included a cross-regional meeting between practitioners from Central and West Africa and Latin America, along with a gathering of practitioners from Central Asia.

UNODC maintained its cross-border operational support to disrupt illicit arms flows. In November, it facilitated Operation KAFO V in West and Central Africa, mobilizing over 500 law enforcement agents and criminal justice practitioners from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Mali and the Niger. The operation at 24 strategic border crossings led to the seizure of more than 400 firearms, 4,000 rounds of ammunition, 10,000 dynamite sticks and 5,200 metres of detonating cords, along with nearly 2 million units of counterfeit medicines and significant quantities of drugs with an estimated value exceeding \$10 million. Several suspects were arrested during the operation. UNODC supported months of coordination and pre-operational capacity-building activities at the regional and national levels, providing nearly

400 field personnel with expertise to strengthen their capabilities in detecting, investigating and prosecuting firearms-related offences.

As part of its global initiative to monitor illicit arms flows, UNODC continued to collect national firearms seizure data through its illicit arms flows questionnaire and explored expanding the UNODC Drugs Monitoring Platform to include firearms-related crimes. The platform would enable analysis and monitoring of illicit arms flows based on a combination of national reporting and web-scraping technology.

UNODC complemented that data collection with several research products and technical assistance tools; it published the *Digest of Firearms Trafficking and Related Crimes Cases*, a joint issue paper with the Flemish Peace Institute entitled *Firearms and Drugs: Partners in Transnational Crime*, and an issue paper entitled *Illicit Firearms Trafficking – Addressing the Criminal Side of Diversion*.

UNODC also translated and disseminated to all five Central Asian States the *Handbook on Firearms for Border Guards and Customs*. Additionally, the Firearms Trafficking Section continued to update its dedicated firearms portal within the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) database, which at year end contained information on 245 firearms trafficking cases and 338 pieces of firearms-related legislation.

Footnotes

[1]As at the end of 2024, eight States had approved their national action plans.

[2]Founded in 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum is the Pacific region's premier political and economic policy organization comprising 18 member countries. The pre-eminent decision-making body of the Forum is the Forum Leaders Meeting.

[3]See Rule 2, Members to the Conference: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen ([A/CONF.236/2023/1](#)).

[4]See Rule 34, Observers ([A/CONF.236/2023/1](#)).

[5]Indicator 16.4.2 reads: "Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments".

[6]The discussions included representatives from RECSA, as well as the African Union Commission, the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, the Eastern Africa Standby Force, UNDP, the International Peace Support Training Centre, UNIDIR, the Small Arms Survey and the Department of Peace Operations.

[7]Co-organized with the Bahamas, the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats.

[8]Co-organized with UNIDIR and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

[9]In support of its mission, the Committee maintained partnerships with the OPCW; the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit; the IAEA; the Office for Disarmament Affairs; the Group of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004); UNODC; the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction; the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control; the European Union Export Control Programme; and academic initiatives such as the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland.

[10]These efforts were further reinforced by the adoption of the [ASEAN Declaration on Combating Arms Smuggling](#) at the seventeenth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, held in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, on 21 August 2023.

[11]"[Forging a path towards a WMD-free Middle East: The WMD-Free Zone Compass](#)", co-organized with UNIDIR; and "[International cooperation on peaceful uses](#)".

[12]The European Union continued to call on all countries to support the implementation of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The European Union continued its full support for the IAEA, which is tasked under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with monitoring and verifying nuclear commitments by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[13]For UNDP, references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). For the European Union, this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the International Court of Justice opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

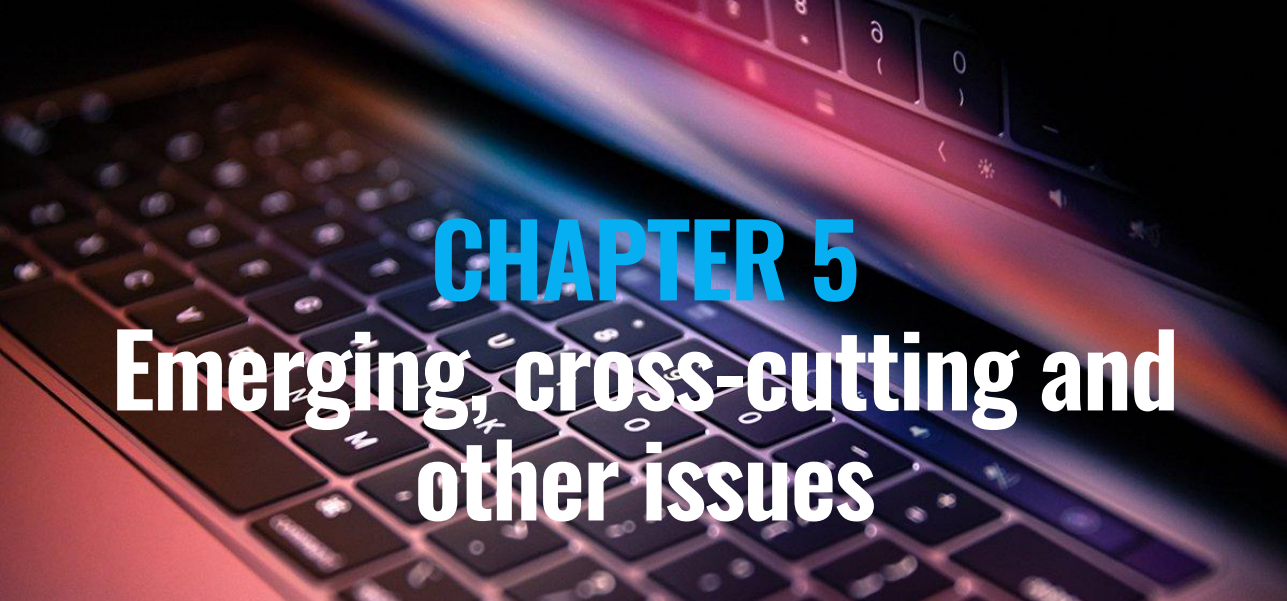
[14]"[The importance and impact of sub-regional roadmaps and initiatives for the implementation of the PoA/ITI](#)"; "[Combatting arms trafficking and investigations of firearm-related crimes – presenting a comprehensive approach in South East Europe \(SEE\)](#)"; and "[Gender mainstreaming in arms control: from policy to operations](#)".

[15] RACVIAC was established in 2000 as an initiative of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. At the end of 2023, it had nine members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Türkiye), as well as 14 associate members and six observers.

[16] Australia, Malta, Republic of the Congo and Uzbekistan.

[17] Albania, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chad, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ghana, Guyana, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Serbia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and Uzbekistan.

[18] Albania, Argentina, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Kazakhstan, Kosovo (under Security Council resolution [1244 \(1999\)](#)), Mali, Montenegro, Niger, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Serbia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Ukraine.



CHAPTER 5

Emerging, cross-cutting and other issues

The very quality of seamless, instant connectivity that powers the enormous benefits of cyberspace can also leave people, institutions and entire countries deeply vulnerable. And the perils of weaponizing digital technologies are growing by the year. ... Digital technology offers an incredible opportunity to create a more just, equal, sustainable and peaceful future for all. But breakthroughs must be oriented towards the good.

— [António Guterres](#), Secretary-General of the United Nations

Developments and trends, 2024

In 2024, the international community continued to make progress in addressing several emerging challenges related to developments in science and technology and their implications for international peace and security.

On outer space, the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/250](#), successfully concluded its work. At its final substantive session, the Group adopted a report ([A/79/364](#)) containing a non-exhaustive set of possible substantial elements that could be considered in further measures and appropriate international negotiations, including in a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Group concluded that the report could serve two purposes: first, as a reference document for further measures and appropriate international negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space,

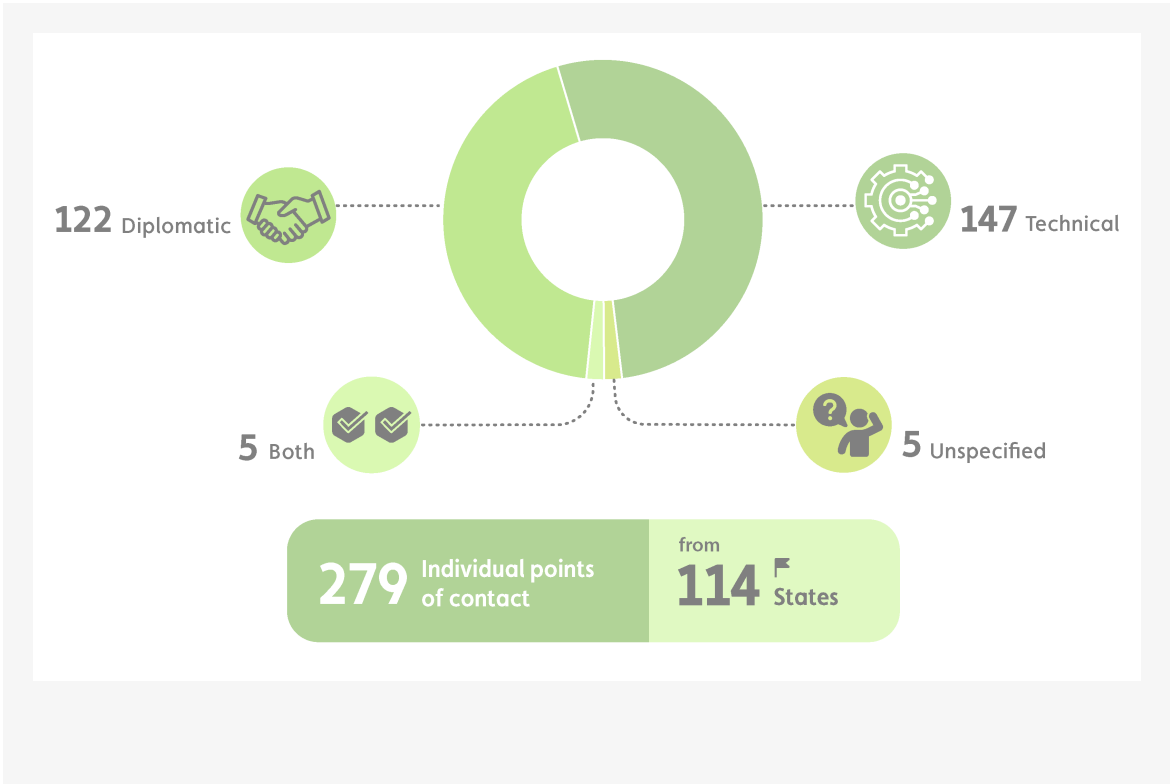
including on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space; and second, as a contribution to future work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The General Assembly established a new open-ended working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, replacing the two open-ended working groups that had been established in 2023 (decision [79/512](#)). The new working group was scheduled to meet from 2025 to 2028.

In the first year of a new three-year cycle, the United Nations Disarmament Commission began considering an agenda item entitled “Recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security” (for more information, see chap. 7).

The Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (2021–2025) held its seventh, eighth and ninth substantive sessions and adopted its third annual progress report by consensus ([A/79/214](#)). In the report, States agreed on new language addressing existing and potential threats, as well as on a new set of confidence-building measures. Additionally, they acknowledged a norms implementation checklist drafted by the Chair and set out an overarching framework outlining the scope, structure and modalities for a future permanent mechanism on information and communications technologies security.

Figure 5.1. Global intergovernmental points of contact directory in numbers, as at 31 December 2024



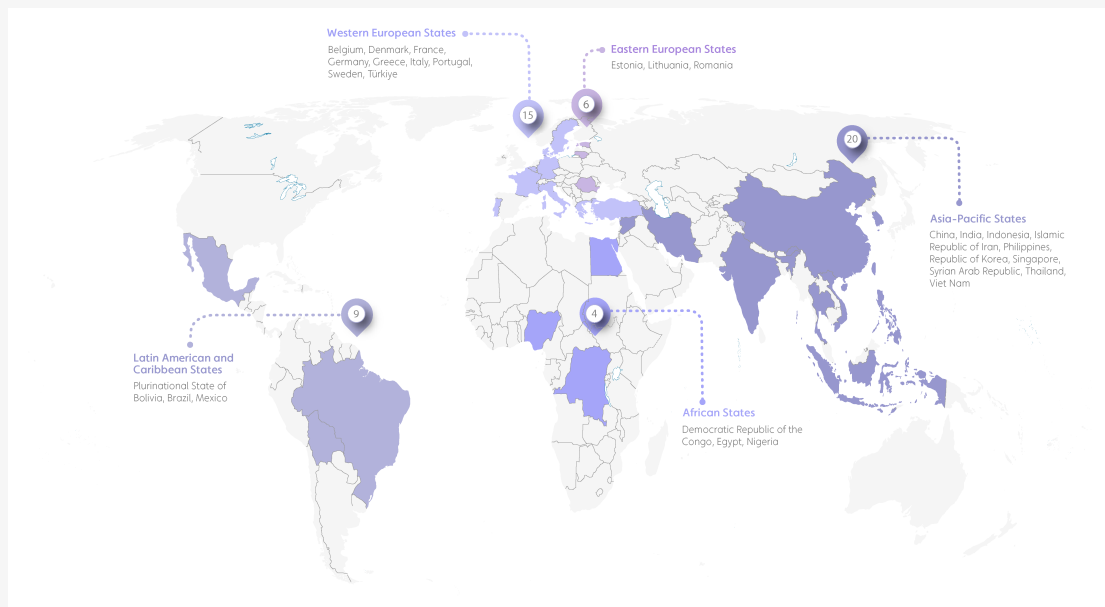
The Office for Disarmament Affairs maintains a Global Intergovernmental Points of Contact Directory on the Use of Information and Communications Technologies in the Context of International Security. Launched in May 2024, this directory aims to facilitate secure and direct communication between Member States regarding ICT incidents and other relevant matters. States can participate by nominating individual points of contact who will be granted access to the online portal.

At the Summit of the Future, in September 2024, the General Assembly adopted the Pact for the Future as resolution [79/1](#), with the Global Digital Compact included as an annex. In the Pact, Member States demonstrated their commitment to multilateral disarmament processes and instruments, positioning disarmament issues within the context of broader peace and security efforts. Their Heads of State and Government underscored the potential impact of rising military expenditures on investments in sustainable development and sustaining peace. Member States committed to advancing various disarmament priorities through appropriate processes and forums, including bringing the world closer to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, addressing existing and emerging threats posed by emerging technologies, and confronting challenges related to the diversion and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

Building on those broad commitments, the Pact outlined specific actions in several key areas. Member States agreed to advance further measures and appropriate international negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. They also committed to urgently advancing discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems through the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The Pact further emphasized the need to enhance international cooperation and capacity-building efforts to close digital divides, as well as continuing to assess the existing and potential risks associated with military applications of artificial intelligence (AI). Member States asked the Secretary-General to provide ongoing updates on new and emerging technologies.

The Global Digital Compact (annex I) included an objective on enhancing the international governance of AI for the benefit of humanity as one of its key objectives. To advance that goal, the General Assembly decided to establish a multidisciplinary Independent International Scientific Panel on AI, and to initiate a Global Dialogue on AI Governance within the United Nations framework.

Figure 5.2. Regional distribution of participants in the workshops on promoting responsible innovation in artificial intelligence for peace and security



A series of workshops on responsible innovation in artificial intelligence (AI) for peace and security have taken place since 2023. In 2024, Young AI practitioners from around the world gathered in Belgium, Estonia and Portugal to address the risks that the misuse of civilian AI could pose to international peace and security. The workshops incorporated scenario-based training, educational resources and multi-stakeholder dialogue to help empower future AI professionals to mitigate risks and contribute to ethical, inclusive and secure AI development. They were organized by the Office for Disarmament Affairs in partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute with support from the European Union.

The map above shows the geographical representation of the participants during the 2024 workshops, with most coming from Asia-Pacific and Western European States.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

MAP SOURCE: United Nations Geospatial.

On autonomous weapons systems, the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems convened, in accordance with a decision of the 2023 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons ([CCW/MSP/2023/7](#), para. 20). Following its mandate and building on previous recommendations and conclusions, the Group worked to consider and formulate a set of elements of an instrument, without prejudging its nature and taking into account the example of existing Protocols within the Convention. In its deliberations, the Group considered draft elements on (a) a working characterization of such systems; (b) the application of international humanitarian law; (c) possible prohibitions and regulations; (d) other measures to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law; and (e) accountability (for more information, see chap. 3).

Responding to General Assembly resolution [78/241](#), the Secretary-General prepared a report on lethal autonomous weapons systems ([A/79/88](#)), incorporating views of 47 States and groups of States, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and 28 civil society entities comprising both individual organizations and informal groupings. The report summarized States' perspectives on definitions and characterizations; challenges, concerns and potential benefits; deliberations by States; and next steps. In his observations and conclusions, the Secretary-General reiterated his call for the conclusion, by 2026, of a legally binding instrument to prohibit lethal autonomous weapons systems that function without human control or oversight and cannot be used in compliance with international humanitarian law, and to regulate all other types of autonomous weapon systems. He also called on the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to work diligently to fulfil the mandate of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems as soon as possible and encouraged the General Assembly to continue its consideration of this matter.

Emerging issues

Outer space

Weapons of mass destruction in outer space

Following a [public disclosure of intelligence information](#) in February, the United States [alleged](#) that the Russian Federation was developing an object capable of carrying a nuclear weapon in Earth orbit. Senior Russian officials denied their country was developing a space-based nuclear weapon and reaffirmed the Russian Federation's commitment to the [Outer Space Treaty](#), including its article IV, in which the States parties "undertake not to place in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of

mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner".

On 24 April, the Security Council [met](#) to act on a draft resolution on weapons of mass destruction in outer space, introduced by the United States and Japan and co-sponsored by 65 States ([S/2024/302](#)). The purpose of the resolution was to reinforce compliance with the Outer Space Treaty, particularly the obligation not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. The Russian Federation vetoed the resolution, stating that the sponsors had failed to reflect its position. Advocating for the development of legally binding prohibitions on the placement of conventional weapons in outer space and on the use of force from space against Earth or from the Earth against space objects — proposals which Western States opposed on technical and political grounds — China and the Russian Federation jointly proposed an amendment to this effect ([S/2024/323](#)), which was defeated by a vote of 7-7-1.

On 20 May, the Security Council [reconvened](#) to consider a Russian-sponsored draft text that incorporated language from the previously considered draft amendment into the proposal tabled by Japan and the United States in April ([S/2024/383](#)). This resolution was also defeated by a vote of 7-7-1, with voting patterns unchanged from the previous deliberation.

In October, Japan and the United States introduced a new draft resolution in the General Assembly, First Committee, entitled "Weapons of mass destruction in outer space" ([A/C.1/79/L.7/Rev.1](#)), identical in substance to the text they had submitted to the Security Council in April. The Committee considered two amendments proposed by the Russian Federation ([A/C.1/79/L.78/Rev.1](#) and [A/C.1/79/L.79/Rev.1](#)) and decided not to adopt them by votes of 41-66-49 and 42-65-49, respectively. The First Committee then approved the draft resolution, which the General Assembly subsequently adopted as resolution [79/18](#).

In a key paragraph of the resolution, the Assembly affirmed "the obligation of all States parties to fully comply with the Outer Space Treaty, including not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner" (operative para. 4). The resolution also urged "Member States, taking into account article IV of the Outer Space Treaty, not to develop nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction specifically designed to be placed in orbit around the Earth, to be installed on celestial bodies, or to be stationed in outer space in any other manner" (operative para. 6).

Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

In 2024, the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space completed its work, adopting by consensus a substantive final report ([A/79/364](#)). The General Assembly had established the Group in 2023 by resolution [77/250](#), mandating it to “consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

In line with the Group's mandate, its Chair, Bassem Hassan (Egypt), convened an open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting as an opportunity for all Member States to engage in interactive discussions and share views on a report of the Group's work provided by the Chair in his own capacity ([GE-PAROS/2024/CRP.1](#)). Held at United Nations Headquarters from 29 February to 1 March, the meeting allowed engagement by representatives of intergovernmental organizations and other entities with standing invitations to participate as observers in the General Assembly's work, as well as United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations.

The meeting featured two main segments, each beginning with a presentation by the Chair on the relevant part of his report. The first segment focused on “General considerations and key conceptual issues”, while the second addressed “Substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space”. Both segments facilitated interactive discussions and exchange of views. The Chair invited working paper submissions from Member States and civil society representatives, receiving contributions from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and Project Ploughshares.^[1]

The Chair of the Group also briefed the Conference on Disarmament on 28 March, under the Presidency of Ali Bahreini (Islamic Republic of Iran), presenting a summary of the report he provided to Member States at the open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting held in New York ([CD/PV.1716](#)).

To support the Group's work, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNIDIR jointly convened a two-day virtual workshop on 22 and 23 May. The workshop explored and elaborated on a working paper that Mr. Hassan had presented to the Group in his own capacity at its first session ([GE-PAROS/2023/WP.20](#)). Participants devoted the first day to examining characteristics of threats involving space systems, particularly space-to-Earth and space-to-space vectors, and the second day to exploring possible verification approaches and tools for effectively mitigating threats to space systems.

During the intersessional period, the Group carried out work on elements for its report. On 29 April, the Chair circulated proposed elements for the final report, which were discussed with the Group's experts at a virtual informal consultation on 8 May, with written comments accepted until 24 May. Based on that feedback, the Chair circulated a revised elements paper on 1 July and convened another round of informal consultations 10 days later. After receiving additional written comments through 19 July, the Chair circulated a zero draft of the report on 30 July.

The Group held its final session in Geneva from 5 to 16 August, with experts from 23 States participating.^[2] The session focused entirely on report preparation, with the Group considering two draft revisions before adopting a substantive final report (A/79/364) by consensus on 16 August.

In the first section of its final report, on "General considerations and key conceptual issues", the Group set out the outcomes of its work in four areas: (a) the evolving nature of outer space activities, threats and related capabilities; (b) the evolution of United Nations efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects; (c) the existing normative and legal framework; and (d) approaches to further measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In the report's second section, on the "Consideration of substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space", the Group first presented its general considerations on definitions and verification. It then provided the considerations of the Group on a non-exhaustive set of possible substantial elements that could be taken into account in further measures and appropriate international negotiations, including in a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Those elements addressed: (a) principles and objectives; (b) obligations in the areas of the threat or use of force; intentional acts / acts that can damage or destroy space systems; acts that can disrupt or interfere with the safe operation or normal functioning of space objects; protection of space-based services to civilians; placement of weapons in outer space; research, development, testing, stockpiling and deployment of systems designed for the use in intentional acts / acts that damage or destroy space systems, as well as their elimination; national space policies, doctrines and strategies and other measures that could reduce the risk of escalation, conflict and an arms race in outer space; assistance and encouragement in certain acts; and national implementation; (c) transparency and confidence-building measures; (d) consultative mechanisms and settlement of disputes; (e) international cooperation; and (f) other aspects.

At its seventy-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted texts welcoming the Group's work (resolutions 79/20 and 79/21) and discussions (resolutions 79/18 and 79/22), as well as the consensus adoption of its report (resolution 79/19 and decision 79/512).

Joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees of the General Assembly

In accordance with General Assembly resolutions [78/52](#) and [78/72](#), on 30 October, the First and Fourth Committees of the General Assembly convened a [joint half-day panel discussion](#) to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. In accordance with past practice, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Office for Outer Space Affairs prepared a draft programme for the joint panel discussion (A/C.1/79/CRP.5; A/C.4/79/CRP.1), which was circulated for information only.

The Chairs of the First and Fourth Committees opened the plenary meeting, which then heard remarks from the Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs. The Committees received briefings from invited panellists, including the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space; the Chair of the Disarmament Commission; the current and incoming Chairs of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; the former Chair of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee; and a representative of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations, who contributed to the negotiations on the outer space elements including in the Pact for the Future. Delegations from 12 Member States (speaking both in their national capacities and on behalf of a group)^[3] and one observer organization^[4] delivered statements (for more information, see chap. 7).

Following the meeting, the Co-Chairs circulated an informal summary of the discussion, issued under their authority and reflecting their understanding of the views expressed.

Open-ended working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects

By resolutions [78/20](#) and [78/238](#), the General Assembly decided to establish two open-ended working groups, under items respectively addressing "Reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours" and "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space". The working group established pursuant to resolution 78/20 was to meet in 2025 and 2026, while the one established pursuant to resolution 78/238 was to meet from 2024 to 2028.

At the seventy-ninth session of the First Committee, Egypt, on behalf of a group of States,^[5] introduced a draft decision to merge these bodies. The General Assembly adopted it as decision [79/512](#), establishing a new open-ended working group for 2024–2028 to replace the two previously created groups. Under this decision, the General Assembly tasked the new open-ended working group with submitting recommendations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, and further decided that its discussions and

recommendations will be informed by all relevant General Assembly resolutions on the topic, including resolutions 78/20 and 78/238.

Information technology and international security

The malicious use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) by both State and non-State actors remained a pressing concern in 2024. The year saw a steady stream of disruptive incidents, with numerous impacts on infrastructure providing essential public services such as healthcare, banking and government service. Exploitation of software vulnerabilities, including through commercial sale of such information over the Internet, emerged as a common tactic. At the same time, growing attention was paid to financially motivated incidents involving ransomware.

Electoral security posed a significant challenge throughout the year, as elections took place in more than 70 States. Disinformation campaigns designed to influence voters, and uses of deepfakes of political figures were observed in the lead-up to national elections in several States. At the same time, interference in critical infrastructure facilitating electoral processes also posed risks.

At the United Nations, States intensified their discussions on those issues through regular multilateral discussions reflecting growing concern over threats to international peace and security from State use of ICTs.

The Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 adopted its penultimate annual progress report ([A/79/214](#)) ahead of its final year of work. Among other outcomes, States consensually agreed on initial elements of a future permanent mechanism to succeed the current group.

In September, the General Assembly convened the high-level Summit of the Future, adopting the Pact for the Future (resolution [79/1](#)), including the Global Digital Compact (annex I). Through the Pact, States committed to seizing opportunities associated with new and emerging technologies, while addressing potential risks from their use. In the Global Digital Compact, Governments committed to upholding international law and human rights online and taking concrete steps to make the digital space safe and secure. A specific commitment in the Pact focused on enhancing international cooperation and capacity-building efforts in order to bridge digital divides, ensuring all States could safely and securely benefit from digital technologies. Relatedly, the Global Digital Compact emphasized closing those divides to accelerate progress under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In December, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime; Strengthening International Cooperation for Combating Certain Crimes

Committed by Means of Information and Communications Technology Systems and for the Sharing of Evidence in Electronic Form of Serious Crimes — the first international criminal justice treaty negotiated in over 20 years. The [Convention](#) established a new platform for collaboratively exchanging electronic evidence, protecting victims and preventing cybercrime, while ensuring the protection of human rights online.

The Security Council also devoted attention to ICT security matters in 2024, holding several dedicated formal and informal sessions. These included Arria-formula meetings in April on the “[Cyberthreat landscape](#)” and in July on “Opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence to international peace and security”, as well as an [open debate](#) in June on “Addressing evolving threats in cyberspace”.

Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025

The [Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025](#) held its seventh, eighth and ninth substantive sessions in March, July and December, respectively, supported by intersessional meetings in May. Burhan Gafoor (Singapore) remained Chair of the Working Group, which met at United Nations Headquarters.

In July, the Open-ended Working Group adopted its third annual progress report by consensus ([A/79/214](#)), building on its first ([A/77/275](#)) and second ([A/78/265](#)). Endorsed by the General Assembly in December by resolution [79/237](#), the third progress report included new language on existing and potential threats, including threats to undersea cables and orbit communication networks, as well as uses of ransomware and commercially available intrusion capabilities. States agreed to a new set of confidence-building measures and acknowledged a Chair-drafted norms implementation checklist. In an annex to the report, States addressed the scope, structure and modalities of a future permanent mechanism on ICT security.

Seventh substantive session

At the Open-ended Working Group's seventh substantive session (4–8 March), States held in-depth discussions on all the Group's sub-agenda items: existing and potential threats in the sphere of ICT security; rules, norms and principles of responsible State behaviour; applicability of international law to uses of ICTs; confidence-building measures; capacity-building; and regular institutional dialogue. The Chair led practical and detailed discussions to identify substantive areas of convergence and facilitate consideration of States' proposals and position papers.

States expressed concern over the growing complexity of the ICT threat landscape, referencing supply chain vulnerabilities, growing markets for ICT intrusion capabilities, and convergences between threats in this domain and other emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence. They also continued to engage on the potential objectives, scope, structure and modalities of a future permanent security mechanism to succeed the current Working Group upon the conclusion of its mandate in 2025.

Women's representation in the Open-ended Working Group continued to be strong. Of the 289 interventions made during plenary sessions, 145 (50 per cent) were delivered by women delegates.

Eighth substantive session

The Open-ended Working Group held its eighth substantive session from 8 to 12 July, adopting an annual progress report by consensus for a third consecutive year ([A/79/214](#)). In negotiating the document, States engaged in substantive discussions on the evolving threat landscape and the applicability of international law to State use of ICTs. A dedicated stakeholder session held during the week featured contributions from representatives of the private sector, academia and civil society organizations.

The third annual progress report reflected the varied inputs of the eighth substantive session and of prior sessions and outcomes, alongside newly agreed language on key topics.

The report encompassed several priority areas:

- Noting with concern uses of ICTs in current conflicts, as well as heightened risks of the uses of ransomware, commercially available ICT intrusion capabilities and potential challenges posed to international peace and security by the convergence of other emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing
- Reaffirming States' need to protect, and refrain from interference in, critical infrastructure, including undersea cables and orbit communication networks
- Responding to the growing scale and complexity of threats to international peace and security from this domain by laying out four new global confidence-building measures in the context of ICTs, including technologies related to protecting critical infrastructure
- Strengthening public-private partnerships.

Significantly, the report incorporated an annex in which the Working Group set out initial elements of a single-track, consensus-based permanent mechanism on ICT security to convene beginning in 2026, including guiding principles, functions and scope, structure, modalities and decision-making arrangements of a future permanent mechanism.

The “Voluntary checklist of practical actions for the implementation of voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs” was included as an annex to the report, which set out actions that could be taken at the national and international levels to support the effective implementation of the voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour.

The Open-ended Working Group recorded further progress towards achieving gender parity, thanks in part to support provided through the internationally financed [Women in Cyber Fellowship](#). At the eighth session, women delegates delivered 110 of 225 plenary statements (49 per cent).

Ninth substantive session

From 2 to 6 December, the Open-ended Working Group convened its ninth substantive session, initiating the final cycle of its mandate to conclude in July 2025.

Throughout its third session of 2024, the Working Group exchanged views on the evolving nature of ICT threats, including threats related to critical infrastructure, ransomware and supply chain vulnerabilities.

On the applicability of international law to State use of ICTs, States reaffirmed the applicability of international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and engaged in discussions on the applicability of international humanitarian law, including its foundational principles of humanity, necessity, proportionality and distinction. The Working Group also considered a proposal by a group of States to develop a legally binding instrument on ICT security.

Women delivered 164 of the 328 statements during the Working Group's substantive deliberations (50 per cent), reflecting ongoing progress towards gender parity.

Intersessional meetings

From 9 to 17 May, the Chair convened a series of intersessional meetings to further support consideration of the Open-ended Working Group's sub-agenda items.

Those meetings included the [formal launch](#) of the Global Intergovernmental Points of Contact Directory and the high-level “Global roundtable on ICT capacity-building”. States addressed the Working Group's six sub-agenda items in deliberations that featured expert briefers, focusing their final day of discussions on regular institutional dialogue and feedback on an elements paper drafted by the Chair, with a view to identifying areas of convergence ahead of negotiations on the Group's third annual progress report. Women delivered 52 of the week's 132 interventions (39 per cent), and 6 of the 15 expert briefers were women.

Global round table on ICT security capacity-building

On 10 May, the Chair convened the “Global roundtable on ICT security capacity-building” ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)), in response to a request in the Working Group’s second annual progress report ([A/78/265](#)). Over 100 Member States took part, with 53 delegations taking the floor. The participants included seven Ministers who shared views, best practices and recommendations for further action to strengthen cooperation in this area.

The opening segment featured video remarks by the [Secretary-General](#), who highlighted both the urgency of closing digital divides between States and the need for an open, free and secure digital future for all. The event also featured interventions from the [Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme](#), the [Secretary-General of the International Telecommunications Union](#) and the Chef de Cabinet of the [Office of the President of the General Assembly](#).

States participated in a signature panel and plenary session on the theme “Building cyber resilience for sustainable development by bridging the global capacity gap”, as well as two breakout groups addressing “Strengthening governance, policies and processes” and “Developing technology, talent and partnerships”. Participants identified barriers to cooperation and mitigation strategies and recommended concrete actions for States, the United Nations system and stakeholders. The meeting was complemented by a “matchmaking session”, where States and stakeholders outlined existing capacity-building programmes and initiatives with the aim of increasing awareness, collaboration and participation.

United Nations–Singapore Cyber Fellowship

From 22 to 27 April and from 12 to 17 August, two sessions of the United Nations–Singapore Cyber Fellowship took place at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations–Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence. The programme was a collaborative effort of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore.

Senior government officials representing a variety of policy, technical and diplomatic backgrounds participated in a week of training panel discussions, workshops and round tables, as well as visits to national critical infrastructure sites, research laboratories and academic institutions. The session culminated in an interactive communications exercise where attendees practised responding to a simulated ICT crisis. The combined sessions were attended by 47 participants, 24 of whom were women delegates (51 per cent).

Developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs prepared the seventh edition of the report of the Secretary-General on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts ([A/79/224](#)). In the report, the Secretary-General addressed scientific and technological developments in the following areas: (a) artificial intelligence and autonomy; (b) uncrewed systems; (c) digital technologies; (d) biology and chemistry; (e) space and aerospace technologies; (f) electromagnetic technologies; and (g) materials technologies. The seventh edition of the report also included a cross-sectional analysis on the convergence of technologies.

In the report's conclusions, the Secretary-General recommended that United Nations bodies and entities continue to encourage multi-stakeholder and geographically equitable engagement on these matters, including by industry and other private sector actors, through formal and informal platforms. He also urged Member States to act on the recommendations in his policy brief [A New Agenda for Peace](#).

Missile-related issues

On 22 and 23 October, the International Institute for Strategic Studies held the sixth meeting of its [Missile Dialogue Initiative](#), in Berlin. The initiative, established in 2019 in partnership with Germany, brought together participants to discuss global developments in arms control, challenges of missile proliferation and the future of missile-related confidence- and security-building measures.

Armed uncrewed aerial vehicles

In 2024, the international community continued to grapple with the growing proliferation and use of [armed uncrewed aerial vehicles](#).

The systems were the focus of a [hybrid event](#) co-convened on 26 January by Cabo Verde, Costa Rica and Portugal, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Member State delegates and experts gathered at United Nations Headquarters to examine technological developments around armed uncrewed aerial vehicles and consider potential multilateral approaches to related threats. Portugal called for increased multilateral exchanges of views on the systems in a [statement](#) that 21 States ultimately endorsed.^[6]

In the following months, Portugal supported UNIDIR and the Office for Disarmament Affairs in organizing a series of webinars on uncrewed systems. Held from July to September, the webinars brought together expert briefers, delegates and other stakeholders to explore [terms](#)

and classifications related to uncrewed systems, benefits and risks stemming from the systems, and potential pathways of action for the multi-stakeholder community. Drawing from the discussions, UNIDIR produced a summary entitled “Armed and dangerous? A brief overview of uncrewed aerial systems – risks, impacts, and avenues for action”.

Cross-cutting issues

Relationship between disarmament and development

The General Assembly again underscored the “symbiotic relationship” between disarmament and development in its annual resolution on the matter (79/43). In that context, the Assembly reiterated its concern about rising global military expenditure diverting resources that could otherwise support development needs.

In his annual report to the General Assembly on the disarmament-development nexus (A/79/124), the Secretary-General highlighted ongoing efforts within the United Nations to further strengthen synergies in that regard. Meanwhile, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) continued to collect and analyse data on weapons collected from illicit domains and their status in accordance with indicator 16.4.2. (For more information on data collection for target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, see chap. 3.)

The Office for Disarmament Affairs, for its part, continued working to integrate small-arms control into development processes and frameworks,^[7] thereby further bolstering interlinkages between disarmament and development at the country level. The Office maintained its financial support for arms control projects in that regard through the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) and the Saving Lives Entity (SALIENT) funding facility. (For more information on UNSCAR and SALIENT, see chap. 3.)

Terrorism and disarmament

Work of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact

Led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact maintained its efforts to enhance coordination and coherence across the United Nations system in support of Member States’ implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Already one of the largest United Nations coordination frameworks, the Counter-Terrorism Compact welcomed the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in 2024 as its newest member.

The Counter-Terrorism Compact's eight working groups convened 40 meetings throughout the year, including regular quarterly meetings, as well as specialized thematic discussions. These gatherings enabled in-depth briefings on key issues, facilitated the exchange of best practices, and supported joint research initiatives, monitoring and evaluation efforts, resource mobilization and capacity-building activities. The working groups discussed critical security challenges, including countering the financing of terrorism, preventing terrorist travel, enhancing maritime and aviation security and protecting vulnerable targets. Additionally, they examined terrorism-related threats associated with small arms and light weapons, uncrewed aircraft systems, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons, as well as emerging risks from technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The Office of Counter-Terrorism continued to maintain the digital Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Platform, providing a virtual collaboration space for 1,050 focal points representing 46 Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, 137 Member States and 14 regional organizations to share information and coordinate activities.

The Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection held four quarterly meetings in 2024,^[8] addressing a range of security challenges. Sessions focused on advancing chemical emergency response exercises in Africa, analysing the use of uncrewed aircraft systems by non-State armed groups and strengthening the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. The Working Group also tracked global cyber threats and ICT incidents, while assessing vulnerabilities in air and maritime transportation. The discussions benefited from contributions by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

Chaired by INTERPOL with support from three Vice-Chairs — the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) — the Working Group explored thematic areas, including weapons of mass destruction financing, proliferation risks, regional threats, chemical security and critical infrastructure initiatives. Throughout the year, the Working Group maintained engagement with the Group of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) (1540 Committee) to identify opportunities to support that resolution's implementation. The Working Group invited the Group of Experts to all of its meetings, with plans for further dialogue in 2025 through thematic briefings or other collaborative activities.

Meanwhile, the Working Group on Border Management and Law Enforcement relating to Counter-Terrorism advanced its [technical guidelines](#) for preventing terrorist acquisition of weapons, with particular emphasis on small arms and light weapons, improvised explosive devices and uncrewed aircraft systems.

Work of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and its Counter-Terrorism Centre

Throughout 2024, the Office of Counter-Terrorism continued its wide-ranging outreach and capacity-building initiatives across global, regional and national platforms, strengthening Member States' capabilities to address terrorist weapon threats. Operating through its Counter-Terrorism Centre and the multi-year programme Countering Terrorist Use of Weapons, the Office engaged more than 650 officials representing over 40 Member States. These efforts addressed diverse security challenges, including weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, improvised explosive devices and uncrewed aircraft systems, while strengthening cooperative mechanisms to bolster international security frameworks.

In February, the Office organized a [workshop](#) in Rabat for Sahel countries to address the converging threats of improvised explosive devices and small arms and light weapons deployed by terrorists in the region. The Office also hosted a [high-level briefing](#) in New York on 23 October dedicated to building capacities for eliminating weapon supplies to terrorists in support of Security Council resolution [2370 \(2017\)](#).

Through its partnership with the United States, the Office convened a series of activities designed to strengthen chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive terrorism response capabilities. Regional workshops and table-top exercises were conducted for [Central Asian](#) States in Almaty (4–7 March), [South and Southeast Asian](#) countries in Bangkok (9–12 July) and North African nations in Cairo (2–5 December). These initiatives emphasized regional cooperation and practical tools for weapons of mass destruction response, complemented by virtual seminars to introduce methodologies, facilitate their application and assess acquired competencies. Additionally, a dedicated briefing for South and Southeast Asian Member States took place in May at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Regarding nuclear and radiological security, the Office provided [equipment and specialized training for Tajikistan's border forces](#) in Dushanbe (9–10 October), as part of efforts to enhance security to strengthen border security between Tajikistan and Afghanistan and combat illicit trafficking of radiological and nuclear materials. The training emphasized securing nuclear and radiological materials while enhancing response capabilities.

To advance effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Office collaborated with UNODC to organize two regional workshops and table-top exercises: "[Steppe Lotus](#)" in Ulaanbaatar (16–18 April) and "[Glowing Tulip 2.0](#)" in The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands (23–26 April). These simulations focused on nuclear terrorism investigations and strengthening legal frameworks to combat chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism.

On 7 November, the Office partnered with the United Kingdom and the United States to conduct a table-top exercise in Washington, D.C., uniting key stakeholders to improve national and regional responses to terrorist attacks involving chemical materials.

The Office further developed Iraqi authorities' capabilities to prevent and respond to biological terrorist threats by conducting the first in a series of train-the-trainer courses in Amman (9–12 December), focusing on countering [basic and intermediate biological threats](#).

Addressing the terrorism-arms-crime nexus, the Office implemented multiple small arms and light weapons initiatives across Central Asia, including operational measures training for Uzbekistan (23–26 January), Tajikistan (29 January–1 February) and Turkmenistan (12–15 February), strengthening efforts to prevent illicit trafficking and terrorist acquisition of these weapons. The Office also enhanced evidence collection capabilities for cases involving small arms and light weapons trafficking or terrorism, conducting training programmes in Uzbekistan (5–8 November) and Kazakhstan (12–15 November).

These initiatives were facilitated through extensive collaboration with regional and international partners — including the African Union Counter Terrorism Centre, the Commonwealth of Independent States Anti-Terrorism Center, the Department of Peace Operations, the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), ICAO, INTERPOL, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Mine Action Service, UNODC, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and its United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and WCO — reinforcing coordinated global responses to evolving terrorist weapon threats.

Work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the prevention and suppression of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism

Throughout 2024, UNODC sustained its efforts to advance adherence to and robust implementation of international legal instruments targeting chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, operating under its established mandate ([78/226](#)). UNODC delivered legislative and technical support through initiatives financed by Canada, the United States and the European Union.

UNODC offered legislative guidance to five Member States, helping them to strengthen their counter-terrorism legislation and regulatory frameworks to align with international standards against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism. This assistance included incorporating into national legislation the obligations from the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Through its Canada-supported project, UNODC established a [virtual speaker series](#) examining the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, addressing critical elements of the Convention and nuclear terrorism challenges. The [January session](#) focused on border management within the Convention's framework, whereas the [February event](#) explored international cooperation on nuclear forensics under the agreement.

Additionally, as part of its European Union-backed initiative, UNODC launched a new [webinar series](#) on the Convention. The [April session](#) featured prosecutorial insights into effective Convention implementation, the [June webinar](#) addressed extradition and mutual legal assistance provisions; and subsequent sessions in [July](#), [September](#) and [November](#) concentrated on nuclear forensics and its significance under the Convention. Led by national and international specialists, these virtual programmes reached over 400 participants worldwide, strengthening their comprehension of this crucial international legal framework.

To underscore the importance of adhering to and effectively implementing the Convention, UNODC convened a [high-level side event](#) during IAEA's International Conference on Nuclear Security on 22 May.

In June, UNODC collaborated with IAEA to bolster the nuclear security legal architecture by co-hosting a [second joint IAEA-UNODC seminar](#) promoting the universalization of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

UNODC also worked to enhance criminal justice capabilities among States parties to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, supporting their ability to effectively investigate, prosecute and adjudicate nuclear and radiological crimes through regional criminal investigation and mock trial exercises. These included training for [South-Eastern European](#) countries in Tirana (25–27 June) and for [Central Asian](#) countries in Tashkent (26–28 November). The Office also conducted national seminars on the Convention as part of its training series for judicial and prosecutorial training centres of States parties including sessions for [Nigeria](#) (16–17 July) and the [Republic of Moldova](#) (8 November).

To strengthen cooperation and coordination among Member States and international organizations in combating chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, UNODC collaborated with Mongolia, Viet Nam and the United States, along with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, to organize the Association of Southeast Asian Nations regional forum [workshop](#) on strengthening legal frameworks to combat chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism. UNODC also partnered with the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Romania and the United States, as well as the Office of Counter-Terrorism, to conduct a [table-top exercise](#) supporting participating States in developing forensic responses to incidents involving

nuclear or other radioactive material outside regulatory control, particularly regarding criminalization of events pursuant to the Convention.

To further pursue that Convention's universalization and robust implementation, UNODC conducted national workshops for officials in [Mozambique](#) and [Suriname](#), delivered a national legislative drafting workshop for [Ecuador](#), and contributed to a workshop on strengthening counter-terrorism legislation for Southern African countries. UNODC also undertook country visits to [Bulgaria](#), Ecuador, [Nepal](#), [Sao Tome and Principe](#) and Uganda. Through UNODC's extensive engagement and sustained collaboration with Member States, two additional countries — [Palau](#) and [Mozambique](#) — joined the Convention in 2024, while [Seychelles](#) deposited its ratification instrument on 3 December.

Recognizing the importance of empowering youth and ensuring their active participation in advancing peace and security, UNODC developed an innovative programme designed to cultivate future leaders who would champion the Convention in their home countries. With Canadian support, UNODC held the first [Universalization Youth Academy](#) for the Convention in Vienna from 10 to 13 September.

To enhance international cooperation and information exchange for detecting, preventing, suppressing and investigating offences outlined in article 2 of the Convention, UNODC launched a [campaign](#) in September encouraging States parties that had not yet designated their competent authorities and liaison points for information transmission and receipt under article 7, paragraph 4, of the Convention. By December, UNODC had received 25 notifications, bringing the number of States parties with designated national contact points to 49.

The Office continued to promote tools and resources supporting the international legal framework against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism. In May, UNODC unveiled a Canadian-funded [repository](#) of national legislation for implementing the criminalization provisions of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, as well as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 Amendment. The regularly updated repository functions as a technical reference tool, compiling established practices for criminal justice practitioners to consider during their national implementation processes.

UNODC also raised awareness about its existing technical assistance resources for incorporating requirements of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism into domestic legislation. Those references included the manual [Fictional Cases related to Offences under the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism](#), as well as an [e-learning module](#) on the Convention's key provisions. All those materials were accessible on the Office's continuously updated Convention website (www.unodc.org/icsant), in all six United Nations official languages, with some also available

in Portuguese. By the year's end, the UNODC website housed submissions from 51 States parties detailing their [legislation](#) implementing the Convention's criminalization provisions. The Office also maintained its [e-learning module](#) on the international legal framework against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, which nearly 2,800 practitioners from 132 Member States had completed since its 2019 launch. The module continued to be available in all United Nations official languages and in Portuguese.

The Office participated in various IAEA events in 2024, including a regional workshop on implementing integrated nuclear security sustainability plans, held in Australia in April; the 2024 International Conference on Nuclear Security, held in May; two regional workshops on the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 Amendment, one held in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in August, and the other in Brazil in October; the tenth Triennial Technical Meeting of States' Points of Contact for the Incident and Trafficking Database, held in October; a legislative assistance mission to Uganda, held in November; and additional technical meetings and seminars addressing nuclear and radiological security held throughout the year. The Office also made a virtual contribution to an IAEA workshop held for Kenya in November on the topic of international nuclear security legal frameworks.

UNODC maintained extensive cooperation with numerous other organizations and initiatives. It supported events organized by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, including a workshop in Sao Tome and Principe addressing the Biological Weapons Convention and resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), as well as two training courses for resolution 1540 (2004) points of contact in the Asia-Pacific region and in Africa. UNODC participated in a national awareness-raising workshop on resolution 1540 (2004) hosted by Indonesia with support from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, and it regularly attended meetings of biological safety and security assistance providers for Africa convened by the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit. The Office also collaborated closely with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States, to support Ecuador in drafting and implementing its national action plan on resolution 1540 (2004). In addition, UNODC took part in the Committee's third cooperation [meeting](#) for implementers of that resolution in Latin America and the Caribbean. In October, it delivered a formal statement during the 1540 Committee's open briefing for Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)).

In March, UNODC contributed to a [training workshop](#) on preventing illicit chemical transfers, hosted by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in partnership with INTERPOL and WCO. The Office contributed to INTERPOL's [Global Geiger Conference](#) in May and attended its first Global Biosecurity Conference in June. UNODC also presented at ICAO's Air Law Treaty Workshop for European States, held in May. In June, UNODC addressed international legal instruments against chemical and biological terrorism at both the [Australia Group plenary](#) and the annual [meeting](#) of the Nuclear Forensics International Technical

Working Group. In October, the Office delivered a virtual presentation on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism for a training programme in Tajikistan organized by the Office of Counter-Terrorism. UNODC also participated in a panel discussion on parliamentarians' role in nuclear security during an October meeting of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In November, UNODC contributed to UNICRI's table-top exercise on strengthening chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear investigation, prosecution and adjudication capabilities in the Republic of Moldova. Furthermore, the Office contributed to the inaugural meeting of the Global Forum to Prevent Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism, co-organized by Romania and the United States. Additionally, UNODC engaged with the working groups of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction; the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection; the United Nations Biorisk Working Group; the Border Monitoring Working Group; the National Nuclear Security Administration of the United States Department of Energy; and the International Nuclear Law Association.

UNODC also engaged with civil society organizations and supported their initiatives, including workshops by Parliamentarians for Global Action to foster dialogue on effective implementation of relevant international legal instruments on nuclear security in [Nepal](#), Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania and [Zimbabwe](#). It [presented](#) at a webinar on strengthening global nuclear security hosted by the African Center for Science and International Security. It also contributed to the Nuclear Threat Initiative's [Global Dialogue on Nuclear Security Priorities](#); the World Institute for Nuclear Security's [webinar](#); and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation's [high-level workshop](#) on universalizing legal instruments for nuclear security. The Office further engaged with academic institutions, delivering lectures both at the International School of Nuclear Law of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and at the University of Buenos Aires.

Contribution of the International Atomic Energy Agency to global anti-terrorism efforts

The IAEA maintains a central role in strengthening the global nuclear security framework and coordinating international nuclear security activities, while preventing duplication and overlap of efforts. Nuclear security encompasses the prevention and detection of, and response to, criminal or intentional unauthorized acts involving or directed at nuclear material, other radioactive material, associated facilities or associated activities. Responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State, in accordance with its respective national and international obligations.

The IAEA continued to provide assistance, upon request, to States in their domestic efforts to establish and continuously maintain effective and comprehensive nuclear security for all nuclear and other radioactive material. It supported States in establishing effective and

sustainable national nuclear security regimes and, where appropriate, in fulfilling their obligations under instruments such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#).

Implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

In 2024, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)^[9] (1540 Committee) was chaired by José De La Gasca from 1 January to 12 November, and by Andrés Montalvo from 13 November to 31 December. In accordance with Security Council resolution [2663 \(2022\)](#), by which the Council extended the 1540 Committee's mandate for 10 years, until 30 November 2032, the Committee adopted its twenty-first programme of work on 30 January 2024, covering the period from 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2025 ([S/2024/115](#)). The programme of work organized the Committee's work around four pillars: (a) monitoring and implementation; (b) assistance; (c) cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations; and (d) transparency and outreach. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and the 1540 Committee's Group of Experts continued to support the Committee in implementing its programme of work.

National implementation

In operative paragraph 4 of resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council mandated States to submit a first report on the steps they had taken or intended to take to implement the resolution. By the end of 2024, 185 of the 193 Member States had submitted their first report, while eight States had yet to do so.^[10] Moreover, 124 Member States had submitted at least one additional report. As at the end of the year, Member States had submitted a total of 538 first and additional national reports on steps taken to implement resolution 1540 (2004).

In 2024, Saudi Arabia submitted additional information on its implementation efforts to the Committee. The Security Council encouraged States in resolution [1977 \(2011\)](#) and its successors^[11] to provide additional information on their implementation efforts, including, voluntarily, on their laws and regulations and on States' effective practices.

On 13 December, Ecuador submitted a voluntary national implementation action plan for resolution 1540 (2004), bringing the year-end total to 48 action plans adopted by 39 States. The Security Council encouraged States by resolution 1977 (2011) and subsequent resolutions to prepare these action plans on a voluntary basis to map out their priorities and plans for implementing key provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). The submission followed a workshop held in Quito on 12 and 13 June to enhance awareness about the resolution's objectives, review the status of national implementation, identify areas needing improvement and

establish priorities and targets for an action plan. The Office for Disarmament Affairs organized that event in partnership with the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States.

Meanwhile, the Office for Disarmament Affairs organized national workshops in Botswana, Indonesia, Madagascar, and Sao Tome and Principe in support of their ongoing efforts to achieve the full and effective implementation of resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). The aim of the events was to raise awareness in each State of its obligations, while enhancing existing border and export control regulations. In addition, the Philippines and Singapore, with support from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, conducted two peer-review exercises on implementing the resolution and strengthening export controls, held in Manila on 28 and 29 May and in Singapore on 4 and 5 September.

To facilitate dialogue with the 1540 Committee on implementing resolution 1540 (2004), States are encouraged to submit up-to-date information on national points of contact, preferably both in their capitals and at their respective permanent missions in New York. In 2024, responding to renewed calls from the 1540 Committee and regular outreach by the 1540 regional coordinators in Africa and Asia of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, nine Member States designated their 1540 points of contact for the first time. In total, 42 States^{[\[12\]](#)} named or provided updates regarding their points of contact, bringing the total number of States with designated points of contact for resolution 1540 (2004) to 155.

In its resolution [2325 \(2016\)](#), the Security Council encouraged the Committee to enhance the capacity of national points of contact for resolution 1540 (2004), particularly by organizing regional training courses to support States in implementing the resolution. In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs organized two such courses in cooperation with the 1540 Committee: one for the Asia-Pacific region, held in Beijing in June and hosted by the Government of China; and another for Africa, held in Addis Ababa in November, in partnership with Mozambique. The training sessions strengthened participants' understanding of the scope and obligations of resolution 1540 (2004) while providing a platform for participating States to share national experiences, particularly regarding the role of points of contact. International organizations attending the courses also shared effective practices to foster coordinated implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and related multilateral instruments, including strategies for efficiently channelling and coordinating international assistance.

Assistance

In 2024, Colombia, Iraq, Madagascar and Tajikistan submitted new assistance requests to the 1540 Committee, with the first three also submitting updated versions of requests from 2023. Meanwhile, the Committee adopted a revised assistance mechanism on 25 November 2024, following a review of its assistance mechanism established in 2018. In its resolution [2663](#)

(2022), the Security Council reiterated that many Member States still required assistance in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) and emphasized the importance of improving the 1540 Committee's matchmaking mechanism to ensure effective, timely and tailored assistance.

Cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations

In resolution 1540 (2004) and its successors,^[13] the Security Council recognized the need to enhance the coordination of efforts at the national, subregional, regional and international levels to strengthen a global response to the threat from non-State actors. The Council also recognized the vital role of international, regional and subregional organizations, including United Nations bodies, in supporting Member States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

The Office for Disarmament Affairs sustained its engagement with States and other stakeholders throughout the year. It regularly invited representatives of governments and international, regional and subregional organizations providing 1540-related assistance in Asia and Africa to collaborative engagements to showcase their support efforts and identify new cooperation opportunities.

The 1540 Committee enhanced its cooperation with the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. In November, the two committees delivered a joint briefing to the Security Council, demonstrating their continued cooperation within their respective mandates ([S/PV.9784](#)).

Transparency and outreach

On 9 October, the 1540 Committee held an open briefing ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)) to summarize its activities across all aspects of resolution 1540 (2004), with particular attention to assistance-related matters, in line with operative paragraph 26 of resolution [2663 \(2022\)](#). The session brought together Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations, providing a platform for showcasing assistance offers and enabling national delegations to share insights, lessons learned and best practices.

The 1540 Committee marked the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1540 (2004) through several high-profile initiatives. Ecuador and the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-convened a commemorative side event where speakers provided a comprehensive overview of implementation progress, highlighting the Office's supportive role while Member States exchanged effective practices and experiences. The Office also released an informational publication for Member States and partner organizations, acknowledging both its own

contributions and those of donors in advancing implementation, while encouraging assistance requests from States requiring support.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs expanded its industry and academic outreach initiatives during the year.^[14] Under the “Wiesbaden process” for industry engagement, the Office partnered with Germany to organize a regional conference on 31 July and 1 August to engage and inform industry and the private sector about their obligations under national laws and regulations. Additionally, through the [Erlangen Initiative](#), the Office and Germany co-organized two conferences aimed at raising awareness within the scientific and academic community about the risks associated with the misuse of scientific and technological developments and fostering dialogue between government regulators and academia on effective means to control intangible technology transfers. The first regional conference under the initiative was held for Southeast Asian States in Singapore on 30 October, followed by the second global conference in Nuremberg, Germany, on 20 and 21 November.

Throughout 2024, the 1540 Committee, including through its Chair and Group of Experts, participated in 32 outreach events organized by States, international and regional organizations, and civil society organizations. The activities supported transparency and fostered greater cooperation and awareness among States, parliamentarians, relevant organizations and civil society regarding resolution 1540 (2004) obligations and their implementation.

With support from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Committee also enhanced its digital presence by revamping its [website](#) with a more user-friendly navigation system and an updated structure reflecting the Committee's programme of work. With support from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the website continued to serve as both a public awareness tool and a key information source on resolution 1540 (2004).

Footnotes

^[1]For a list of all documents, see [A/79/364](#), annex II. All working papers are accessible on the [website](#) of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

^[2]Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

[3]Austria, China, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Philippines, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom (also on behalf of Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine and United States) and United States.

[4]International Committee of the Red Cross.

[5]Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

[6]Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechia, Ecuador, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Kiribati, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand.

[7]In particular, such integration work should be articulated in common country analyses and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

[8]On 14 March, 18 June, 4 October and 19 December.

[9]In resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council decided that all States shall refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes. The Council required all States to adopt and enforce appropriate laws, as well as other effective measures, in that regard.

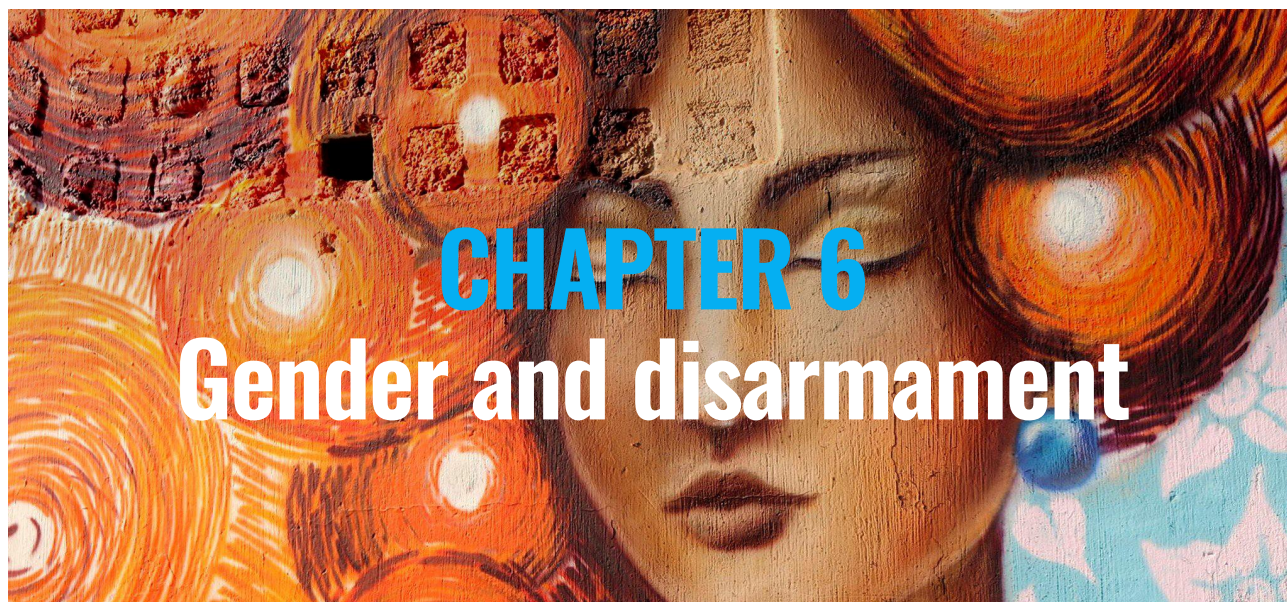
[10]Chad, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eswatini, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Somalia.

[11]Security Council resolutions [2325 \(2016\)](#) and [2663 \(2022\)](#).

[12]Afghanistan, Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Canada, Colombia, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Fiji, Gambia, Germany, Guyana, Honduras, India, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Luxemburg, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Panama, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

[13]Resolutions [1673 \(2006\)](#), [1810 \(2008\)](#), [1977 \(2011\)](#), [2055 \(2012\)](#), [2325 \(2016\)](#) and [2663 \(2022\)](#).

[14] In resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council calls upon States to develop appropriate ways to work with and inform industry and the public regarding their obligations under national laws and regulations adopted pursuant to the resolution and the key multilateral non-proliferation treaties. Furthermore, in resolution 2663 (2022), the Council calls upon States to take into account developments on the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation and rapid advances in science and technology in their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).



Women are significantly underrepresented in multilateral arms control and disarmament processes, and face barriers to participating in conventional arms control at the national level. Removing the barriers for women's participation not only contributes to breaking down gender norms and challenging patriarchal systems that drive conflict- related sexual violence; it also leads to more effective response efforts.

— Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

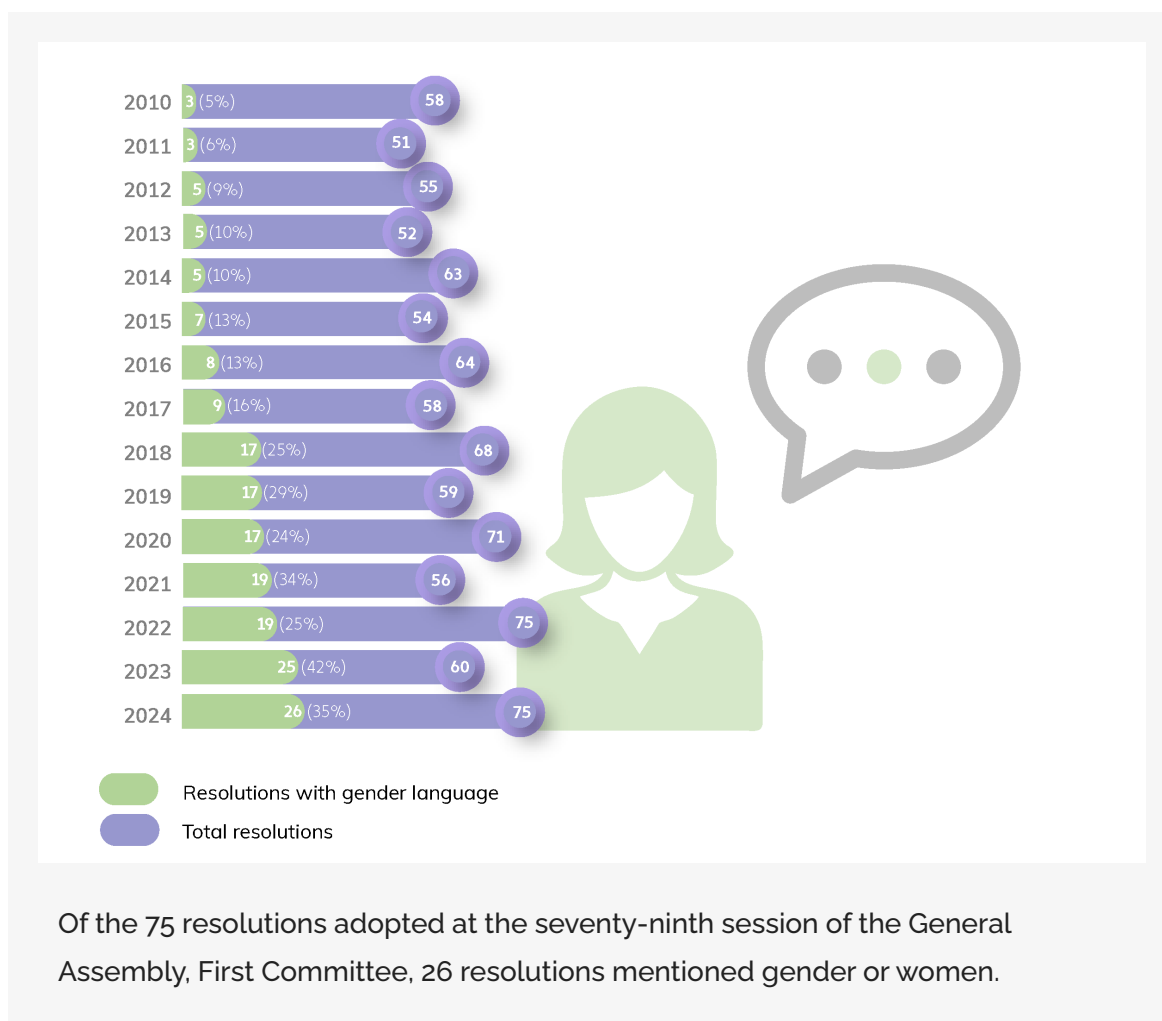
Developments and trends, 2024

In adopting the Pact for the Future in September (General Assembly resolution [79/1](#)), Member States agreed to a set of actions to advance their commitments on women, peace and security, while advancing implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. They recognized women's essential role in achieving sustainable peace and committed to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all decision-making levels. States also pledged to take targeted and accelerated action to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence. In considering the risks and opportunities of new and emerging technologies, States agreed to address barriers to women's participation in science and technology, and to address gender- related challenges emerging from the use of technologies, including bias, discrimination and gender-based violence. Underscoring a tension noted consistently in United Nations contexts, States also expressed concern over rising military expenditures and their impact on investments in sustainable development and peace.

Global military expenditures continued to rise throughout 2024. In his annual report to the Security Council on women, peace and security ([S/2024/671](#)), the Secretary-General reported that global military expenditures had increased for the ninth consecutive year in 2023, reaching an unprecedented \$2.44 trillion. This represented a 6.8 per cent increase in real terms from 2022, further diverting resources from other global priorities, including gender equality and women's empowerment.

The General Assembly adopted by consensus a revised version of the biennial resolution on "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control" (resolution [79/57](#)), although it was notably subject to 12 paragraph votes, a record. Through the resolution, the Assembly encouraged States to address the gendered impact of armed violence and recognized, for the first time, women's contribution in all aspects of arms control and disarmament efforts, including weapons of mass destruction, and the need to facilitate and promote women's leadership in disarmament efforts. Approximately 34 per cent of disarmament resolutions adopted during the General Assembly's seventy-ninth session contained references to gender, including several resolutions introduced for the first time. Additionally, Member States provided inputs to the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control", sharing information on their national efforts to incorporate gender perspectives into their national disarmament policies and programmes.

Figure 6.1. Number and proportion of First Committee resolutions incorporating gender language, 2010–2024



The connection between disarmament and conflict-related sexual violence was further reinforced as a key theme in 2024. In his annual report to the Security Council on conflict-related sexual violence ([S/2024/292](#)), the Secretary-General stressed that the illicit proliferation and widespread availability of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition directly facilitated incidents of sexual violence. He further noted that weapons proliferation, by fuelling armed conflict, contributed to creating environments conducive to perpetrating sexual violence with impunity.

On 23 April, the Security Council convened its annual open debate on conflict-related sexual violence ([S/PV.9614](#), [S/PV.9614 \(Resumption 1\)](#) and [S/PV.9614 \(Resumption 2\)](#)). Chaired by Malta, the meeting focused on the theme “Preventing conflict-related sexual violence through demilitarization and gender-responsive arms control”. In her briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict advocated for using measures imposed by United Nations sanctions regimes to stop the flow of weapons into the hands of perpetrators of sexual violence. A civil society representative, from

Darfur Women Action Group, addressed the situation in the Sudan, emphasizing how the spread of weapons had enabled the current levels of sexual violence and highlighting continued violations of the Security Council's arms embargo. During the debate, numerous Council members underscored the importance of preventing the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, reducing military spending and enforcing arms embargoes to stop conflict-related sexual violence. The Russian Federation, however, expressed opposition to linking the prevention of such violence to disarmament initiatives under the women, peace and security agenda.

In a [joint statement](#), 11 Council members — Malta, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States — urged all States to harness conventional arms control and disarmament treaties, instruments and measures to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. They called for States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty to fully and effectively implement and report on the instrument's gender provisions. Similarly, they encouraged Member States to observe gender-related language in the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. The Security Council members reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in all United Nations- facilitated peace negotiations, ceasefire negotiations and security sector reforms, while advocating for explicit provisions prohibiting conflict-related sexual violence in those agreements and their monitoring frameworks.

Eleven Security Council members brief reporters to reaffirm their shared commitment to prevent conflict-related sexual violence



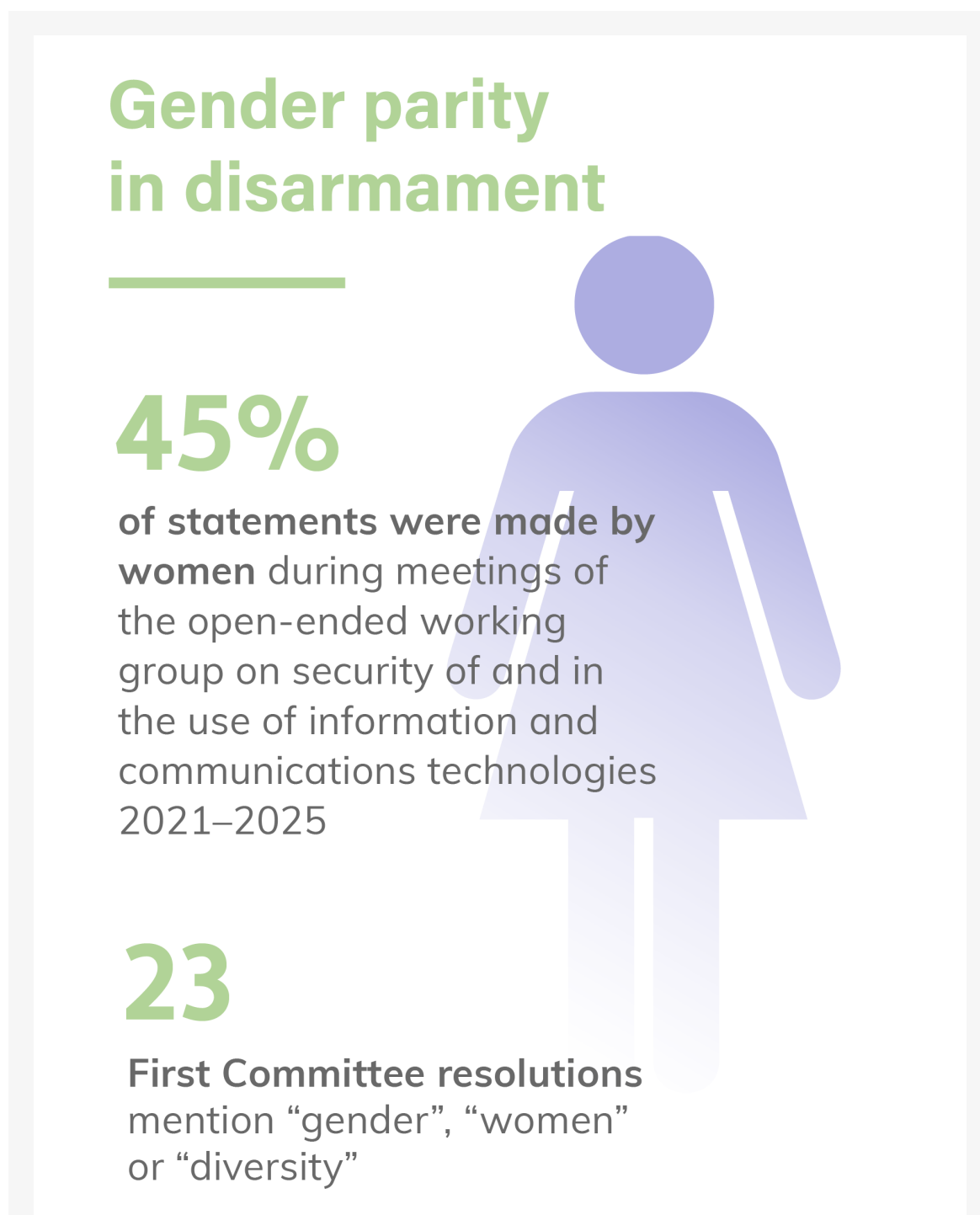
Malta, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States — signatories of a [joint statement](#) on women, peace and security — held a press stakeout in New York on 4 April. They urged all States to harness conventional arms control and disarmament treaties, instruments and measures to prevent conflict-related sexual violence.

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs addressed some of these issues on 23 October at a [commemoration](#) marking the fifteenth anniversary of the establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict by Security Council resolution [1888 \(2009\)](#). In her [remarks](#) at the event, the High Representative emphasized that disarmament, arms control and demilitarization must form a key part of efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence, describing the proliferation of weapons as both a driver and enabler of conflict-related sexual violence.

In his annual report to the Security Council on women, peace and security ([S/2024/671](#)), the Secretary-General highlighted the impact of militarization and of the spread of weapons and ammunition on civilians, particularly women. He called for the adoption of gender-responsive measures related to small arms and light weapons, as well as human-centred

disarmament approaches. During the Security Council's debate on women, peace and security in October ([S/PV.9760](#) and [S/PV.9760 \(Resumption 1\)](#)), several States continued to advocate for effective gender-sensitive disarmament measures as a means to prevent conflict and protect women's rights.

Figure 6.2. Highlights: Women's participation in multilateral disarmament forums, 2024



In his annual report to the General Assembly on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security ([A/79/224](#)), the Secretary-General noted that emerging technologies, including those in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, rely on data sets that could amplify social bias, including gender bias. He encouraged Member States to integrate ways to identify and examine such risks into review mechanisms for new and emerging technologies. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General's

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters called for a holistic consideration of technological advances in the military domain, including from a human rights perspective, emphasizing the particular need to consider gender equality in this context ([A/79/240](#)).



On 24 October, Maritza Chan, Chair of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, First Committee, and Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, join women delegates of the Committee, Youth Champions for Disarmament and Office for Disarmament Affairs staff members in kicking off Disarmament Week.

Gender dimensions in multilateral forums

General Assembly

In the General Assembly, First Committee, States delivered a [joint statement](#) on gender in which they highlighted key developments and initiatives for integrating gender perspectives into disarmament work. The remarks, delivered by Costa Rica on behalf of 80 countries,^{[\[1\]](#)} emphasized the differential impacts of armed conflict and weapons on women, men, girls and boys. In that connection, the States noted that gender considerations could enable more sustainable, comprehensive, effective and targeted disarmament policy solutions.

Recognizing the necessity of action across the broader disarmament machinery to advance gender equality in every region, the statement's sponsors pressed for targeted steps to support women's meaningful representation and leadership in decision-making processes. The States also welcomed the "significant work" carried out in recent years, both to achieve

gender balance in disarmament and non-proliferation conferences, and to further integrate gender perspectives into First Committee resolutions.

The signatory countries welcomed efforts to implement decisions on gender and gender-based violence within the frameworks of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In addition, they expressed support for fellowships and other opportunities enhancing women's participation in disarmament-related intergovernmental processes. Although their statement reflected strong international support for gender perspectives in disarmament, it received six fewer signatories than the First Committee's 2023 joint statement on gender.

Separately, many First Committee delegations delivered or endorsed statements supporting the full participation of women in all disarmament discussions and emphasizing the need for gender equality and inclusivity in disarmament processes.^[2] Delegations further noted the differentiated gendered impacts of weapons use and armed violence,^[3] and highlighted the importance of the women, peace and security agenda and its intersection with disarmament issues.^[4]

In 2024, the General Assembly maintained its trend of incorporating gender-related language into more disarmament resolutions. Of the 77 resolutions proposed by the First Committee and adopted by the Assembly, 26 featured provisions calling for women's participation or highlighting other gender perspectives, an increase of three from the previous year.

Of the First Committee resolutions incorporating gender considerations, several were adopted by the General Assembly for the first time. In its new resolution on "Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security" (79/239), the Assembly noted the possible consequences of the application of artificial intelligence in the military domain, including with regard to gender, racial, age or social aspects that could be caused by bias in data sets or other algorithmic biases. In the resolutions "Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects" (79/241) and "Nuclear war effects and scientific research" (79/238), the Assembly stressed the need for gender balance in the composition of relevant expert groups.

In its resolution on "Through-life conventional ammunition management" (79/54), the Assembly strengthened its recognition of the risks posed by the diversion of conventional ammunition, specifically highlighting their contribution to gender-based armed violence.

Conference on Disarmament

Gender equality and women's participation remained important topics in the Conference on Disarmament throughout its 2024 session. During the year, Belgium (speaking on behalf of

the European Union), Canada, France and Ireland all highlighted the need to incorporate gender perspectives into disarmament discourse and security policy.

During the Conference's high-level segment in late February (CD/PV.1703– CD/PV.1707), delegations emphasized closely related issues. Chile, Colombia, Norway, Peru, Spain and Sweden reiterated the importance of mainstreaming gender perspectives in the Conference's own substantive work. Germany, Ireland and Mexico focused on the need to meaningfully include women in broader disarmament efforts. Japan advocated for integrating disarmament initiatives with the women, peace and security agenda, and Belgium, speaking on behalf of the European Union, specifically addressed gender biases in artificial intelligence.

During the plenary meeting on 8 March (CD/PV.1709), which coincided with International Women's Day, Belgium (speaking on behalf of the European Union), Canada and France emphasized the need to update the Conference's rules of procedure to incorporate gender-neutral language. During a plenary meeting on 6 June under agenda item 6 on "Comprehensive programme of disarmament", the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela called for a gender focus in all capacity-building programmes (CD/PV.1725).

Small arms and light weapons

At the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (18–28 June), States adopted a consensus outcome document (A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3), which reflects a marked advancement in their shared recognition of the gender dimensions of illicit arms within this category.^[5]

In the document, countries acknowledged both the gendered patterns in weapons acquisition and the differential impact of weapons on women, men, girls and boys. Building on language negotiated in 2021 and 2022 (A/CONF.192/BMS/2021/1 and A/CONF.192/BMS/2022/1), they called for "gender-responsive" policies and programming on small arms and light weapons — an evolution of previously adopted references to "gender-sensitive" measures. Throughout the document, States resolved to understand the gendered drivers and impacts of small arms and light weapons proliferation by recognizing the roles, norms and expectations that drive women and men to acquire illicit arms. Another key focus was the gendered impacts that result from such proliferation, including the use of illicit small arms in acts of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence.

States further committed to developing evidence-based policy approaches through the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other characteristics, as appropriate, as well as through better coordination of disarmament and small-arms-control policies with national positions on women, peace and security. Additionally, the Review

Conference agreed to address persistent barriers to women's full, equal, meaningful and effective participation in implementation processes related to the Programme of Action, including at a leadership level.

The discussions on gender at the Review Conference were not without contention, however. Throughout the two weeks of negotiations, different views emerged on the role that gender should play in disarmament and arms control discussions.

At the Review Conference on 19 June, Croatia delivered a [joint statement relating to gender](#) on behalf of 46 States,^[6] coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. The remarks were followed on 28 June by a [second statement](#) delivered by Croatia for an expanded group of 61 countries.^[7] In both statements, delegations advocated for language in the outcome document supporting evidence-based good practices on gender in ensuring the Programme of Action's effective implementation.

Civil society organizations highlighted gender issues both in [statements](#) to the Review Conference and in retrospective commentaries on its outcomes. In a publication entitled [Advancing Gender and Inclusivity in Small Arms Control: Key Takeaways from RevCon4](#), the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and the Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control (GENSAC) sought to outline and contextualize gender-related elements of the adopted outcome document. Separately, six States^[8] joined Small Arms Survey and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to submit a [working paper](#) on prospects for gender-transformative small arms control, highlighting the benefits of a gender perspective in small-arms-control policymaking. Addressing delegations directly, civil society representatives advocated strongly for further linking the Programme of Action with the women, peace and security agenda, enhancing women's participation, improving data collection, increasing financial support and capacity-building for women's organizations, and highlighting the need to support gender in all its diversities.

Three gender-related side events took place on the margins of the conference:

- [Connecting the Dots](#): Organized by GENSAC, the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Government of Chile, this event explored the role of parliaments and civil society in implementing the Programme of Action and advancing the women, peace and security agenda.
- [Gender Mainstreaming in Arms Control: from Policy to Operations](#): The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean convened representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile and Guatemala to examine how gender dynamics manifest in patterns of violence and victimization across different regions.

- [Looking Ahead: the Future of Gender Perspectives in the UNPoA](#): Germany, UNIDIR and Small Arms Survey hosted a discussion featuring representatives from Nepal, Liberia, Argentina and civil society organizations. Participants emphasized the importance of data in responding to intersectional drivers of small arms and light weapons acquisition and use, as well as strategies for aligning national policies on arms control with women's equality initiatives.

Landmines, cluster munitions and improvised explosive devices

In 2024, gender considerations remained central to the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Pursuant to decisions taken at its fourth Review Conference in 2019, the Convention's four substantive [Committees](#) continued to address matters related to gender and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities. Meanwhile, the focal points designated by those Committees, in accordance with the 2019 Oslo Action Plan ([APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1](#)), provided ongoing advice on gender mainstreaming and ensured that diverse perspectives were incorporated in the Plan's implementation.

At the fifth Review Conference of the Convention, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from 24 to 29 November, States parties reaffirmed the importance of gender equality and gender-balanced participation to the effective implementation of mine action activities, as reflected in the Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration and Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025–2029 ([APLC/CONF/2024/15/Add.1](#)). In support, the 2024 gender focal points^[9] submitted a working paper ([APLC/CONF/2024/WP.25](#)) in which they undertook a wide-ranging assessment of progress towards achieving more inclusive mine action and identified various opportunities and challenges for advancing gender equality and inclusion over the coming five years.

States also took action on gender within the framework of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, whose article 5 on victim assistance identifies an obligation for States parties to “adequately provide [cluster munition victims with] age- and gender-sensitive assistance, including medical care, rehabilitation and psychological support, as well as provide for their social and economic inclusion”. At the Convention's twelfth Meeting of States Parties, held in Geneva from 10 to 13 September, Belgium and Germany, in their capacity as Coordinators of the Working Group on the General Status and Operation of the Convention and focal points on gender mainstreaming,^[10] reported on activities they had undertaken in cooperation with the other [thematic Coordinators](#), including in a working paper entitled “Taking stock of gender, diversity and inclusion in the Convention on Cluster Munitions: A mid-point review of the implementation of the Lausanne Action Plan” ([CCM/MSP/2024/WP.2](#)).^[11] The working paper outlined several recommended actions to strengthen gender mainstreaming, including organizing consultations, improving reporting mechanisms, supporting inclusive research initiatives, enhancing synergies with other humanitarian disarmament treaties, and fostering

connections with broader frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women, peace and security agenda.

The Secretary-General, in his fourth report to the General Assembly on “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices” ([A/79/211](#)), submitted in July, recognized significant gendered impacts from improvised explosive devices. The report’s recommendations highlight the need for a better understanding of the differential impacts of those devices on women, men, boys and girls, encouraging States to strengthen the collection, storage, analysis and dissemination of gender- and age-disaggregated data. The Secretary-General further called on States to promote the meaningful participation of women and diverse stakeholders across all aspects of prevention, preparedness, protection, threat mitigation and response.

Arms Trade Treaty

The general debate of the tenth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (19–23 August) included the reading of a joint statement on “[Gender mainstreaming and addressing gender-based violence under the Arms Trade Treaty](#)”. Delivered by Mexico on behalf of 45 States parties,^[12] the statement outlined various proposals to enhance the implementation of the Treaty’s gender-related provisions.

Subsequently, the Conference encouraged States parties in its final report ([ATT/CSP10/2024/SEC/807/Conf.FinRep](#)) to recommit to the action-oriented decisions on gender and gender-based violence, endorsed in 2017 by the fifth Conference of States Parties ([ATT/CSP5/2019/SEC/536/Conf.FinRep.Rev1](#), para. 22), to continue regular exchanges on good national practices in preventing arms-related gender-based violence, and to consider appointing gender focal points to each of the Treaty’s working groups. The tenth Conference of States Parties also invited future presidencies to review progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the gender-related decisions of the 2017 Conference and subsequent meetings, while also calling on the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat to collect gender-disaggregated attendance data during meetings for the Treaty.

The Conference also welcomed the [Political Declaration for the Next Decade of the Arms Trade Treaty](#), introduced by the United Kingdom on behalf of 73 States parties.^[13]

Emphasizing the Treaty as the first legally binding multilateral instrument requiring States to take into account the risks of conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate gender-based violence, the signatories recognized the need to promote women’s full, equal, meaningful and effective participation in all its decision-making and implementation processes and stressed the importance of women’s involvement.

Information and communications technologies

The Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 continued to tackle issues related to gender in its 2024 deliberations, with delegations highlighting both the growing representation of women and the prominence of gender perspectives at its substantive sessions in March, July and December. States and civil society stakeholders widely commended the Women in Cyber Fellowship programme for its ongoing contribution to enhancing women's participation. Co-funded by several Member States, the Fellowship supported women delegates in attending meetings of the Working Group, offered specialized training in cyber negotiations and fostered a network of women engaging in cyber diplomacy and related United Nations processes.

In its third annual progress report ([A/79/214](#)), the Open-ended Working Group emphasized the need to incorporate a gender perspective in responses to threats involving information and communications technologies, drawing particular attention to the risks faced by vulnerable populations. Highlighting the unequal distribution of benefits from digital technologies, delegations stressed the need to adequately address the growing digital divide in efforts to speed up implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Working Group also reaffirmed its call for various gender-responsive capacity-building initiatives, such as integrating a gender perspective into national policies and developing checklists or questionnaires to identify related needs and gaps. Furthermore, States recognized the impact of the gender digital divide and the importance of promoting women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in relevant decision-making processes. In building upon previously agreed text, participants demonstrated continued interest in developing consensus language on gender-related aspects of information and communications technologies security in its final year of work in 2025.

Gender equality was also a priority of the Disarmament Commission during the second year of a three-year cycle focused on developing recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security. Julia Elizabeth Rodríguez Acosta (El Salvador), in her [summary](#) of the discussions of the Commission's Working Group II, highlighted States' support for greater gender equality in the field of information and communications technologies security.

Lethal autonomous weapons systems

Within the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, established in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, a group of States^{[14](#)} submitted a working paper ([CCW/GGE.1/2024/](#)

[WP.5](#)) compiling proposals by participating experts to address concerns raised over several years around the need to address risks related to artificial intelligence and gender biases.

Outer space

The Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, established pursuant to resolution [77/250](#), completed its work in 2024 after holding its second and final substantive session. In its final report ([A/79/364](#)), the Group noted that several experts had expressed the view that any future legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should avoid using gender-exclusive terms, aim at gender equality and be informed by diverse perspectives. Those experts also highlighted the need for further work to determine the possible differentiated impacts of threats to space systems on vulnerable groups, including, but not limited to, women and girls.

The Group also identified in its report areas where States could undertake further work, including “further consideration to ensuring equal opportunities for women and men to enable their meaningful engagement in efforts to achieve the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects”.^[15]

Nuclear weapons

Mexico, serving as the gender focal point of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as appointed by the second Meeting of States Parties ([TPNW/MSP/2023/14](#), annex II), organized consultations on 21 June focused on measures to ensure equal participation by men and women within the Treaty framework. In its report on related intersessional activities ([TPNW/MSP/2025/5](#)), Mexico emphasized that ensuring full, equal and meaningful participation with respect to gender extends beyond achieving simple numerical parity in the Treaty’s activities, while also stressing that the Treaty could provide a key forum for advancing gender perspectives in security, peace and disarmament.

Noting women’s historical underrepresentation in multilateral decision-making processes related to nuclear disarmament, participants in the consultations encouraged tracking gender-disaggregated participation data in relevant meetings and making it available to States parties. In addition, they stressed the importance of States parties committing to ensuring full, equal and meaningful opportunities for men and women both in meeting delegations and in national positions for Treaty implementation. Participants proposed various initiatives to raise awareness of gender considerations in the context of nuclear weapons, such as organizing a conversation series during the Treaty’s intersessional period to facilitate the dissemination of relevant insights, best practices and policy recommendations. They also stressed the need to establish intergenerational dialogue between established women

leaders and emerging voices in humanitarian nuclear disarmament to ensure a sustainable and progressive approach to gender mainstreaming within the Treaty's operations.

Meanwhile, at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), States parties highlighted both achievements and challenges in integrating gender perspectives into relevant institutional and leadership structures. Participants emphasized the disproportionate impacts of nuclear weapons use and testing on women in the context of their ongoing underrepresentation in political discussions on nuclear disarmament, with women comprising only one third of State representatives to the session. The gendered effects of ionizing radiation on women and girls came into notable focus, with several States also parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons highlighting the contribution of nuclear-test survivors and victims to a broader understanding of those harmful effects.

On the margins of the session, the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group — co-chaired by Australia, Ireland, Namibia, the Philippines and UNIDIR — organized a [panel discussion](#) on the relevance of gender-sensitive nuclear policy approaches to the NPT regime. In his opening remarks, the Chair of the second session, Akan Rakhmetullin (Kazakhstan), underscored the importance of incorporating gender perspectives in nuclear policy discussions, as gender equality represents a fundamental human right. He highlighted women's underrepresentation in disarmament forums and their unique vulnerability to radiation effects, which can impact physiological and mental health, as well as socioeconomic status. In this context, he welcomed the growing roles of women, civil society and youth in nuclear disarmament efforts.

Biological weapons

During the fifth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention,^[16] held from 2 to 13 December in Geneva, States parties discussed a proposal by the Chair, Frederico S. Duque Estrada Meyer (Brazil), to convene a special conference in 2025 on establishing an international cooperation and assistance mechanism under article X and a science and technology advisory mechanism. In those deliberations, States parties stressed the importance of ensuring equitable gender representation in the governance structures of these mechanisms, should they be established.

Women's participation in disarmament processes

Participation in intergovernmental processes

The year 2024 witnessed incremental progress towards women's equal, full and effective participation and leadership in some multilateral disarmament forums.

The General Assembly, First Committee, achieved a significant milestone in electing a woman Permanent Representative as its Chair for the first time: Ambassador Maritza Chan Valverde of Costa Rica. This progress in leadership was mirrored in the broader composition of delegations, with those headed by women increasing significantly, from 29 per cent in 2023 to 46 per cent in 2024. While the overall gender balance of Member State delegations remained steady from 2023 — women comprising 38 per cent of registered delegates — there was a slight improvement in active participation, with women accounting for 30 per cent of delegates who took the floor, up 1 percentage point from the previous year.^[17]

The Conference on Disarmament experienced a notable shift in gender dynamics in 2024. Women's overall presence markedly declined, with women comprising 38 per cent of registered delegates (down from 46 per cent in 2023) and 28 per cent of heads of delegation (a decrease from 32 per cent in the previous year). Amid that decline in overall representation, women's active participation as speakers remained largely flat, increasing by 1 percentage point from 2023.

During the six meetings in 2024 related to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, women's participation averaged 40 per cent of all registered participants and one third of delegation leadership positions. When it came to active participation in discussions, women delivered 34 per cent of all statements, reflecting their substantive involvement in the Convention's deliberations. Most notably, the Convention achieved gender parity among the co-facilitators and coordinators of its group of experts, with women occupying exactly half of those roles.

Of the various forums within the Convention's framework, women achieved notably higher representation in leadership and speaking positions during the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. In the Group's two meetings during the year, women comprised 42 per cent of registered delegates, 36 per cent of heads of delegation and 43 per cent of speakers.

In the 2024 meetings of the Biological Weapons Convention, women constituted 40 per cent of participants and 31 per cent of delegation heads. When taking the floor to deliver statements, women represented 37 per cent of speakers. The Convention's sponsorship programme, intended to broaden representation at intersessional meetings, supported 61 national experts in 2024, 22 of whom were women (36 per cent) and 39 were men (64 per cent).^[18]

The Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 continued to approach gender parity, with women constituting on average 39 per cent of all registered participants and 50 per cent of those speaking across the year's three sessions.

At the second session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, in July–August 2024, women remained underrepresented across all participation metrics, accounting for 33 per cent of registered participants, and slightly smaller proportions of comprised heads of delegation (30 per cent) and speakers taking the floor (29 per cent).

In the fifth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in November 2024, there was notable progress in women's representation amid persistent gender imbalances. Women constituted 25 per cent of all delegates, while their participation as speakers more than doubled, rising to 23 per cent from just 11 per cent in 2023.

Participation in activities supported by the Office for Disarmament Affairs

Throughout the year, the Office for Disarmament Affairs contributed to advancing women's equal participation and diversity across disarmament fellowship programmes, scholarships, training activities and workshops.

In 2024, women represented 56 per cent of participants in the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme (14 out of 25 Fellows). The Programme included focused lectures on the gender dimensions of various disarmament issues, with particular emphasis on ammunition. Fellows also received an in-depth briefing on the women, peace and security agenda from officers of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

In partnership with Singapore, the Office co-convened two sessions of the United Nations-Singapore Cyber Fellowship in 2024, with 13 women and 12 men participating in April and 16 women and 14 men taking part in August. The programme's selection process, open to State-nominated senior officials working in information and communications technologies security, emphasized gender parity in gender representation.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also supported women's participation through sponsorships for delegates from least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States to attend the ninth substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025, in December. The initiative promoted cross-regional and gender-balanced participation at the Working Group session, where sponsored delegates engaged in various capacity-building activities alongside the formal meetings.

The Office also supported opportunities for women as it facilitated training for experts under the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons. Women made up a significant portion of experts participating in the

Mechanism's specialized training courses throughout 2024, constituting between 30 and 69 per cent of participants across individual courses.^[19]

Bolstering gender equality was an aim of two initiatives funded by the European Union and the United Kingdom within the framework of the Biological Weapons Convention. The Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship, a three-month capacity-building programme for young scientists from the global South, achieved gender parity in its second edition, which took place from June to August.^[20] Meanwhile, women made up more than one third of the 96 participants in the Convention's first global workshop for national contact points, held on 28 and 29 November. This workshop marked the culmination of six regional training courses conducted by the Office from May 2023 to April 2024 to address critical gaps in support for those national contact points and enhance national implementation of the Convention.

The second edition of the training course on "Science diplomacy, biosecurity and virus detection" achieved gender parity in its cohort of 14 participating life scientists. Held from 4 to 8 March in Trieste, Italy, the programme engaged this group through lectures on biosecurity, table-top exercises and hands-on sessions focused on molecular assays and modern diagnostic technologies. The course was funded by Norway and conducted in collaboration with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, the World Academy of Sciences and the InterAcademy Partnership.

Gender mainstreaming by the Office for Disarmament Affairs

Global initiatives

In addition to promoting gender-balanced participation in disarmament processes, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued helping to operationalize policies aimed at integrating a gender perspective into disarmament and arms control activities. Of the 56 meetings, conferences, training courses, workshops and events organized or co-organized by the Office in 2024 for which data were collected, 68 per cent integrated a gender perspective to some extent, while 11 per cent had gender equality as a principal substantive focus.

The Saving Lives Entity (SALIENT) — a funding facility jointly managed by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme in partnership with the Peacebuilding Fund and relevant United Nations country teams — continued supporting local armed violence reduction efforts around the world, extending support to eight countries across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific during its 2023–2024 cycle.^[21] Gender remained a central focus, with at least 30 per cent of programme funds going to activities in direct pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The projects supported by SALIENT included a comprehensive gender analysis of Jamaica's new Firearms Act; technical courses to help national police in Honduras to apply a gender lens to firearms-related investigations; workshops and dialogue spaces in Panama addressing weapons in schools with a gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory approach; and, in Ghana, the development of awareness-raising materials on gender-based violence coupled with a nationwide gender-responsive survey of the country's small-arms-control needs and limitations.

The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR), another key funding mechanism administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, continued strengthening gender-responsive approaches in how it conceptualized, planned and carried out all projects and activities. Gender issues and the women, peace and security agenda remained thematic priorities in UNSCAR's 2024 application process, with all funding applicants required to ensure women's meaningful participation and representation in their proposed activities. This emphasis produced measurable results: of the 60 applications submitted in response to the 2024 call, 23 (38 per cent) went beyond basic requirements and incorporated gender-responsive approaches that more fully addressed women, peace and security objectives.

UNSCAR-funded projects advanced those gender-responsive aims throughout the year. In East Africa, a civil society partner led a regional workshop for women parliamentarians that strengthened linkages between small arms control and the women, peace and security agenda. Meanwhile, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an UNSCAR-funded weapons stockpile management project incorporated a gender awareness seminar for women police officers in Posavina Canton.

Strengthening and deepening gender integration in small-arms-control policies and programmes remained a key pillar of a multi-year, extrabudgetary [project](#) led by the Office for Disarmament Affairs to support the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Acting through its regional centres in Lima, Lomé and Kathmandu, the Office undertook various capacity-building efforts to integrate gender considerations into small arms and light weapons policies. Additionally, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations maintained their practice of exchanging information through periodic meetings of the informal coordination mechanism on gender and small arms and light weapons.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also worked throughout the year to incorporate gender considerations in ammunition management and strengthen women's participation in that field, supporting objective 14 of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management ([A/78/111](#), annex). As part of a series of regional and subregional outreach meetings on the Global Framework that the Office organized in Africa, in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in Asia and the Pacific, Small Arms Survey led dedicated

substantive sessions on integrating gender perspectives into conventional ammunition management practice. Participants from Member States, United Nations entities and international, regional and non-governmental organizations discussed two priority areas: the need for improved data and analysis on the gendered impact of ammunition diversion and unplanned explosions at munition sites; and strategies to address structural, social and cultural barriers to women's meaningful participation in ammunition management.

In the framework of the Women Managing Ammunition Network (WoMA-Network), established in 2022, the Office collaborated with the Austrian Ministry of Defence and the Ammunition Management Advisory Team, as well as the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation and Small Arms Survey to convene the second international training session on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines for women specialists. The two-week session in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, convened 14 women participants and three women trainers, all working in specialized ammunition management roles, either for their national military and security forces or for expert organizations. The programme enhanced participants' capacity and knowledge across a range of ammunition safety and management topics, deepening their understanding of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. The session also addressed gender equality considerations, both broadly and specifically within the ammunition sector. Participants joined the WoMA-Network, a platform that promotes gender equality and diversity while increasing women's visibility and leadership in the specialized field of ammunition management.

In November, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations delivered the annual training course on "Effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context", in Accra. The course featured a strengthened focus on gender equality, with gender perspectives integrated into every module and — for the first time — a dedicated session on gender. This approach highlighted women's critical roles, both in weapons and ammunition management and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. The session emphasized how women contribute to community trust-building, programme effectiveness and sustainable outcomes. By incorporating gender-sensitive practices in technical and operational aspects, the course underscored how inclusive approaches can better address the human impact of weapons and ammunition proliferation throughout the entire peace process, from conflict to lasting stability.

The Office and its Youth4Disarmament initiative maintained gender balance across all their outreach programmes and opportunities for young people. Gender perspectives were integral to training the second cohort of Youth Champions for Disarmament (funded by Germany), while the Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship (funded by the European Union and the United Kingdom) incorporated a dedicated session on youth and gender perspectives. The twenty-third Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-

Proliferation Issues, which for the first time included a dedicated main session on youth perspectives, was highly successful in attracting young women participants in the programme. As part of the Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (funded by Japan), in October, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research delivered an online session for programme participants on “Gender and human rights”. The year also saw gender balance among the youth participants and speakers in intergovernmental disarmament processes, such as the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, and the high-level commemorations of the International Day against Nuclear Tests and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

To mark the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness on 5 March and to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March, the Office for Disarmament Affairs held a [hybrid event](#) as part of its Vienna Conversation Series. Organized in cooperation with the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, the Austrian Research Association (ÖFG) and the Permanent Mission of the Kyrgyz Republic to the International Organizations in Vienna, the event featured distinguished speakers from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The panellists discussed the human cost of weapons through a gender lens, focusing on the gendered impact of conventional weapons and ensuring women's meaningful participation in disarmament processes.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to offer diverse training courses on its [Disarmament Education Dashboard](#), including modules on “Gender perspectives on disarmament” and “Gender-mainstreaming small arms control”. By the end of 2024, the platform had over 29,600 registered users, with women comprising 50.4 per cent of participants.

Regional activities in Africa

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, based in Lomé, continued its active efforts to integrate gender perspectives into disarmament and arms control initiatives across the African continent.

In preparation for the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Regional Centre organized preparatory meetings [tackling challenges faced and progress achieved](#) in designing and implementing gender-responsive small arms control policies. More than 80 participants from the continent took part in the February and March meetings, with editions held in Lomé for West and Central African countries and in Nairobi for East and Southern African States.

The Centre marked International Women's Day (8 March) by co-hosting a webinar examining the tangible progress made in integrating gender considerations into various African arms control initiatives. Organized with UNIDIR, the event brought together over 60 disarmament experts from national commissions on small arms and light weapons across West, Central, East and Southern Africa, along with international practitioners and representatives of civil society and regional organizations.

At two informal regional meetings convened by the Regional Centre on the new Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management, participants applied a gender lens in exploring how to translate the Framework's political commitments into actionable measures. Cross-border trafficking and ammunition tracing and disposal were key focuses of the gatherings in [Lomé](#) and [Gaborone](#), which drew representatives from 40 Member States and regional and civil society organizations.

Integrating gender considerations into Africa's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes was the objective of another webinar organized by the Centre in November. Aimed at fostering inclusive and effective post-conflict societal reconstruction, the event brought together 60 participants from national commissions for the control of small arms and light weapons and from civil society organizations engaged in disarmament and other peace and security work.

In December, the Regional Centre partnered with the International Action Network on Small Arms to hold a webinar addressing linkages between gender-based violence and the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The discussion, timed to coincide with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign, attracted 57 attendees from national commissions on small arms and light weapons in Africa and from regional and civil society organizations. Participants actively discussed the contribution of effective gender-sensitive arms control initiatives to combating gender-based violence.

At a hybrid conference that the Centre co-organized in December with the Institute for Strategic Studies at the University of Lomé, 100 students discussed the roles of youth and women in disarmament processes. Speakers underscored how combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons is pivotal in efforts to promote peace, justice and strong institutions, improve education systems and achieve gender equality in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Centre also collaborated with the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, to [train national stakeholders from Burundi](#) in integrating gender considerations into both the reporting process for the Programme of Action and national action plans to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Women comprised almost one third of the participants.

A hybrid event entitled “Women and youth participation in disarmament processes: challenges and opportunities”, held in December, brought together 77 civil society representatives to discuss national experiences in fostering gender-sensitive arms control initiatives. Their exchange emphasized the critical need for women's organizations to actively coordinate with national commissions for the control of small arms and light weapons to strengthen community-based violence prevention efforts.

Regional activities in Latin America and the Caribbean

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Lima, acted throughout 2024 to foster gender-responsive approaches to arms control, while enhancing capacities to address firearms-related violence.

In the run-up to the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Centre convened a [webinar](#) on the importance of integrating gender perspectives in implementation activities for the Programme of Action. The event helped to inform broader discussions and leadership on the issue at the Review Conference. Following the Conference, the Centre hosted a second webinar to reflect on the progress made at the global level and to spotlight good practices from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Recognizing a need for further capacity-building for Member States to implement their global commitments under the Programme of Action, the Centre hosted a [gender-focused small-arms-control course in Guatemala](#). The programme equipped authorities with a fuller understanding of key concepts related to gender and small arms, synergies between the women, peace and security agenda and small-arms-control frameworks, data collection and gender analysis, and integrating gender perspectives into arms control initiatives.

Preventing firearms-related femicides and other forms of gender-based violence remained a critical priority for Latin America and the Caribbean, where violence against women involving firearms persisted at alarming rates. Under an initiative funded through SALIENT, the Centre strengthened national capacities in Honduras through its specialized “Firearms investigations from a gender perspective” courses. The curricula, tailored for law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges, equipped each actor in the chain of custody with the technical expertise needed to thoroughly investigate and analyse firearms-related crimes against women, thereby helping to reduce impunity. The Centre complemented those courses with a webinar on cross-referencing firearms legislation with norms around preventing and punishing violence against women, further reinforcing those efforts.

In Haiti, the Regional Centre co-organized a webinar with UNIDIR where officials discussed integrating arms control measures into efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. By

fostering dialogue among national policymakers and practitioners, the event supported the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti to assist authorities in protecting and promoting human rights, with a particular focus on women's rights and gender equality.

The Centre provided enhanced support for young women taking part in [GenerAcción Paz](#), a newly launched disarmament training programme for youth in the region. Funded by UNSCAR, the programme is designed to build young leaders' capacity to create a region free of armed violence.

In November, the Centre launched "[Women, Forces of Change: the Podcast](#)", celebrating the achievements of women in disarmament while examining persistent challenges to gender equality in that field. Over the course of 10 episodes, 10 inspiring women from Latin America and the Caribbean — including experts, diplomats, policymakers and civil society leaders — shared their personal journeys and professional insights on advancing peace and security.

Regional activities in Asia and the Pacific

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, based in Kathmandu, maintained its wide-spanning work to integrate gender considerations in disarmament processes and enhance women's participation in regional security initiatives.

Emphasizing the need for inclusive, gender-mainstreamed policies in small arms control was a key message at a [regional preparatory meeting](#) hosted by the Centre in January, ahead of the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. To highlight the issue of women's participation, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs led a panel of experts in exploring both the importance of gender-responsive approaches and the linkages between small arms control and sustainable development. The three-day meeting in Kathmandu attracted 85 participants — more than a third of them women — including government officials, civil society representatives from 23 countries and officials from relevant United Nations agencies.

On 15 February, the Centre partnered with UNIDIR to convene an [online regional briefing](#) aimed at strengthening gender-responsive practices within small-arms-control frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region, with particular focus on the Programme of Action and the Arms Trade Treaty. The virtual forum assembled government officials, representatives from international organizations and civil society advocates to critically evaluate pathways for translating high-level global commitments on gender mainstreaming into concrete action. Timed in advance of two key gatherings (the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action and the tenth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty), the event drew 60 participants from across 23 countries.

From 26 June to 5 July, the Regional Centre joined the Prajnya Trust, an India-based civil society organization, to co-host [the third edition of the Disarmament Toolkit online course](#), which featured a dedicated webinar on the topic of gender and disarmament. The curriculum explored critical gender considerations and women's meaningful participation across various disarmament portfolios, including conventional arms control, weapons of mass destruction and emerging technologies. The programme attracted 628 registered participants from 80 countries, including diverse stakeholders from academia, international and regional organizations, civil society and the practitioners' community.

The Centre hosted an informal regional meeting on the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management on 4 and 5 December, in Kathmandu, featuring a substantive session on gender and ammunition management that directly addressed objective 14 of the Global Framework. Facilitated by civil society partners Nonviolence International Southeast Asia and Small Arms Survey, the session helped participants to identify knowledge gaps around how ammunition diversion and unplanned explosions impact women, men, boys and girls differently. The discussions emphasized the need to address persistent structural, social and cultural barriers to women's full, equal, meaningful and effective participation in the ammunition management sector. This forum brought together government officials from 19 Asia-Pacific States alongside United Nations entities, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, and civil society (39 men and 23 women).

On 27 December, the Regional Centre moderated an end-of-year [webinar](#) on integrating gender, mental health and peace processes into the Programme of Action on Small Arms, jointly organized by Nonviolence International Southeast Asia and the International Action Network on Small Arms. The discussion explored how gender perspectives, mental health considerations, peace process dynamics and indigenous knowledge systems can strengthen efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms while advancing gender equality.

Footnotes

[1]Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

[2]Albania, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Guyana, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Lithuania, Maldives, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United States and Zimbabwe.

[3]Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Italy, Republic of Korea and Spain.

[4]Australia, Chile, Colombia, Germany, Honduras, Ireland, Jamaica, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malta, Namibia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Viet Nam, European Union and Nordic States.

[5]One State dissociated itself from the gender-related language in the outcome document through a verbal statement delivered after its adoption.

[6]Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

[7]This group comprised the signatories to the earlier statement, excluding New Zealand and including Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Monaco, North Macedonia, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of Moldova and United States.

[8]Canada, Chile, Germany, Ireland, Thailand and United Kingdom.

[9]Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Peru and Thailand.

[10] At the Convention's second Review Conference, held in 2021, States parties decided that the Coordinators on General Status and Operation would act as the focal points of the Convention to provide advice on gender mainstreaming and to ensure that matters related to gender and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities are taken into account in the implementation of the Lausanne Action Plan, in cooperation with the other thematic coordinators ([CCM/CONF/2021/6](#), para. 84(iii)(c)).

[11] Submitted by the Coordinators on behalf of Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Ecuador, France, Gambia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and UNIDIR.

[12] Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Uruguay.

[13] Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Zambia and Gambia (for which the Treaty entered into force on 11 September 2024).

[14] Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay.

[15] In 2023, the Canadian expert in the Group submitted a working paper on "Gender-based considerations for a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space" ([GE-PAROS/2023/WP.4](#)).

[16] In 2022, the ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention established the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention to “examine and develop specific and effective measures, including possible legally-binding measures, and to make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalise the Convention in all its aspects, to be submitted to States Parties for consideration and any further action” ([BWC/CONF.IX/9](#)).

[17] As determined by the titles of individual delegates in the list of participants.

[18] The seventh Review Conference in 2011 ([BWC/CONF.VII/7](#)) established a sponsorship programme under article X to support and increase the participation of developing States parties in the Convention's intersessional meetings. The eighth Review Conference in 2016 and the ninth Review Conference in 2022 both reaffirmed that decision.

[19] Women's participation in 2024 training courses was as follows: “Investigative interview” (Switzerland, February) – 9 of 15; “Safe and secure approaches in the field environment” (Thailand, May and November) – 9 of 13 and 7 of 19; “Decontamination” (Portugal, May) – 9 of 19; “Bio crime scene management” (Italy, August) – 6 of 20; “Transportation of infectious Substances” (Germany, September) – 8 of 16; basic training course (South Africa, July) – 6 of 17; and basic training course (Germany, November) – 7 of 16.

[20] The Fellowship offered 20 young scientists from the global South a valuable opportunity to engage in an interactive online segment consisting of five webinars, followed by an in-person segment taking place during the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, in Geneva.

[21] Cameroon, Ghana, Honduras, Jamaica, the Kyrgyz Republic, Panama, Papua New Guinea and South Sudan.



Despite the current diplomatic deadlock, the central premise behind [the Conference on Disarmament] remains as vital as ever. The most effective disarmament tool is inclusive diplomacy. We need that diplomacy now — urgently. And you have the power to deliver it, and change this Organization for the better.

— [António Guterres](#), Secretary-General of the United Nations

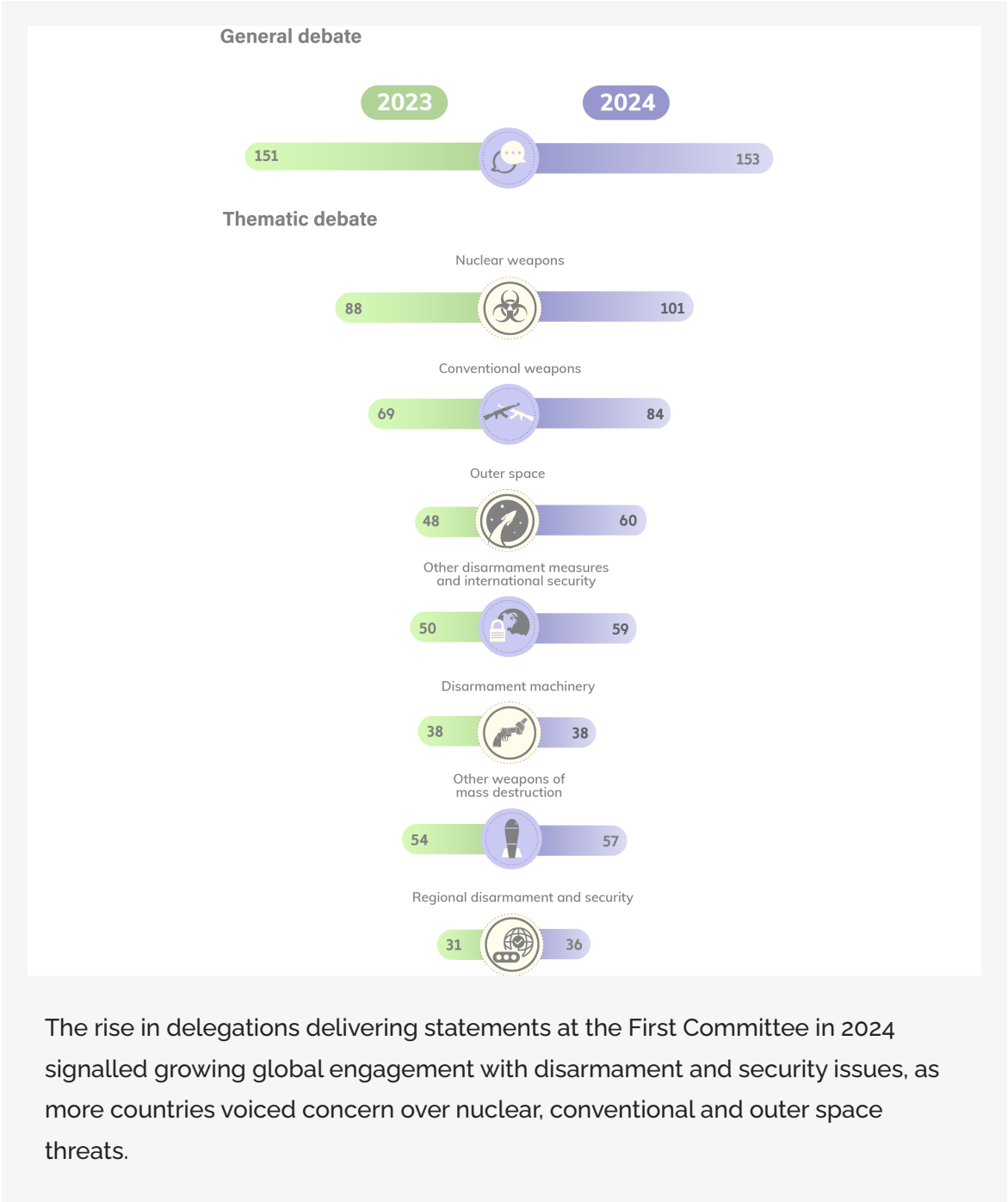
Developments and trends, 2024

The year 2024 saw modest progress across the disarmament machinery. In particular, the Conference on Disarmament adopted a decision in June on the work of its 2024 session, a positive signal for the body's future work that importantly also introduced the concept of continuity between annual sessions. Elsewhere, in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, States began a new three-year cycle by considering two substantive agenda items in their respective working groups: "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" in Working Group I; and "Recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security" in Working Group II. States welcomed the start of a new cycle and expressed hope in reaching agreement on consensus recommendations.

Overall participation in the General Assembly, First Committee, remained high, with delegates delivering markedly more statements across every issue area than the previous year. In its seventy-ninth session, the Committee adopted five new proposals addressing the effects of nuclear war; the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones; strengthening and institutionalizing

the Biological Weapons Convention; weapons of mass destruction in outer space; and artificial intelligence in the military domain. Despite ongoing divisions on matters such as the pace of nuclear disarmament and the ongoing wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, the Committee completed its work within the allocated five weeks, adopting a total of 77 draft proposals.

Figure 7. First Committee 2024 at a glance: number of delegations delivering statements, 2023–2024



In the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, after intensive consultations by the first four Presidents — India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq — the Conference decided to establish five subsidiary bodies for its 2024 session. Each subsidiary body met for one day and held a general exchange of views under the relevant agenda items, touching on specific topics for future meetings. All five bodies agreed on both a report to the Conference and a recommendation that it decide in 2025 to reinstate the subsidiary bodies for that year with their present mandates and coordinators. The issue of participation by States not members of the Conference remained deeply divisive, however; the Conference ultimately opted to consider each request for participation individually, approving 22 of the 39 submitted.^[1]

The United Nations Disarmament Commission convened its 2024 substantive session from 1 to 19 April, under the chairmanship of Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon (Pakistan). Immediately after the organizational session, also held on 1 April, the Commission re-elected by acclamation Akaki Dvali (Georgia) as Chair of Working Group I and Julia Elizabeth Rodríguez Acosta (El Salvador) as Chair of Working Group II. The Commission held a general exchange of views over four plenary meetings on 1 and 2 April before the two working groups commenced their work.



The Chair of the 2025 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon (Pakistan), addresses the Commission's 390th plenary meeting at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 1 April. (Credit: UN Photo/Loey Felipe)

In response to the dynamic global environment, the Secretary-General requested the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to conduct a strategic foresight exercise over 2024 and 2025 to identify both present and future risks and opportunities for international peace and security emanating from advances in science and technology. The year 2024 marked the midway point in the Board's discussions, which emphasized a growing need for the United Nations to systematically analyse how scientific and technological advances intersect with disarmament and arms control. Key concerns raised by the Board included ensuring human control over AI and autonomous weapons; ensuring compliance with international law; understanding the roles of various stakeholders, including States, the private sector, civil society, the scientific community and non-State armed groups; and examining how new technologies interact with existing weapon systems. The Board also focused on anticipating the future implications of these developments for disarmament and arms control priorities.

First Committee of the General Assembly

Organization of work

The First Committee of the General Assembly (Disarmament and International Security) held its [seventy-ninth substantive session](#) from 7 October to 8 November. Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) chaired the Committee, becoming the first woman Permanent Representative ever to do so,^[2] following her election on 6 June alongside the rest of the session's Bureau, comprising Rapporteur Pēteris Filipsons (Latvia) and Vice-Chairs El Hadj Lehbib Mohamedou (Mauritania), Abdulrahman Abdulaziz Al-Thani (Qatar) and Vivica Muenkner (Germany).

In an [organizational meeting](#) on 3 October, the Committee approved its programme of work as contained in documents [A/C.1/79/CRP.1](#) and [A/C.1/79/CRP.2](#). It then convened 33 in-person meetings, including a joint meeting with the Fourth Committee on possible challenges to space security and sustainability.^[3]

For the second consecutive year, the First Committee dedicated one meeting to [discussions on programme planning and working methods](#). At that meeting, held on 17 October, it adopted a draft decision entitled "Information on requests for votes" ([L.4](#)), compelling the Chair to provide information, upon request, on States or groups of States requesting votes on proposals as a whole or individual paragraphs.^[4] Following a subsequent oral decision to implement the procedure immediately and pursuant to any requests received, the Chair began announcing from the podium which States or groups of States had requested votes on various drafts before Committee action on each cluster of proposals.

The Committee adopted 77 draft proposals — 17 more than in 2023 — and rejected two draft amendments introduced by the Russian Federation. Of the drafts adopted, only 27 texts (25 per cent) were adopted without a recorded vote. Member States requested 150 separate

paragraph votes, with several resolutions subject to more than 10 separate paragraph votes each. In total, the Committee voted 201 times during the session, a substantial increase from the 148 votes recorded during the previous session.

The Committee adopted five new proposals at its seventy-ninth session — namely, “Nuclear war effects and scientific research” (L.39); “Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects” (L.68); “Strengthening and institutionalizing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction” (L.73); “Weapons of mass destruction in outer space” (L.7); and “Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security” (L.43).

On 18 October, the Committee heard briefings from the Chairs of various disarmament bodies and components of the disarmament machinery and participated in a [high-level exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs](#). Earlier, on 16 October, the Committee devoted a segment to civil society engagement, hearing from 21 non-governmental organizations on issues spanning the full breadth of its mandate — including nuclear disarmament, conventional weapons control and emerging challenges posed by military applications of artificial intelligence (AI).^[5]

The Committee structured its discussions in line with previous sessions, dividing its work into three stages: (a) general debate; (b) discussions on seven thematic clusters (nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, regional disarmament and security, outer space (disarmament aspects), other disarmament issues and international security, and disarmament machinery); and (c) action on all draft resolutions and decisions. Nine meetings were dedicated to general debate, followed by 15 meetings for thematic discussions and six meetings for action on all draft resolutions and decisions.

Engagement in the Committee remained strong, with 153 delegations making statements during the general debate segment, two more than the previous year’s total. The thematic debate featured 435 interventions, surpassing the record established in the previous session. While gender balance remained an unrealized goal, with women comprising well below 50 per cent of speakers across all meetings, many delegations welcomed the historic appointment of Ambassador Chan Valverde as Chair and expressed hope that more women would serve in leadership capacities in the future.

The matter of visa issuance by the host country presented an ongoing challenge for the Committee throughout the session. At the organizational meeting on 3 October, the delegation of the Russian Federation said that it would not be able to fully participate in the session due to a lack of visas for several of its members. The delegation asserted that the United States continued to neglect its obligations as the host country. Beyond its general

debate statement and occasional points of order, the Russian delegation did not make interventions from the floor, instead directing delegates to its written statements.

The overall atmosphere of the Committee remained contentious, reflecting persistent and deep divisions among Member States. Those divisions were particularly evident in discussions concerning the slow pace of nuclear disarmament, the erosion of strategic nuclear arms control between the United States and the Russian Federation, the war in Gaza and broader Middle East tensions, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and concerns about the expansion of China's nuclear arsenal. Many States expressed alarm about the deteriorating international security environment, rising military expenditures and growing levels of distrust.

In her [opening remarks](#) to the First Committee, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs noted that 7 October marked one year since the large-scale terror attack against Israel and the subsequent eruption of shocking violence and bloodshed — a stark reminder of what was at stake in the Committee's work. The High Representative also recalled that the Committee was meeting after the Summit of the Future, where States had adopted the Pact for the Future (resolution [79/1](#)), alongside the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations (resolution [79/1](#), annexes I and II). The Summit, she emphasized, had highlighted challenges to international peace and security, including ongoing violations of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. The High Representative further lamented that nuclear posturing had re-entered the discourse and that the emergence of new domains of potential conflict was no longer an abstract concern.

On 8 October, the President of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, Philémon Yang (Cameroon), [addressed](#) the Committee, emphasizing that nuclear-weapon States must take the lead in preventing nuclear war and fulfilling their commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The President further underscored that States must remain vigilant regarding scientific advancements and the potential misuse of biological and chemical weapons, while also urgently confronting the challenges posed by emerging technologies, including lethal autonomous weapons and malicious cyber activities. He highlighted the threats to civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, as well as from small arms and light weapons, cluster munitions and landmines. The President also noted with concern that global military expenditures had reached record levels, diverting vital resources from essential sectors such as the economy and education.

In line with past practice, throughout the thematic debate, the Committee heard briefings from the Chairs of ongoing and recently concluded disarmament bodies and experts groups, including on [23 October](#) from Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica), President of the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; on [25 October](#) from Burhan Gafoor (Singapore), Chair of the

Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025; and on [29 October](#) from Bassem Hassan (Egypt), Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

On 28 October, the Committee received [briefings from the Directors of the regional centres](#) of the Office for Disarmament Affairs for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. These were followed by the traditional [panel on disarmament machinery](#), which included the President of the Conference on Disarmament, Daniel Meron (Israel); the Chair of the Disarmament Commission, Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon (Pakistan); the Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, Shorna-Kay Richards (Jamaica); and the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

On 18 October, at its [twelfth meeting](#), the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs engaged in an annual exchange with the First Committee, joining high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament nominated by the General Assembly regional groups. In her [address](#), the High Representative reflected on themes from the general debate, particularly the widespread concerns of States about the deteriorating international security environment, declining compliance with disarmament obligations, and rising military expenditures. She emphasized the First Committee's pivotal role as a platform for engaging diverse stakeholders, including civil society and academia. The High Representative also underscored the importance of investing in disarmament education, highlighting the [Disarmament Education Strategy](#) of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. She emphasized that existential threats to the planet — including the continued existence of nuclear weapons, the climate crisis and increasing inequality and injustices — must be addressed through intergenerational, cross-cultural, cross-sectoral and cross-regional action.

Also on the panel were Martha Mariana Mendoza Basulto, who represented the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), nominated by the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean; and Robert in den Bosch (Kingdom of the Netherlands), Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, nominated by Western European and other States.

Speaking on behalf of OPANAL, the representative highlighted several activities, including a [joint declaration](#) commemorating the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September, and a working paper submitted to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference ([NPT/CONF.2026/PC.II/WP.14](#)). The organization expressed support for undertaking a new comprehensive study on nuclear-weapon-free zones to facilitate the potential establishment of new zones and highlighted its

member States' efforts to promote women's inclusion and gender mainstreaming in disarmament discussions.

The Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems briefed delegates on the Group's progress. Established in 2016 by the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Group conducted numerous informal consultations throughout 2024 to refine key considerations, including the definition of lethal autonomous weapons systems. The Chair concluded by expressing optimism about the progress achieved by the Group, despite difficult international security circumstances.

On 2 December, the General Assembly acted on 72 of the 77 draft resolutions and decisions on substantive items approved by the First Committee. The Assembly did not act on five texts due to pending review of their programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee: "Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/240](#)" ([A/79/403](#); formerly [L.13](#)); "Nuclear war effects and scientific research" ([A/79/408](#), [draft resolution XVII](#); formerly [L.39](#)); "Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security" ([A/79/408](#), [draft resolution XX](#); formerly [L.43](#)); "Group of Scientific and Technical Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification" ([A/79/408](#), [draft resolution XXXVI](#); formerly [L.67](#)); and "Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects" ([A/79/408](#), [draft resolution XXXVII](#); formerly [L.68/Rev.1](#)). In presenting the reports of the First Committee, the Rapporteur, Pēteris Filipsons (Latvia), noted that the Committee required two additional plenary meetings beyond those originally scheduled to complete its work on time.

On 24 December, the General Assembly adopted the outstanding proposals: "Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/240](#)" ([79/237](#)); "Artificial intelligence in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security" ([79/239](#)), "Group of Scientific and Technical Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification" ([79/240](#)), "Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects" ([79/241](#)) and "Nuclear war effects and scientific research" ([79/238](#)). In addition, the draft decision "Open-ended working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects" was adopted as decision [79/512](#) without a vote.

Exchange with civil society and meeting on working methods and programme planning

On 17 October, at its [eleventh meeting](#), the First Committee held a debate on working methods and programme planning, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [78/244](#) and the Committee's adopted programme of work and timetable ([A/C.1/79/CRP.1](#)). To facilitate productive discussions, the Chair circulated a non-paper in advance containing guiding questions on matters such as time management, transparency and informal consultations, civil society participation, inclusion and gender parity, and the possibility of the biennialization or triennialization of resolutions. The Committee heard interventions from 19 States, four of which spoke on behalf of a group of States.^[6]

Also at its eleventh meeting, in line with the decision from its organizational session, the Committee took action on the draft decision "Information on requests for votes" ([L.4](#)), adopting it without a vote. Several interventions during the meeting served as explanations of vote on this draft decision. Following adoption and a subsequent oral decision to apply the modalities immediately, the Chair announced that she would provide information on vote requests from the podium throughout the current session. In its earlier introduction of the draft decision, Singapore, speaking also on behalf of South Africa, recalled the existing First Committee practice of maintaining anonymity for States requesting votes on draft proposals or individual paragraphs. The co-sponsors emphasized that their intention was not to infringe on any State's right to request a vote, but rather to enhance procedural transparency.^[7]

In their deliberations on programme planning, delegates expressed regret that the Committee for Programme and Coordination had again failed to reach consensus on conclusions and recommendations on programme 3, Disarmament, in the proposed programme plan for 2025 ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 4\)](#), part A). While one delegation emphasized that programme planning should remain depoliticized, a group of States stressed that it must continue as a consensus-based process, noting that the Fifth Committee holds final responsibility for adopting the programme plan and budget. Another delegation asserted that the meeting on 17 October duplicated the Fifth Committee's work, stating it would have preferred the First Committee not to address the matter. Separately, a group of States requested that the Chair propose to the Fifth Committee that the General Assembly adopt the proposed programme plan without modification.

Several delegations provided detailed input on the First Committee's working methods, including by addressing specific points from the Chair's non-paper. Some called for more comprehensive consideration of potential reforms beyond the newly adopted measure on vote request transparency. One delegation observed that working methods cannot be standardized across all forums of the disarmament machinery, given the unique

requirements of each one, while another emphasized the intrinsic connections among those bodies and urged enhanced coordination among them.

Multiple delegations noted the substantial workload of the First Committee during its five scheduled weeks, with some expressing openness to allocating additional meetings. In particular, several emphasized the need for more time to consider draft proposals. Other priorities included the critical importance of multilingualism, with delegations stressing the necessity of providing interpretation of every mandated meeting in all six United Nations official languages and the timely dissemination of Committee documents in all those languages. Several interventions emphasized the fundamental principle of equal participation of all States, noting the importance of timely visa issuance to ensure all delegation members could attend.

Joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees

By General Assembly resolutions [78/52](#) of 4 December 2023 and [78/72](#) of 7 December 2023, the First Committee convened a [joint half-day panel](#) with the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on 30 October to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. A draft programme was prepared by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Office for Outer Space Affairs (A/C.1/79/CRP.5; A/C.4/79/CRP.1) and circulated for information.

The Chairs of the First and Fourth Committees opened the plenary meeting. Following remarks by the Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and by the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, both Committees heard presentations from invited panellists, which included the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, Bassem Hassan (Egypt); the Chair of the Disarmament Commission, Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon (Pakistan); the current and incoming Chairs of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Sherif Sedky (Egypt) and Rafiq Akram (Morocco); the former Chair of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee, Manuel Metz of the German Aerospace Center; and a contributor to the negotiations on the outer space elements included in the Pact for the Future, Ana Avila (Costa Rica).

The Committees heard statements on outer space from delegations of 12 Member States — speaking both in their national capacities and on behalf of a group,^[8] and one observer organization.^[9] Member States highlighted the value of the joint panel discussion for ensuring complementarity and dialogue among various United Nations bodies, particularly since different aspects of outer space were typically addressed in separate forums.

Concerns about heightened threats and risks in outer space were voiced by multiple delegations, who noted that the domain was becoming increasingly contested and congested. They cited specific challenges, including the exponential growth of object launches, proliferation of space debris and destructive anti-satellite weapon tests. Some delegations voiced specific concern regarding the possible placement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in orbit. A number of Member States rejected the placement of any type of weapon in space and expressed alarm about risks associated with dual-use technologies that could exacerbate tensions among space actors. Concern was also expressed that certain national space programmes were transforming space into another domain of conflict.

In that context, Member States expressed broad support for developing and implementing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, with several calling for the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Some States also recognized the value of non-binding measures to address threats relating to space systems. In that regard, discussions on norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour featured prominently. While some delegations emphasized that such voluntary approaches should not substitute for legally binding commitments, others noted their potential as building blocks for a legally binding instrument.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space also received strong support from delegations, with calls for enhanced resources to bolster its work. Several representatives identified the Committee as the optimal forum for addressing space traffic management concerns. The Committee's [Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines](#) were welcomed by many delegations, who urged their prompt implementation. Meanwhile, several States expressed appreciation for a [gender mainstreaming toolkit](#) created by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and some noted with interest a proposal for a consultative mechanism for lunar activities ([A/AC.105/C.2/2024/CRP.18/Rev.1](#)), which promised to foster increased discussions, coordination and cooperation for cislunar and lunar activities.

A number of delegations expressed support for involving non-State stakeholders in multilateral deliberations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. While one view highlighted the potential positive contributions of commercial actors towards sustainable development, another emphasized that all parties operating in outer space, including commercial actors, should conduct their activities responsibly. The issue of satellite mega-constellations in low-Earth orbit prompted various delegations to suggest collaborative approaches among all States to prevent long-term impacts on space sustainability.

Overview of key substantive issues

Nuclear weapons

The Committee took action on 25 resolutions and decisions related to nuclear weapons, adopting only three by consensus. Those consensus resolutions all addressed nuclear-weapon-free zones: “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty” (79/15), “Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia” (79/24) and “Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status” (79/30).

Notable among the resolutions adopted by vote were those mandating new studies: “Nuclear war effects and scientific research” (79/238), mandating further research on the effects of nuclear war; and “Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects” (79/241), updating previous work on nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Throughout the general debate and thematic discussions, the deep divisions between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States remained evident. Non-nuclear-weapon States decried ongoing nuclear modernization programmes, resurgent arms race dynamics and the growing prominence of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines of nuclear-weapon States and their allies. Meanwhile, nuclear-weapon States maintained their position that nuclear disarmament efforts must account for the current security environment, advocating for what they characterized as a pragmatic approach.

Some nuclear-weapon States notably opposed resolutions such as “Addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons: providing victim assistance and environmental remediation to Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons” (79/60), as well as “Nuclear war effects and scientific research” (79/238), which mandates the first United Nations study on nuclear war effects since 1989. Nuclear-sharing agreements also generated significant debate, with increased criticism of those policies prompting lengthy defences by Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Kingdom of the Netherlands — current hosts of United States nuclear weapons. Separately, many non-nuclear-weapon States expressed concern to distinguish certain groups of countries beyond the NPT’s two recognized categories of “nuclear-weapon States” and “non-nuclear-weapon States”, viewing such characterizations as potentially undermining the Treaty’s fundamental structure.

Other weapons of mass destruction

The Committee adopted six resolutions under this cluster, including a new resolution introduced by Kazakhstan, Kiribati and Saudi Arabia on strengthening and institutionalizing the Biological Weapons Convention. This resolution, entitled “Strengthening and institutionalizing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and

Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction" (79/79), garnered consensus.

The resolution "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction" (79/56) was adopted by vote for an eleventh consecutive year. The need for a vote in the seventy-ninth session stemmed from contentious language regarding the possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic.

During the general debate and thematic discussions, numerous States expressed their appreciation for the completion in 2023 of the verified destruction of all declared chemical-weapon stockpiles by States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. At the same time, they emphasized that support for the Convention must continue in view of persistent challenges, particularly those related to non-State actors and emerging technologies. Many delegations expressed concern about [two new issues with the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration](#) identified in August by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Another prominent issue raised by several States was the alleged use of chemical weapons in the conflict in Ukraine. Ukraine specifically condemned the Russian Federation's use of riot control agents and alleged Russian disinformation campaigns targeting peaceful biological activities conducted by the United States in Ukraine.

Regarding biological weapons, the Committee adopted by consensus its annual resolution on the Biological Weapons Convention (79/78), maintaining its established practice. Numerous Member States welcomed the success of the ninth Review Conference and the establishment of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention. The Working Group presented a unique opportunity to revitalize the Convention, according to multiple States, whose delegations welcomed progress both on establishing international cooperation and assistance mechanisms, and on monitoring scientific and technological developments. Several States underscored the importance of science and technology reviews in strengthening the Convention, calling for further efforts to enhance the implementation of article X.

Outer space (disarmament aspects)

The Committee acted on six resolutions and one decision under this cluster, adopting two annual resolutions without a vote: "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (79/19) and "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities" (79/51).

A decision entitled "Open-ended working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects" (79/512) was adopted by vote with the vast majority of States voting in

favour. This decision marked a significant development, resulting in the convergence of two previously separate open-ended working groups on outer space security established in the previous General Assembly session by resolutions [78/20](#) and [78/238](#). The convergence was championed by a cross-regional group of States, led by Egypt, aiming to establish a single platform to comprehensively address questions related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This unified approach would encompass both the consideration of norms, rules and principles, and the pursuit of legally binding measures. Through intensive consultations with the main sponsors of the two previously established working groups — the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom — Egypt successfully facilitated the merger of these initiatives, garnering overwhelming support from Member States.

Under this cluster, the United States introduced a new resolution entitled “Weapons of mass destruction in outer space” ([79/18](#)), which was adopted by a wide majority of States. The Russian Federation proposed two amendments to the text ([L.78/Rev.1](#) and [L.79/Rev.1](#)), arguing that the draft lacked practical elements and failed to adequately emphasize issues regarding the “placement” of weapons and the pursuit of legally binding measures. The Russian delegation further contended that the resolution should be expanded to cover all types of weapons, not just weapons of mass destruction. The co-sponsors of the resolution opposed the draft amendments, characterizing them as “hostile” and asserting that they would fundamentally alter the scope of the resolution and were not legally sound. The Committee ultimately rejected both proposals.

Conventional weapons

The Committee adopted 10 resolutions under this cluster, including annual resolutions dedicated to established treaties, such as the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction ([79/34](#)), the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects ([79/75](#)) and the Arms Trade Treaty ([79/52](#)). The biennial resolution “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices” ([79/53](#)), introduced by Australia, France and Nigeria, was adopted as a whole without a vote, although several paragraph votes were taken, including on elements related to gender.

Throughout the general debate and thematic cluster discussions, States devoted considerable attention to the need for capacity-building in small arms and light weapons control and conventional ammunition management. Many delegations welcomed two recent developments: the adoption of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management ([A/78/111](#), annex) and the successful conclusion of the fourth Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. A second

iteration of the resolution addressing the Global Framework (79/54) was adopted by a vote, with the vast majority of States voting in favour. The resolution specified that the first Preparatory Meeting of States would be convened from 23 to 27 June 2025.

The annual resolution "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" (79/40), led by South Africa, was adopted as a whole without a vote. The resolution contained several forward-looking elements, including mandating a fifth Review Conference of the Programme of Action in 2030 and scheduling biennial meetings of States in 2026 and 2028. In response to evolving challenges, the resolution established an open-ended technical expert group to address developments in manufacturing, technology and design of small arms and light weapons. Additionally, the resolution requested that the Secretariat undertake two specific tasks within existing resources: establish a structured procedure to facilitate matching assistance needs with available resources, and conduct a study on obliterated markings and methods for marking recovery.

Other disarmament measures and international security

The Committee adopted 13 resolutions and one decision under this cluster, including one on information and communications technologies security. Despite concerns that competing resolutions on the issue of information and communications technologies security might emerge, as had occurred in previous years, the Committee adopted a single, consensus resolution entitled "Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025 established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 75/240" (79/237). The resolution, sponsored by Singapore in its capacity as Chair of the Open-ended Working Group, endorsed the Working Group's latest progress report (A/79/214, annex), recalled the consensus elements reached on the establishment of a future permanent mechanism on these matters beyond 2025, and mandated additional intersessional meetings.

Throughout the Committee, many States welcomed the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, under the auspices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Led by Austria, a second iteration of the resolution "Lethal autonomous weapons systems" (79/62) was adopted by a large majority of States, but also subject to many individual paragraph votes. The resolution called for informal consultations on the topic in 2025 to consider the report of the Secretary-General issued on the topic (A/79/88), in full complementarity with and in a manner that supports the fulfilment of the mandate of the Group of Governmental Experts.

States regularly raised the issue of AI applications in the military domain. A new resolution on this topic was adopted (79/239), acknowledging the potential international peace and

security implications of these applications and requesting a report from the Secretary-General with a specific focus on areas other than lethal autonomous weapons systems.

Regarding gender and diversity, the Committee continued to hear a growing number of calls for the inclusion of more diverse voices, including those of women. The biennial resolution on “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”, led by Trinidad and Tobago, was adopted as a whole by consensus, although it was subject to 12 paragraph votes, a record. The updated version of the resolution notably acknowledged, for the first time, women's contribution in all aspects of arms control and disarmament efforts, including those related to weapons of mass destruction.

Disarmament machinery

The Committee adopted nine resolutions under this cluster, including the annual texts dedicated to the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament (79/65, 79/66, 79/67 and 79/70). The annual resolutions on the reports of the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission (79/71 and 79/72) were adopted without a vote.

While States continued to lament the lack of substantive negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, many welcomed the decision allowing the establishment of subsidiary bodies during the 2024 session. States also expressed appreciation for the Disarmament Commission's ongoing consideration of emerging technologies in the context of international security. On the matter of the possible convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the annual resolution presented by States of the Non-Aligned Movement was adopted by consensus (79/44).

United Nations Disarmament Commission

The [United Nations Disarmament Commission](#) convened its [2024 substantive session](#) from 1 to 19 April at United Nations Headquarters, with Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon (Pakistan) serving as Chair. The session marked the beginning of a new three-year cycle of deliberations, with the Commission taking up two agenda items: (a) recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (item 4); and (b) recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security (item 5).

At its organizational session on 1 April ([A/CN.10/PV.390](#)), the Commission elected its Chair and the following Vice-Chairs by acclamation: Amr Essameldin Sadek Ahmed (Egypt), Mohammed Lawal Mahmud (Nigeria) and Viviana Sanabria Duarte (Paraguay). Katherine Sarah Jones (United Kingdom) was elected as an additional Vice-Chair the following day. Ms. Sanabria Duarte agreed to serve as Rapporteur. At the opening of the substantive session ([A/](#)

[CN.10/PV.391](#)), held immediately after the organizational session, the Commission re-elected, by acclamation, Akaki Dvali (Georgia) as Chair of Working Group I, and Julia Rodríguez Acosta (El Salvador) as Chair of Working Group II.

Speaking as the substantive session got under way, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs [underscored the Commission's importance](#) amid heightened global tensions and increased strategic arms competition, combined with decreasing trust between nuclear-weapon States. With respect to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, she suggested that the Commission focus on providing further accountability for the existing commitments of NPT States parties; developing transparency, confidence-building and crisis-communication measures to prevent nuclear-weapon use; fostering constructive engagement between critics and supporters of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and accelerating efforts towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. On emerging technologies, she encouraged the Commission to identify gaps in current multilateral discussions by examining convergences in areas such as AI and biotechnology, alongside the interplay of various technological advancements with governance frameworks affecting international security.

The Commission held a general exchange of views for almost four plenary meetings on 1 and 2 April (A/CN.10/PV.391–A/CN.10/PV.394), before the two working groups commenced their work. A total of 76 statements were delivered by Member States and observers^[10] — almost the same number as in 2023. Most States focused on nuclear-related issues in their statements, rather than on emerging technologies.

Following three weeks of deliberations in plenary meetings and its respective working groups, the Disarmament Commission concluded its 2024 substantive session at its 396th meeting, on 19 April, by adopting a final report, with the consensus reports of its two working groups, which provided a procedural summary for submission to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session ([A/79/42](#)). No recommendations were put forward on the agenda items ([A/CN.10/PV.396](#)).

Working Group I

Working Group I based its discussions on agenda item 4, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", continuing its deliberations on the same agenda item from previous cycles. At its first meeting, on 3 April, upon the Chair's suggestion, delegations agreed to use the Chair's paper from the previous three-year cycle, dated 19 April 2023 (A/CN.10/2023/WG.I/CRP.1/Rev.2), as a starting point for their work in the new session.

Following robust exchanges of views and various proposals from Member States between the second and seventh meetings, the Chair subsequently revised and circulated updated papers on 5, 9, 16 and 19 April. At the eighth and final meeting of the year's session, on 19 April, delegations expressed their initial positions and reflections on the Chair's revised paper (A/CN.10/2024/WG.I/CRP.1/Rev.2), which was issued under the Chair's own responsibility and without prejudice to the position of delegations. At the same meeting, the Working Group considered and adopted its report on the agenda item by consensus (A/79/42, para. 20).

Working Group II

Working Group II conducted deliberations on agenda item 5, "Recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security". The Group organized its work using the framework provided in the Secretary-General's 2023 report on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts (A/78/268). Following the structure of section II of the report, the Working Group examined various emerging technologies through expert presentations and substantive exchanges among delegations.

To inform its deliberations and avoid duplication of efforts, the Working Group received briefings from Chairs of United Nations processes addressing emerging technologies in international security contexts. Member States also delivered presentations on relevant State-led initiatives. Throughout its meetings, the Group conducted an exchange of views on both the potential benefits and risks of emerging technologies in the context of international security.

The Working Group began its work on 3 April with a general exchange of views on agenda item 5. At its second meeting, on 4 April, representatives from the Office for Disarmament Affairs [presented](#) the Secretary-General's report (A/78/268), followed by an initial exchange of views among delegations. The Group then conducted a series of thematic discussions over the course of five meetings from 5 to 12 April:

- 5 April: Artificial intelligence and autonomous and uncrewed systems (section II.A)
- 8 April: Digital technologies (section II.B)
- 9 April: Biology and chemistry (section II.C)
- 11 April: Space and aerospace technologies (section II.D)
- 12 April: Electromagnetic technologies (section II.E) and materials technologies (section II.F).

During those thematic discussions, the Working Group benefited from [presentations](#) by representatives of international organizations and non-governmental entities.^[11]

At its eighth meeting, on 15 April, the Working Group heard and exchanged views on presentations by the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies 2021–2025, Burhan Gafoor (Singapore); the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, Robert in den Bosch (Kingdom of the Netherlands); and the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, Bassem Hassan (Egypt).

At the same meeting, the Working Group heard presentations on State-led initiatives related to emerging technologies from representatives of Austria, China, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

At its ninth meeting, on 16 April, the Group held a wide-ranging exchange of views on emerging technologies in the context of international security. The Working Group concluded its substantive deliberations at the tenth meeting, on 18 April, discussing the outcome of its work.

Based on those discussions, the Chair issued a [summary](#) reflecting her understanding of the key points raised without prejudice to the position of any delegation. The summary was intended to support States in their further consideration of the agenda item during the subsequent two annual sessions of the present three-year cycle. At its tenth meeting, the Working Group concluded its work with the consensus adoption of a procedural report ([A/79/42](#), para. 21).

Conference on Disarmament

The [Conference on Disarmament](#) held part I of its [2024 session](#) from 22 January to 28 March (CD/PV.1695–CD/PV.1715); part II from 13 May to 28 June (CD/PV.1716–CD/PV.1730); and part III from 29 July to 13 September (CD/PV.1731–CD/PV.1736). The session comprised 42 formal plenary meetings and six informal plenary meetings.

Adoption of the agenda

The 2024 session opened on 23 January under the presidency of Anupam Ray (India). As in previous years, the Conference adopted its agenda at its first meeting ([CD/2382](#)).

At the time of adoption, the President acknowledged a formal proposal by Pakistan to include a new agenda item entitled “New technologies: the development, deployment, integration and use of AI for military purposes, and autonomous weapon systems” ([CD/2334](#), annex). Noting the absence of consensus on this proposal, the President indicated that the matter would remain open for further consideration throughout the 2024 session.

Several member States of the Conference expressed the view that discussions on AI in the military domain could be accommodated within the Conference's existing agenda items. These delegations suggested various approaches, with some preferring to address the issue under agenda item 5, "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons", whereas others advocated for its inclusion under item 6, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament".

Requests for participation by States not members of the Conference

In a significant development from the previous year, the Conference addressed the issue of observer participation that had remained unresolved throughout 2023. By the opening of the 2024 session, 33 States not members had submitted requests to participate in the work of the Conference (CD/WP.653).

The matter was not resolved at the first plenary meeting owing to persistent disagreement over the procedure, specifically whether to address all requests through a single comprehensive decision or to consider each request individually. Following discussions on 30 January, the Conference reached a procedural compromise on 1 February, deciding to consider each request individually in their chronological order of receipt by the Secretariat.

Over the course of the session, the Conference considered and took action on 39 requests from non-member States of the Conference to participate in its work, accepting 22 requests and rejecting 17 ([CD/PV.1698](#), [CD/PV.1699](#), [CD/PV.1710](#)).

High-level segment

The Conference held its high-level segment from 26 to 28 February under the presidency of Febrian Ruddyard (Indonesia) (CD/PV.1703–CD/PV.1707). The segment attracted substantial participation, with dignitaries representing 49 States delivering in-person statements and an additional 10 submitting pre-recorded video messages. The speakers included the [Secretary-General](#) of the United Nations and the [Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization](#).

Complementing the formal proceedings, the presidency, with support from the Secretariat, organized two informal thematic discussions on 27 February. The first discussion, "Overcoming stagnation: ensuring the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament" was moderated by Camille Petit (France). The second, "Addressing contemporary challenges: the promotion of measures to reduce distrust and build confidence", was moderated by the President himself. Indonesia subsequently circulated a Chair's summary prepared by the Secretariat (CD/WP.654).

Decisions on the work of the Conference for 2024

Efforts towards a programme of work continued to present challenges for the Conference. In accordance with past decisions, consultations on a draft programme had been initiated the previous year by India as the first President-designate for the 2024 session. Those consultations extended into the next session, using as their basis the decision on the work of the Conference negotiated in 2022 under China's presidency and later adopted under the presidency of Colombia ([CD/2229](#)).

On 7 February, the Conference held a plenary meeting on an informal draft decision circulated by India's presidency. Despite continued consultations with various delegations to narrow differences, the President, Anupam Ray (India), concluded on 16 February that consensus remained elusive. The matter was subsequently transferred to the incoming presidency of Indonesia.

Under the presidency of Indonesia, consultations continued based on the latest draft developed under India's presidency. Its approach transitioned from bilateral consultations held before the high-level segment, to group discussions conducted thereafter. Setting a clear deadline, the second President, Febrian Ruddyard (Indonesia), announced that if consensus could not be achieved by 4 March, Indonesia would redirect the remainder of its presidency to convening thematic plenary meetings on substantive issues within the Conference's purview.

The third President of the 2024 session, Ali Bahreini (Islamic Republic of Iran), continued bilateral consultations on a draft decision on the work of the Conference, also based on the last draft text developed under the first presidency. On 20 May, the President circulated a working paper entitled "On the dual-track approach to the work of the Conference on Disarmament" ([CD/WP.655](#)), describing the efforts undertaken by the Iranian presidency and putting forward a proposal for a draft decision. France and the United States circulated a working paper containing comments on the President's draft ([CD/WP.656](#)), and the Conference discussed the proposal on 21 May.

The fourth President of the Conference, Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa (Iraq), continued consultations both bilaterally and in a small-group format, working from the draft proposal of the third President and with support from the Secretariat. These consultations successfully resolved the outstanding issues on the text, which had included questions on how to refer to the past work of the Conference and how to reflect the goal of ensuring continuity across its annual sessions.

In a significant milestone, the Conference adopted a decision on 13 June to establish five subsidiary bodies: four of them respectively covering agenda items 1–4, and a fifth covering

agenda items 5, 6 and 7, to meet during the 2024 session (CD/2390). This achievement was complemented on 19 June by a second decision appointing coordinators for the subsidiary bodies and establishing a timetable for their meetings (CD/2391). Following those decisions, the fourth and fifth Presidents convened an informal preparatory meeting of the coordinators to harmonize their approach towards organizing the subsidiary bodies.

On 24 June, at the request of the Russian Federation, the fifth President of the Conference, Noel White (Ireland), convened a plenary meeting to provide the coordinators an opportunity to outline their respective plans (CD/PV.1730). The coordinators each anticipated facilitating a general exchange of views, including on specific issues that the Conference could address at its 2025 session. Each subsidiary body would then consider a technical report containing any recommendations for continuing the substantive work of the Conference in 2025.

Work of the subsidiary bodies

Following the adoption of the decisions establishing the subsidiary bodies and appointing their coordinators, each body convened as follows:

- Subsidiary Body 1 (Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament) met on 25 June
- Subsidiary Body 2 (Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters) met on 28 June
- Subsidiary Body 3 (Prevention of an arms race in outer space) met on 6 August
- Subsidiary Body 4 (Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons) met on 8 August
- Subsidiary Body 5 (New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons/Comprehensive programme of disarmament/Transparency in armaments) met on 13 August.

Each subsidiary body conducted a general exchange of views under its respective agenda items, including discussions on specific topics that could be considered at its future meetings.

In advance of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies, the fifth President circulated a non-paper, prepared by the Secretariat, which provided a common template for the technical reports of the subsidiary bodies, including recommendations for continuing work in 2025. During the meeting of Subsidiary Body 1, States discussed amendments to the template and negotiated the report of the subsidiary body. Subsequently, all the subsidiary bodies agreed to their reports based on the agreed template.

Each subsidiary body recommended in its respective report to the Conference that, for its 2025 work decision and in accordance with the rules of procedure, the subsidiary bodies

should resume their work in 2025 with their present mandates as specified in decision [CD/2390](#). They further recommended that the coordinators, appointed pursuant to decision [CD/2391](#), be reappointed for 2025. Additionally, each subsidiary body encouraged its respective coordinator, under the President's authority and to ensure an inclusive, balanced and fair approach, to continue conducting informal consultations on both organizational and substantive aspects of its possible future work, consistent with the rules of procedure.

On 15 August, the Conference adopted all five subsidiary body reports as submitted by the fifth President ([CD/2392](#), [CD/2393](#), [CD/2394](#), [CD/2395](#) and [CD/2396](#)).

Other substantive work of the Conference in 2024

From mid-March until the establishment of the subsidiary bodies in June, the Conference resumed its previous session's practice of holding thematic plenary meetings based on proposals by the presidency. These meetings addressed various agenda items, as follows:

- 12 March: Fissile material cut-off treaty (item 2, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters")
- 14 March: Negative security assurances (item 4)
- 21 March: Nuclear disarmament verification (item 1, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament"), with a panel featuring former staff of the International Atomic Energy Agency and UNIDIR
- 28 March: Prevention of an arms race in outer space (item 3), with a panel featuring the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, as well as representatives of UNIDIR and the Office for Disarmament Affairs
- 14 May: Relationship between disarmament and development (item 6, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament"), with a panel featuring the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
- 23 May: Zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (item 2, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters"), with a panel featuring the President of the fourth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, Taher EL-Sonni (Libya), as well as UNIDIR and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
- 28 May: Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament (item 1)
- 30 May: Promoting transparency on nuclear doctrines and arsenals (item 7, "Transparency in armaments"), held as an informal meeting with a panel featuring UNIDIR, the Federation of American Scientists and King's College London

- 6 June: Building capacity in disarmament through education and research (item 6, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament"), with a panel featuring Tomiko Ichikawa (Japan), the Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNIDIR
- 11 June: Challenges of new and emerging threats: assessing the impact of emerging technologies on international security and arms control efforts (item 6, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament"), with a panel featuring representatives from France, the Republic of Korea and the United States

Consideration and adoption of the report to the General Assembly

The sixth President of the Conference, Meirav Eilon Shahr (Israel), facilitated negotiations on the consideration and adoption of the Conference's annual report to the General Assembly. His efforts, which built upon the successful model established by Hungary in 2023, resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive procedural report ([CD/2430](#)). Israel also led consultations on the annual draft resolution submitted to the First Committee on the report of the Conference on Disarmament ([L.14](#)), which the General Assembly subsequently adopted without a vote as resolution [79/71](#).

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

The Secretary-General's [Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters](#) held its eighty-first session from 31 January to 2 February in Geneva and its eighty-second session from 26 to 28 June at United Nations Headquarters. Shorna-Kay Richards (Jamaica) presided as Chair of both sessions.

The Board began a two-year programme of work focused on international peace and security risks emanating from advances in science and technology. It undertook a strategic foresight exercise aimed at identifying emerging peace and security trends; exploring interactions between technology and weapon systems; assessing impacts and governance mechanisms; and proposing measures to address risks and opportunities.

In its progress report to the Secretary-General ([A/79/240](#)), the Board outlined its preliminary considerations, informed by discussions among members and with external experts. The body was scheduled to issue formal recommendations following its eighty-fourth session in June 2025.

Over the course of its deliberations, the Board emphasized the dual potential of scientific and technological developments to either support disarmament, development, peacebuilding and human rights protection, or exacerbate inequalities and conflict dynamics. In this context, the Board noted a growing need within the United Nations for a systematic analysis of how

scientific and technological advancements intersect with issues of disarmament and arms control. Key concerns included ensuring human control over AI and autonomous weapons; adherence to international law; understanding the roles of States as well as non-State actors, including the private sector, civil society, the scientific community and non-State armed groups; and examining how technological advancements interact with existing weapons, particularly nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Turning to potential policy approaches, the Board recognized that effective management of technological impacts requires proactive and coordinated efforts at the national, regional and international levels. It emphasized the pivotal role of the United Nations in fostering international cooperation, establishing norms and setting global standards in the evolving landscape. Board members discussed establishing standardized terms and criteria for evaluating peace and security risks of various technologies, such as a matrix to help to determine whether technologies should be monitored, regulated or prohibited. The Board considered options for adapting existing multilateral frameworks, as well as regional and bilateral forums, to address technological advancements affecting nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. Members also explored opportunities for conducting technology assessments, establishing new dialogue platforms, enhancing research capabilities and promoting public ownership of computing capacities through publicly funded initiatives.

In its capacity as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Board reviewed UNIDIR's current programmes, activities and finances, including ongoing efforts to strengthen policy impact, achieve financial sustainability and further expand global engagement. The Board was briefed on UNIDIR workstreams addressing AI implications for international peace and security, as well as new developments in space security. In addition, UNIDIR provided information on the objectives and planned activities for its Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone Project. Trustees discussed recent UNIDIR activities, including Security Council briefings on cybersecurity and small arms, capacity-building initiatives in AI ethics and international law, and improvements to strategic and global communications.

The Board endorsed plans for UNIDIR's programme of work and budget for 2025, emphasizing core research areas and the need for sustainable funding to support its vital research functions amid evolving global challenges.

Footnotes

[1]**Approved:** Angola, Armenia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Holy See, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Niger, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Thailand and United Arab Emirates. **Not approved:** Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia and State of Palestine.

[2]Only one woman had previously chaired the First Committee: Mona Juul, then Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway, who held the role in 2006.

[3]The General Assembly decided to convene the joint half-day panel discussion by its resolutions [78/52](#) and [78/72](#).

[4]Unlike the other Main Committees, the First Committee had maintained the practice of not revealing delegations requesting votes in view of the substance of the Committee's work and its direct relationship to national security. In 2023, the delegation of Singapore pushed back against that practice, arguing it was not in line with the procedures of other committees of the General Assembly or with the principle of transparency. Singapore and South Africa jointly submitted the draft decision "Information on requests for votes" for adoption by the First Committee. The General Assembly adopted it on 2 December as decision [79/516](#).

[5]PAX, King's College London, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Cluster Munition Coalition, Access Now, University of Baltimore School of Law and Harvard Law School Project on Disability, International Network on Explosive Weapons, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Mines Action Canada, Human Rights Watch, Control Arms, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, Project Ploughshares, International Action Network on Small Arms, Pace University, Open Nuclear Network, International Peace Bureau, Stop Killer Robots, Pan-African Reparation Initiative, and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

[6]Australia (also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand), Austria, Cameroon, China, Cuba (also on behalf of Nicaragua and the Islamic Republic of Iran), Egypt, El Salvador, France, Hungary (on behalf of the European Union), India, Lithuania, Mexico, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Singapore (also on behalf of South Africa), Slovenia, Switzerland, United States and Uruguay.

[7]The General Assembly adopted the text on 2 December as decision [79/516](#).

[8]Austria, China, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Philippines, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom (also on behalf of Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine and United States) and United States.

[9]International Committee of the Red Cross.

[10]Algeria, Angola (on behalf of the Group of African States), Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia (first on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and subsequently in its national capacity), Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati (also on behalf of Kazakhstan), Lao People's Democratic Republic (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Latvia (on behalf of the Baltic States), Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Qatar (on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council), Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia (first on behalf of the Group of Arab States and subsequently in its national capacity), Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe, Holy See, State of Palestine, League of Arab States and European Union.

[11]Those presentations were provided by Jimena Viveros of the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence; Sarah Grand-Clément of UNIDIR; Elina Noor of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Pavel Karasev of the National Association for International Information Security; James Revill of UNIDIR; Peter Hotchkiss of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan of the Observer Research Foundation; Timothy Wright of the International Institute for Strategic Studies; Thomas Withington of the Royal United Services Institute; and Frank Grosspietsch of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.



We can begin the process of reform and revitalization ... by securing full and meaningful participation in civic life and peacebuilding — particularly young people, women and girls, and other historically marginalized communities. In short, we must "cultivate a culture of peace".

— [António Guterres](#), Secretary-General of the United Nations

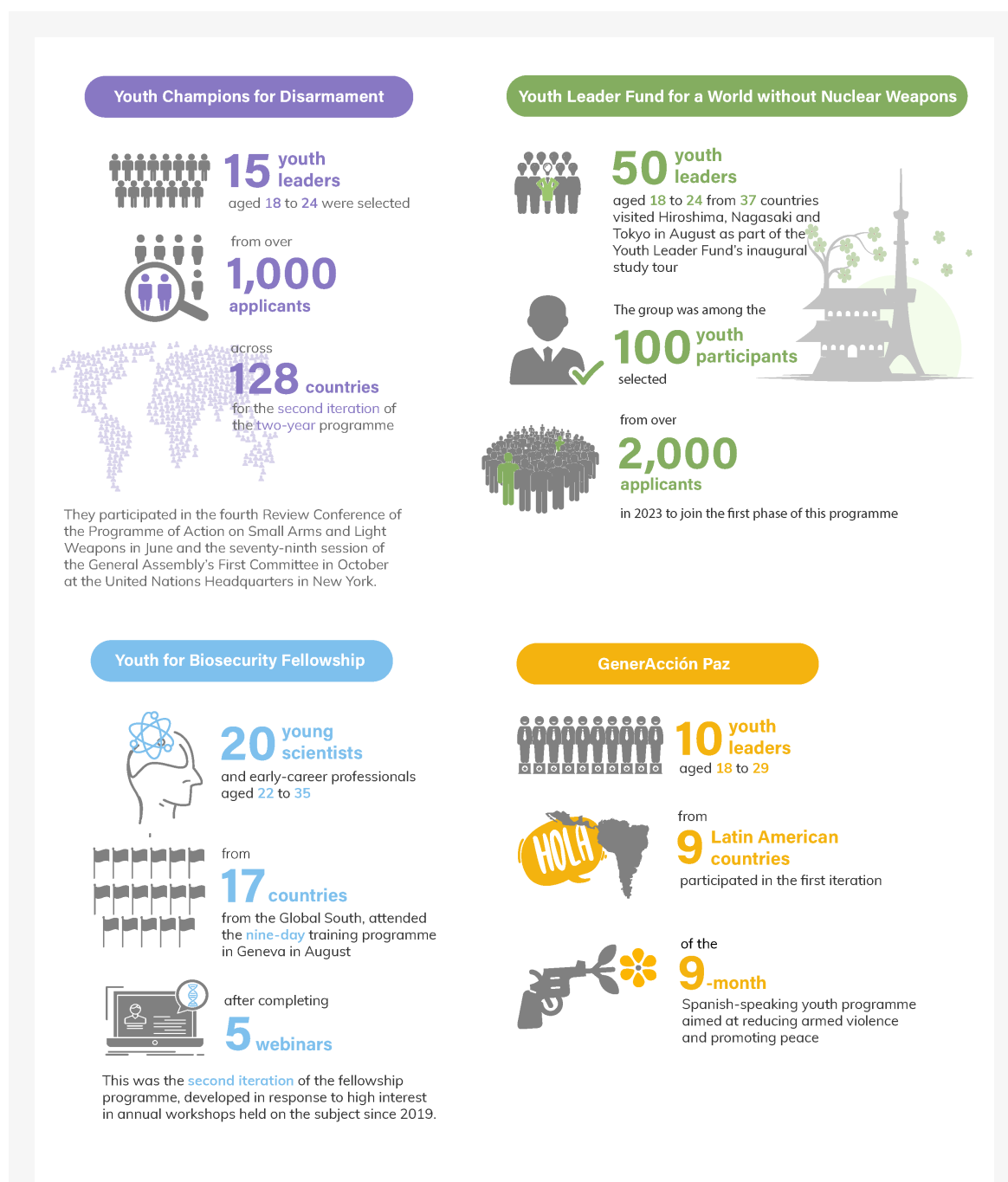
Developments and trends, 2024

In 2024, the General Assembly adopted its biennial resolutions on the “United Nations Disarmament Information Programme” (79/69) and the “United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education” (79/28). These mandates, alongside the Assembly’s recurring resolution on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation (78/31), continued to guide the information and outreach activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and relevant efforts by other United Nations entities. The aims of this work included providing Member States, the diplomatic community, non-governmental organizations and the public with unbiased, up-to-date and relevant information on multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, as well as promoting young people’s meaningful and inclusive participation in the field.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs engaged a record number of young people globally in its educational and empowerment programmes during the year, with participants taking part online and at in-person events held in Japan, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the United States and beyond. The second edition of the [Youth Champions for Disarmament Training Programme](#) brought together a diverse cohort of 15 selected young people who developed

community projects and participated in key United Nations forums, delivering statements and leading side events at the General Assembly, First Committee, and the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Office also launched the [Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge](#), engaging youth aged 13 to 29 in exploring the risks of AI in military operations, and supported youth-led discussions at the twenty-third Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. Through its fourth annual [#StepUp4Disarmament campaign](#), the Office encouraged young people to advocate against nuclear weapons by completing a distance of 8.29 km in observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August). The year also featured notable regional initiatives such as the GenerAcción Paz programme, which engaged 10 Spanish-speaking youth leaders in Latin America.

Figure 8.1. Youth4Disarmament programme: 2024 in numbers



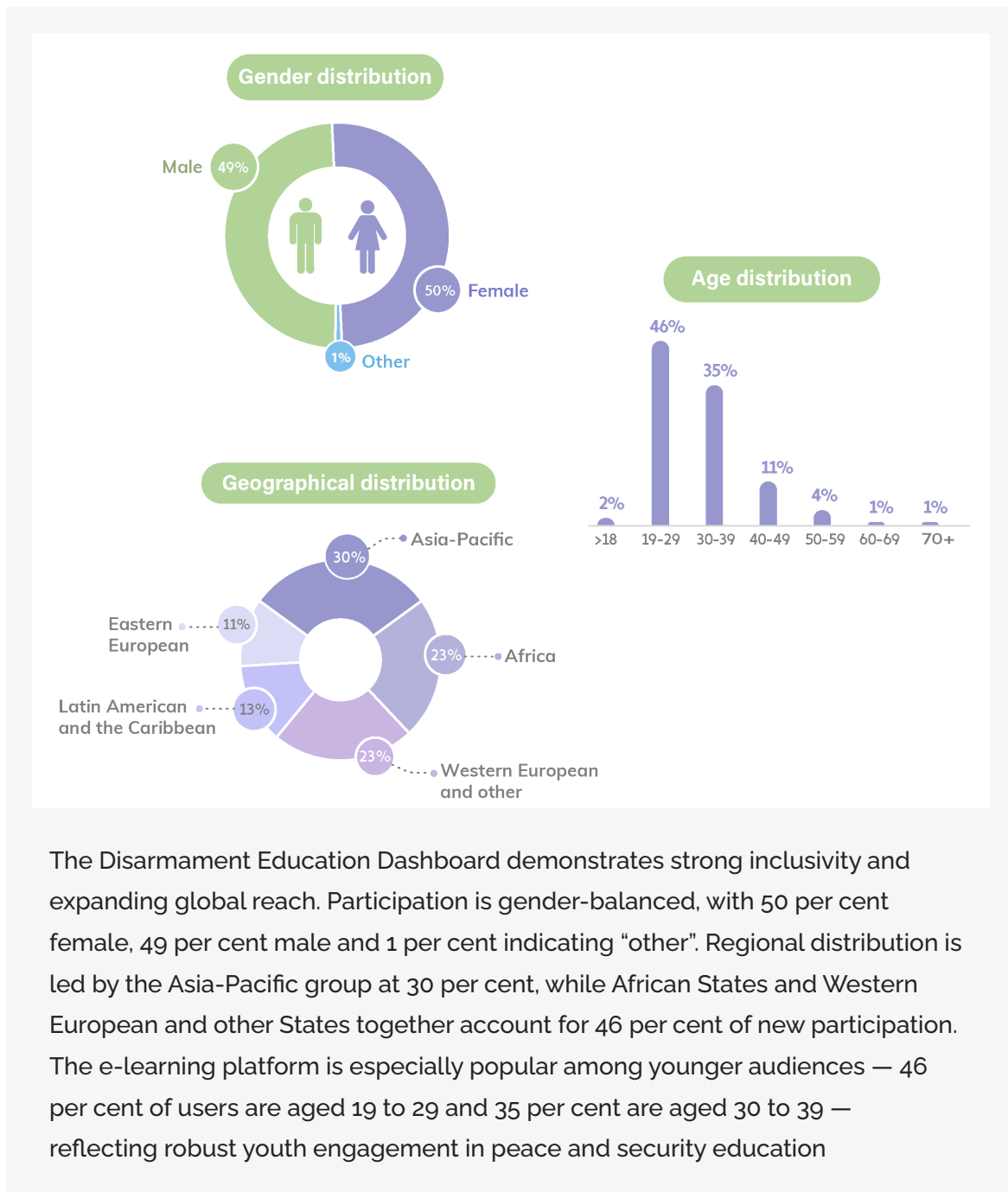
The Office successfully concluded its largest youth-focused initiative to date, the **Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons**, which provided 100 scholarships to young people from 63 countries to participate in online coursework on nuclear disarmament. From this cohort, 50 participants were selected to join a week-long, in-person study visit to Nagasaki, Hiroshima and Tokyo. The programme culminated in the Youth Leader Conference, where participants officially adopted the **DeclarACTION** — a document outlining their commitments and planned actions for nuclear disarmament advocacy.



Participants of the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons at the Nagasaki Peace Memorial on 26 August.

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to strengthen the sustainability and impact of its educational offerings in line with its 2022 [Disarmament Education Strategy](#). The Vienna Office maintained its role as the Office's education hub, supporting the strategic prioritization, development and execution of educational initiatives throughout the year. A significant milestone was the launch of a new disarmament education [website](#) that consolidated resources, tools and learning opportunities for diverse audiences. The Office's other activities in this area included recurring events in the Vienna Conversation Series and in the Disarmament Conversation Series of its Geneva Branch, as well as programming delivered to hundreds of learners by the Office's regional centres in Lomé, Lima and Kathmandu. Meanwhile, the [Disarmament Education Dashboard](#) continued to grow, attracting over 4,000 new users and offering specialized e-learning courses for diplomats, youth leaders and other stakeholders. A course focused on youth and disarmament gained particular attention, furthering the Office's commitment to engaging young people in disarmament efforts.

Figure 8.2. Charting progress: the global reach of online disarmament education, as at 31 December 2024



Meanwhile, fellowship and training programmes retained their vital role in developing new expertise within the disarmament field. The [United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme](#) — established in 1978 to promote greater disarmament knowledge among Member States, particularly developing countries — trained diplomats and other officials from 25 States. From March to August, the second iteration of the [Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship](#) engaged 20 young leaders in life sciences from 17 States in the global South, attracting over 2,400 applications from more than 100 countries — a 200 per

cent increase from the previous year — and offering participants online learning sessions with experts, a collaborative research project, and a 10-day immersive study visit to Geneva during the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention. Additionally, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Cybersecurity Agency of Singapore co-organized two sessions of the [United Nations-Singapore Cyber Fellowship](#).

In partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the European Union, the Office concluded the second year of its initiative "[Promoting responsible innovation in artificial intelligence for peace and security](#)". The programme delivered a series of events — including in- person workshops held in Estonia, Portugal and Belgium — aimed at supporting greater engagement from the civilian AI community in mitigating the risks that the misuse of civilian AI technology could pose to international peace and security.

The Office attracted over 600,000 visitors to its main website (<https://disarmament.unoda.org>), which regularly featured updates, speeches and press releases in all six United Nations languages, even as the website underwent a significant upgrade to improve content management, security and performance. The Meetings Place website (<https://meetings.unoda.org>) also improved, offering faster data entry, better metadata and new features for document generation.

In 2024, the Office continued its comprehensive database integration initiative aimed at creating a unified portal for disarmament-related data. Major milestones included an upgrade of the [Military Expenditures Database](#) with enhanced reporting tools and analytics capabilities, and the launch of the new [Gender database](#), providing sex-disaggregated data on delegate participation in multilateral disarmament forums. Meanwhile, the [United Nations Register of Conventional Arms](#) began a two- phase upgrade scheduled for completion in 2025, intended to improve data accessibility and transparency.

For the forty-eighth consecutive year since 1976, the Office published the [United Nations Disarmament Yearbook](#), providing a comprehensive account of the previous year's developments in the field of disarmament. The 2023 *Yearbook* was the second to feature a graphically enhanced preview edition issued in advance of the comprehensive text, which was published online later in the year.

Throughout 2024, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs participated in numerous interviews with international media outlets, including the *Sankei Shimbun* in Japan and Jibek Joly Television in Kazakhstan. The High Representative also briefed the press on the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, the Japanese organization of atomic bomb survivors. Media coverage of the Office's initiatives expanded significantly, with the Youth Leader Fund study visit to Japan garnering attention from news outlets in Australia, Japan and Somalia. To further enhance its reach, the Office issued 10 press releases during the year

and strengthened its digital presence by distributing its podcasts on major platforms, including [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#), while maintaining active engagement on its Flickr, Instagram and X social media channels.

Disarmament Information Programme

Publications

The *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* remained the flagship publication of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In June 2024, the Office published a graphically enhanced preview edition of the 2023 *Yearbook*, developed with a collection of explanatory graphics and charts to share key findings from the previous year in a concise and accessible format. The comprehensive edition of the *Yearbook* was launched in October as a website (<https://yearbook.unoda.org>), providing seamless access to this annual guide to the previous year's developments and trends related to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

The Office also issued the 2023–2024 edition of *Programmes Financed from Voluntary Contributions*, showcasing concrete outcomes of its donor partnerships to highlight the crucial role of extrabudgetary support in advancing key disarmament goals. The online publication featured activities such as the launch of the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons, as well as a public conversation series in Geneva and Vienna exploring the practical applications of human-centred disarmament.

For the 2024 edition of the Civil Society and Disarmament series, the Office published *The Impacts of the Availability of Firearms in Central America*. In the book, analysts from the Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible, in Guatemala, examined the wide-ranging peace and security and development impacts of small arms and light weapons across Central America, where firearms are involved in 70–90 per cent of all violent deaths. In addition to assessing the differing impacts of armed violence on various populations in this subregion, including women and youth, the authors considered how issues such as transnational organized crime, corruption among domestic authorities, and lax border enforcement practices affect efforts by Governments to restrain violence and control firearms availability.

In June, the Office for Disarmament Affairs launched its first Occasional Paper for the year, *Governance of Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain* (No. 42). In this publication, experts from the Office reviewed various opportunities and challenges posed to international peace and security by the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in applications such as military weapon systems and decision-support tools. Arguing that rapid developments in the AI field have outpaced the development of guardrails to mitigate such risks, the authors highlighted

various expert and diplomatic debates in this field while offering policy recommendations and options for multilateral governance.

In December, the Office issued Occasional Paper No. 43, *Youth and Peace in the Age of AI: Stories by the Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge Winners*. The book is centred around the winning entries from a contest hosted by the Office and the Republic of Korea, which invited young people aged 13 to 29 to submit written or comic-style stories envisioning potential risks and positive scenarios in a fictional future in which AI is deeply integrated into militaries around the world. (For more information, see “Youth and disarmament” below.)

In addition, the Office for Disarmament Affairs released four stand-alone publications in 2024. These included a graphically enhanced edition of the *Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management*, as well as an explanatory brochure, in all six official languages of the United Nations. Issued as a parliamentary text following its adoption in 2023 (A/78/111, annex), the new international instrument contains political commitments to prevent diversion, illicit trafficking and misuse of ammunition; mitigate and prevent unplanned explosions at munition sites; ensure the safety and security of conventional ammunition throughout its life cycle from the point of manufacture; and contribute to lasting peace, security and sustainable development. The Global Framework covers all types of ammunition, from small-calibre to the largest conventional ammunition, with 15 objectives and 85 concrete measures to promote the safety, security and sustainability of through-life conventional ammunition management.

Additionally, the Office issued the background paper *The Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and its Application in Latin America and the Caribbean*. In the document, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean examined synergies between the Global Framework and other international and regional arms control instruments. Following a review of key opportunities and potential challenges for Latin American and Caribbean countries, the Regional Centre outlined several recommendations in support of the Global Framework’s implementation in the region.

In 2024, the Office also published two issues of the newsletter for nominated experts and analytical laboratories for the Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons: No. 7 (January 2024) and No. 8 (June 2024). The biannual newsletter contained updates for the nominated experts and laboratories relating to recent or planned activities and provided an informal forum for sharing experiences and knowledge related to the Mechanism.

Throughout the year, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to produce the [UNODA Updates](#), listing events and activities of the Office and various disarmament forums. In 2024, the Office posted 92 updates, collated by quarter.

For a list of the Office's 2024 publications, including those of its regional centres, see the annex to the present *Yearbook*.

Websites

The Office for Disarmament Affairs maintained its use of websites as key platforms for communication with diverse audiences, including delegates, civil society organizations, staff members and the public. Its main website (<https://disarmament.unoda.org>) attracted 600,000 visitors during the year, as the central hub for sharing timely updates, high-level speeches, official remarks and breaking news on multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. To ensure maximum accessibility and engagement, the Office maintained fresh, regularly updated content across multiple sections of the website, including dynamic banner updates and dedicated areas for "Spotlight" features, "Updates" and "Statements and press releases". As in previous years, the Office worked to offer content in all six official languages of the United Nations.

In parallel with its content efforts, the Office made substantial progress towards a comprehensive upgrade of the main website's technical infrastructure. The platform modernization initiative focused on implementing a more advanced content management system with a seamless translation workflow, while ensuring content alignment with the Secretariat's current organizational standards. The Office also continued to enhance the website's security compliance and responsiveness.

Building on the successful 2022 launch of its new Meetings Place website (<https://meetings.unoda.org>), in 2024 the Office delivered further improvements to the platform's functionality and user experience. Featuring a simplified interface and more structured metadata, the revamped database-driven system streamlines stakeholder access to meeting documents and statements, while allowing more convenient data entry by meeting organizers. Notable features introduced during the year include an automated documents and statements page generation feature with customizable templates, allowing for greater flexibility in content presentation; an easy-to-use form for uploading documents and statements; and the ability to revise existing materials with changes reflected online seamlessly. The system now also offers analytics and visualization tools, providing insights into meeting trends and document engagement patterns.

The Office added a substantial number of e-learning courses to its [Disarmament Education Dashboard](#), a global online platform providing free training on disarmament, non-proliferation

and arms control topics. The content became available through a new website (www.disarmamenteducation.org) launched in 2024 to provide one-stop access to all publicly available disarmament education resources. (For more information, see “Education and outreach activities” below.)

For the second consecutive year, the Office published the complete *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* as a website (<https://yearbook.unoda.org>). This second release marked the first time the *Yearbook* was built using a comprehensive content management system, establishing a robust foundation for future editions. The reconfigured website maximizes the publication's interactive potential by leveraging browser-native tools, while maintaining the visual appeal that distinguished its inaugural digital release. The intuitive design allows effortless navigation between chapters and features an engaging visual timeline complemented by interactive graphics that enhance the user experience.

Databases

In 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs achieved significant progress in its multi-year database modernization initiative, completing several key systems while advancing others towards deployment as part of a comprehensive disarmament data repository.

- The Office completed an extensive two-phase upgrade of the [Military Expenditures Database](#), which catalogues national military expenditure reports received from Member States. The first phase introduced a streamlined reporting tool enabling Member States to transmit their military expenditure information more efficiently. Following this new tool's successful implementation, the second phase culminated in the launch of a revamped database frontend featuring advanced analytics capabilities. This new interface allows Member States to access and analyse submitted military expenditure data through interactive charts and visualization tools, providing insights into global defence spending patterns.
- The Office launched its new [gender portal](#), designed to support women's equal, full and effective participation in discussions and decision-making related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The portal provides access to sex-disaggregated data on delegates, heads of delegations and speaking roles across multilateral disarmament forums. Using analytics charts, users can now track and analyse gender participation trends in disarmament meetings and events, supporting evidence-based efforts to promote inclusivity in the field.
- Development commenced on upgrading the [United Nations Register of Conventional Arms](#), an interactive platform presenting data provided by Member States on their arms transfers across multiple weapon categories. The Office initiated the planning phase of this

two-phase upgrade in 2024, with the development and deployment phase scheduled for completion in 2025.

International days

International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness

The Office for Disarmament Affairs marked the second International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness (5 March)^[1] in two awareness-raising initiatives of its Vienna Office. At a public exhibition organized in the Vienna International Centre, from 28 February to 8 March, visitors could access educational materials and postcards on the theme of the 2024 day ("human cost of weapons"). The exhibition also included an interactive quiz game, as well as short videos on the work of multilateral disarmament and the contributions of the United Nations to that field.

The Vienna Office also hosted a [panel discussion](#), entitled "Reducing the human cost of weapons: human-centred disarmament through a gender lens", in cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna and the Austrian Research Association. Expert participants considered challenges to women's full and equal participation and leadership in small arms control, global and regional trends in the use of firearms in domestic and gender-based violence, and gendered perceptions of the use of firearms.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

The International Day against Nuclear Tests^[2] on 29 August was observed at a high-level plenary session of the General Assembly, held on 4 September at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. The commemorative event included statements from 23 Member States, six of which were delivered on behalf of regional organizations or groups of States.^[3] The meeting also included statements from two observer entities, one youth advocate and one civil society representative. (For more information, see chap. 1.)

In an opening [statement](#), the President of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, Dennis Francis (Trinidad and Tobago), voiced deep concern that a nuclear-armed State had revoked its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and about the return of dangerous, irresponsible and reckless rhetoric suggesting that the real risk of resort to nuclear arms may, once again, not be a far-fetched reality. He said, "It is our collective responsibility to ensure that we do not turn back the clock and allow the same mistakes to occur once more — with even graver consequences. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains our best safety net to ensure that nuclear testing stays where it belongs — in the past".

Speaking for the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Director and Deputy to the High Representative [welcomed](#) the signature of the CTBT by Somalia and its ratification by Papua New Guinea since the 2023 International Day: “Yet, we cannot ignore the troubling signs that continue to threaten efforts to end nuclear testing and the disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a whole ... The increasing reliance on nuclear weapons as instruments of coercion in geopolitical conflicts is deeply concerning ... The very notion of nuclear tests being used as a tool of influence is abhorrent and must be condemned unequivocally ... The threat of nuclear weapons use, in any form, is a grave danger that we must resist with all our might.”

The meeting also heard [remarks](#) by the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Robert Floyd, who highlighted that the International Monitoring System was more than 90 per cent complete. He said, “Seismic and hydroacoustic data, infrasound and radionuclide data, streaming non-stop into Vienna from those 300 facilities around the whole planet. States know that we’ll detect any test really fast, and we’ll know where it’s happened with precision well exceeding the original targets of the Treaty ... Still, without entry into force we don’t have the Treaty’s full set of verification tools”.

Speaking on behalf of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Director of the IAEA Liaison Office in New York noted ongoing efforts to assess the potential for safe use of various areas affected by nuclear weapons tests: “The work will continue in the years to come and serves as a strong reminder of the long-term hazardous effects of nuclear weapons testing.”

In a separate [written message](#), the Secretary-General reaffirmed his call for the nine Annex 2 States that had not ratified the CTBT to do so, establishing the conditions for its entry into force: “Recent calls for the resumption of nuclear testing demonstrate that the terrible lessons of the past are being forgotten — or ignored. On the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the world must speak with one voice to end this practice once and for all.”

The Office for Disarmament Affairs invited young people to mark the International Day by completing a distance of 8.29 km as part of the [#StepUp4Disarmament](#) youth challenge. The effort was part of the Office’s broader [Not One Nuclear Explosion \(NONE\) awareness-raising campaign](#), which encouraged participants to post photos of themselves with the word “none” written on their hands to signal opposition to any nuclear explosion. The Office also promoted the International Day across its social media platforms using the #IDANT hashtag. (For more information, see “Youth and disarmament” below.)

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons^[4] was marked on 26 September at a high-level plenary meeting convened by the President of the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, Philemon Yang (Cameroon). The commemorative event included statements^[5] from 89 Member States, four observers^[6] and two civil society organizations.^[7]

In his opening [statement](#) to the meeting, the President of the General Assembly lamented the growing risk of a nuclear weapon being used and observed that “States are actively advancing their weapons technology, while concerning reports suggest that some may soon seek to increase their nuclear stockpiles and military resources”. He added, “In the Pact for the Future, which was just adopted, we recommitted to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This is a global undertaking, but nuclear-weapon States must take the lead. I call on these States to resume dialogue with each other and to fully commit to preventing any use of a nuclear weapon. While awaiting their total elimination on the face of the Earth, I also appeal to these States to agree that none will be the first to use nuclear weapons. There is no scenario in which the use of nuclear weapons does not end in catastrophe for us all”.

The Secretary-General delivered the following [remarks](#), warning that “the norms painstakingly established over decades against the use, spread and testing of nuclear weapons are being eroded”, and calling on nuclear-weapon States to “stop gambling with humanity's future”. He continued, “This starts with nuclear-weapon States honouring their commitments, and meeting their disarmament obligations. Until nuclear weapons are eliminated, these States should commit to never use them under any circumstances. And they must demonstrate the utmost transparency in all matters related to nuclear weapons”.

To raise further awareness about the International Day, the Office for Disarmament Affairs promoted the observance through its social media channels using the #IDTENW and #NuclearWeaponsFreeWorld hashtags, as part of its NONE campaign.

Commemoration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On 6 and 9 August 2024, the world marked the seventy-ninth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In statements for the [Hiroshima Peace Memorial](#) and the [Nagasaki Peace Memorial](#), the Secretary-General honoured the victims of the attacks and the bravery of the hibakusha, survivors of the atomic bombings, who devoted a lifetime of service as advocates for peace and disarmament.

“We must never allow such devastation again”, he said in his remarks for the Nagasaki Peace Memorial, which the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs delivered on his behalf.

“And yet, I worry the lessons of nearly eight decades ago have not been learned. The world is seeing greater and greater division and mistrust. We are seeing nuclear weapons — and the threat of their use — re-emerging as tools of coercion. We are seeing their return to the centre of national security strategies, putting us all at the risk of annihilation. In the face of these threats, we must share the hibakusha's courage and speak with one clear and united voice to rid the world of these apocalyptic weapons, once and for all. The only way to eliminate the nuclear risk is to eliminate nuclear weapons.”

Media

In 2024, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs advanced disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control initiatives through various international media platforms by engaging in interviews and taking part in press conferences and media briefings.

In February, the High Representative was interviewed by [Sankei Shimbun](#), a leading newspaper in Japan. During the discussion, she emphasized the critical need for international cooperation in nuclear disarmament, particularly in the context of rising geopolitical tensions. She highlighted the importance of transparency and dialogue among nuclear-armed States to build trust and reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. She also discussed the role of emerging technologies in modern warfare, underscoring the necessity for establishing global norms and regulations to prevent their misuse.

In May, the High Representative appeared on [News23](#) in Japan, where she addressed the ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, emphasizing the commitment of the United Nations to facilitating peaceful resolutions. She highlighted the importance of diplomatic efforts and international cooperation in mitigating those crises, as well as the role of the United Nations in providing humanitarian aid and supporting disarmament initiatives in conflict zones.

In a June interview with [Yomiuri Shimbun](#), a prominent Japanese newspaper, the High Representative emphasized the critical importance of nuclear disarmament in the current global security environment; highlighted the need for renewed international dialogue and cooperation to address the escalating risks associated with nuclear weapons; and underscored the role of the United Nations in both facilitating such discussions and advocating for transparency among nuclear-armed States.

Ahead of the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the High Representative gave a [press briefing](#) to highlight the urgency of tackling the illicit arms trade. Appearing with the President-designate of the Conference, Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica), the High Representative underscored the devastating human cost of small arms

proliferation and called for strengthened international cooperation to fully implement the Programme of Action.

During her media-focused August, the High Representative made a notable appearance on [Jibek Joly](#) TV in Kazakhstan, where she highlighted Kazakhstan's important contributions to nuclear disarmament efforts, emphasizing its work in establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially across Central Asia, as well as its support for global initiatives such as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. The High Representative's engagement with Japanese media outlets in August included appearing on NHK Academia for a two-part interview series that aired in September and October.^[8] During the segments, she discussed various dimensions of nuclear disarmament, emphasizing the need for renewed international dialogue amid escalating global tensions. She also addressed the challenges posed by emerging technologies in warfare, while reiterating the role of the United Nations in fostering collaboration for peace and security among Member States.

In an interview with [Komei Shimbun](#), a Japanese daily newspaper, in September, the High Representative expressed concern over the deteriorating international security environment, again citing the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Gaza Strip, as well as the heightened risk of nuclear-weapon use. She also discussed the challenges posed by emerging technologies, including the unpredictable risks that could result from the integration of AI into nuclear command systems.

In October, she spoke to the Japanese magazine [Ushio](#) as part of an interview series on "women breaking the glass ceiling". Reflecting on her career, the High Representative shared her experiences working in conflict zones and the unique challenges and opportunities she faced as a woman in those environments. In an interview with [Envoy](#) magazine in October, the High Representative discussed the integration of AI into military systems and reiterated the Secretary-General's call for a legally binding prohibition of lethal autonomous weapons systems. She highlighted the importance of multilateral discussions, such as those within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, to advance concrete negotiations on autonomous weapons.

In addition, the High Representative held a [press conference](#) in October to discuss the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Nihon Hidankyo (Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations), commending its unwavering dedication to nuclear disarmament and highlighting its significant role in advocating for a world free of nuclear weapons. She further underscored the organization's significance in a November interview with [Jiji Press](#), noting its critical role in the 2017 adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Beyond the High Representative's media engagements, the Office's youth initiatives also garnered substantial international attention. The Youth Leader Fund for a World without

Nuclear Weapons [study visit to Japan](#) attracted significant media coverage, demonstrating broad global interest in youth-led nuclear disarmament advocacy. Multiple media outlets across different regions and languages covered the study visit and its associated Youth Leader Conference, including Japan's NHK and [Hiroshima Television](#), SBS Australia (broadcasting in both [Japanese](#) and [English](#)), and Somalia's [Weriye Axmed-seeko](#).

Additionally, staff of the Office for Disarmament Affairs participated in a briefing on disarmament-related matters for young international media representatives and journalists participating in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalism Fellowship.

In 2024, the Office also issued [10 press releases](#) to communicate on key issues and activities.

Exhibits

To commemorate Disarmament Week (24–30 October), the Office for Disarmament Affairs showcased the history and impact of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control through an [interactive photo exhibition](#) housed in the rotunda of the Vienna International Centre, home to various international organizations relevant to the Office's work. Using a visual display accompanied by powerful messages to highlight the field's successes, the Office underscored the importance and historical relevance of disarmament in times of crisis and tension.

Its Vienna Office partnered with Austria to organize a launch event for the exhibition on United Nations Day (24 October). The commemoration featured youth voices throughout its programme, including remarks by a participant in the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons and presentations of the winning entries from the [Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge](#).

Youth and disarmament

#Youth4Disarmament

Throughout 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to empower young people in the disarmament and non-proliferation field through its #Youth4Disarmament outreach programme.

It launched the second iteration of the [United Nations Youth Champions for Disarmament Training Programme](#), aimed at empowering youth to work for disarmament in their communities. An open call for applications in October 2023 prompted a substantial response, generating nearly 1,000 applications from 128 countries. Through a competitive selection process, 15 outstanding young leaders from the Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia and the Pacific

were chosen to participate. As part of the immersive learning programme, the Youth Champions developed community engagement projects with dedicated support from mentors and project coordinators in the Office for Disarmament Affairs. These initiatives were designed to expand disarmament awareness, understanding and advocacy within their local contexts.

In parallel, the first and second Youth Champions cohorts each made strategically timed visits to United Nations Headquarters in New York. In June, members of the inaugural cohort participated in the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, where they organized a side event entitled "[Reality check: role of youth in advocating against weapons of 'widespread destruction'](#)". During Disarmament Week in October, the second group of Youth Champions visited New York to participate in the First Committee proceedings. The event included high-level interactive meetings with key officials: the President of the General Assembly, Philemon Yang; the Chair of the First Committee, Maritza Chan Valverde; and the Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs, Felipe Paullier. The Youth Champions also hosted their own side event, "What you(th) can do for disarmament", emphasizing youth agency and concrete actions for advancing disarmament goals.

Building on this foundation of direct engagement and advocacy training, the Office for Disarmament Affairs conducted numerous [#Youth4Disarmament](#) activities to engage young people with diverse interests and backgrounds in contributing to disarmament and international peace and security. In collaboration with the Republic of Korea, it launched the [Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge](#), a creative science-fiction storytelling contest that engaged young people in exploring the risks and opportunities of AI and its implications for peace and security. Applicants aged 13 to 29 were invited to submit written or comic-style stories set in the year 2145, imagining a fictional world where militaries have integrated AI into their operations. Through their narratives, participants explored how AI could influence armed conflicts, interact with other emerging technologies, and potentially be leveraged positively in the military domain.

Young people around the world joined the 2024 [#StepUp4Disarmament](#) youth challenge, completing a distance of 8.29 km, a symbolic number corresponding to the date of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, on 29 August. The effort took place as part of the broader [NONE campaign](#), which provided multigenerational activities for participants to voice their perspectives against the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons. A notable social media component encouraged participants to pose in photos with "none" written on the palms of their hands, signalling "no" to any nuclear explosion.

Throughout the year, the Office raised the [#Youth4Disarmament](#) public profile through participation in a range of international forums. Its members featured prominently in the

twenty-third [Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues](#), in Seoul, which included its first plenary session dedicated to youth perspectives. In New York, young speakers and #Youth4Disarmament alumni delivered statements at the Economic and Social Council youth forum, as well as high-level meetings of the General Assembly to mark the International Day against Nuclear Tests and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

The Office's youth outreach in 2024 also included the following activities:

- Young alumni from past programmes of the Office participated in the [One Young World Nagasaki Summit](#) in May to explore the role of young people as "peace-preneurs" — a coined word combining "peace" and "entrepreneur".
- To mark World Youth Skills Day on 15 July, the Youth Champions for Disarmament led an [interactive virtual forum](#) where they engaged with young participants on ways of addressing challenges in their respective regions. Participants networked with peers from the Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia and the Pacific to discuss and exchange ideas to advance disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
- In the [#YouthInAction for Disarmament Campaign 2024](#), 12 young advocates shared their individual projects and work in the field of disarmament to mark the fourth anniversary of the General Assembly's biennial resolution on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation (74/64).
- In the first edition of [GenerAcción Paz](#), 10 selected Latin American youth trained and pursued community projects to help free their region of armed violence. (For more information, see "Education and outreach activities" below.)

Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons

In August, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, supported by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Hiroshima Office, led the inaugural [study visit to Japan](#) under the [Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons](#), a programme to empower young leaders as advocates for a nuclear-weapon-free world. The week-long study visit to Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Tokyo brought together 50 diverse young leaders selected from an initial cohort of 100 participants who had completed four months of online training the previous year.

Those joining the study visit heard first-hand perspectives on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons during meaningful interactions with the hibakusha, who shared their experiences as atomic bomb survivors and lifelong nuclear disarmament advocates. The programme also facilitated interactions with local youth, fostering cross-cultural understanding and building networks for future collaboration.

The study visit culminated in an international, youth-led hybrid conference where the participants presented and officially adopted their Declaration for a World Without Nuclear Weapons ([DeclarACTION](#)). This landmark document, developed collaboratively by the participants throughout their learning journey, is structured around three foundational pillars: hibakusha and community engagement; youth participation in political and intergovernmental processes; and research and academia. The authors emphasized the urgent need for political will, diplomacy, international cooperation and unity of nations for advancing nuclear disarmament efforts globally, and they presented commitments and recommendations for advancing the cause of a nuclear-weapon-free world. These included calls to integrate the hibakusha narratives into nuclear weapons dialogues, ensure meaningful youth participation in diplomatic processes related to nuclear disarmament, and promote partnerships with educational and research institutions to integrate peace and disarmament education into their teaching.

The programme's next phase was scheduled to begin in 2025, building on the success of the inaugural programme cycle.

Strategic priorities and Vienna Office education hub

Throughout 2024, the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to implement its 2022 [Disarmament Education Strategy](#) through expanded initiatives targeting diverse global audiences. In a significant milestone, the General Assembly noted the Strategy in its recurring resolution on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education ([79/28](#)).

In addition to fulfilling its liaison responsibilities, the Vienna Office maintained its "education hub" role, providing support for strategic prioritization, development and execution of educational efforts across all activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In 2024, the Vienna Office launched a new website (www.disarmamenteducation.org) as a dynamic, one-stop platform for public access to all disarmament education resources.

Education and outreach activities

The Office for Disarmament Affairs conducted extensive worldwide outreach and awareness-raising activities in 2024 to enhance understanding of its work, promote broad and active engagement in disarmament efforts, and bolster recognition of the ways those efforts support other global priorities related to peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. Member States also continued to strengthen their focus on disarmament and non-proliferation education, with a record 13 of them contributing to the Secretary-General's biennial report on the topic.

The ongoing [Vienna Conversation Series](#) provided a platform for productive discussions on timely issues among diverse stakeholders. In preparation for the landmark Summit of the Future, the Vienna Office convened senior policymakers to discuss the Vienna community's [crucial contributions](#) to the milestone process. Following the Summit, it organized a [dedicated event](#) in partnership with the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna to examine how the outcome [Pact for the Future](#) could affect future disarmament efforts.

The series explored other pressing topics throughout the year, including [reducing the human cost of weapons through a gender lens](#) and [examining artistic and creative means](#) for advancing disarmament. Each event brought together intergenerational speakers and audiences representing governments, international organizations, civil society and academia.

The Vienna Office provided more than 25 briefings to visitor groups from all United Nations regional groups, including students and Member State representatives. These sessions introduced participants to the Office's mandate and activities, while highlighting pathways for engagement in disarmament issues. Additionally, the Vienna Office took part in local and regional outreach initiatives, including [Ciné-ONU](#) film screenings and the [Long Night of Research](#).

Geneva Branch

The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its Geneva Disarmament Conversation Series, facilitating informal discussions on key topics relevant to the Geneva-based disarmament community. Throughout 2024, the Office's Geneva Branch organized six events in this series on diverse challenges: weapons and their environmental impact; disarmament and human rights within the framework of the [New Agenda for Peace](#); military expenditures and arms control; environmental protection in armed conflict under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons; explosive weapons in populated areas and human-centred disarmament; and countering improvised explosive device threats.

The Geneva Branch briefed student groups from 13 universities and institutions visiting the Palais des Nations, covering Geneva-based disarmament instruments including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. These briefings also touched on the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

Regional centres

The Office for Disarmament Affairs pursued educational initiatives targeted to various geographical contexts through its three regional centres.

In June and July, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific delivered the third edition of its flagship [Disarmament Toolkit](#) online course. Conducted in partnership with the Prajnya Trust, an India-based non-governmental organization, the six-day comprehensive programme attracted more than 600 participants from 80 countries, representing a diverse mix of students, professors, civil society representatives and practitioners. The course explored international disarmament efforts and their interconnections with the women, peace and security agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in a manner accessible to audiences across different sectors and experience levels.

In August, the Regional Centre for Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean launched the first edition of [GenerAcción Paz](#), an innovative, Spanish-language educational programme empowering Latin American youth to act for a future free of armed violence in their region. Ten selected youth leaders participated in four months of online training focused on the impacts of armed violence on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Throughout the training sessions, the young participants addressed how small arms and light weapons proliferation impacts various priorities under the Sustainable Development Goals, such as ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender equality, and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. In December, participants travelled to Lima for a study visit where they presented projects they had developed to promote peace and violence reduction in their communities over the coming months. The programme was implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme office in Peru and supported by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation.

In December, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in collaboration with the Institute for Strategic Studies of the University of Lomé, convened a hybrid conference on youth and women's participation in disarmament and arms control initiatives. The event brought together 100 young people for briefings on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The programme emphasized the importance of meaningful engagement by women and young people, with participants exploring strategies to integrate youth and gender perspectives into national action plans on small arms control, while aligning them with the Sustainable Development Goals.

E-learning and educational resources

The [Disarmament Education Dashboard](#), a global online learning platform managed by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, provides free courses on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control issues. In 2024, the platform continued its growth trajectory, attracting over 4,000 new registrations and bringing the total number of registered users close to 30,000 worldwide.

The Office undertook significant improvements to the Dashboard in 2024 to enhance user experience and maintain alignment with technological advancements. These upgrades were focused on optimizing user-friendliness, accessibility and interactivity, while strengthening collaboration across the Office's branches and regional centres for more efficient course creation and management.

The Dashboard's course offerings expanded substantially in 2024, with the addition of five new self-paced e-learning courses covering diverse weapon systems, legal instruments and cross-cutting issues. These additions brought the total [catalogue](#) to 29 public courses available to learners globally. The new programmes addressed topics such as youth and disarmament, emerging technologies, and humanitarian approaches to arms control.

User engagement with the new content proved robust, with over 500 learners completing the newly launched courses during the year. The course on youth and disarmament generated particular interest, attracting more than 200 completions and demonstrating the high demand for educational content bridging generational perspectives on the subject.

Beyond public offerings, the Office leveraged the Dashboard to deliver specialized training programmes. The platform supported participants in the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme, providing government officials with important background and capacity-building knowledge through courses that complemented a wider array of available training offerings. The platform also supported curated learning pathways for youth leadership initiatives, including participants in the [Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons](#) and the second edition of the [United Nations Youth Champions for Disarmament](#).

United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme

In 2024, diplomats and other officials from 25 States^[9] participated in the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship, Training and Advisory Services Programme, a capacity-building initiative established by the General Assembly at its tenth special session in 1978.^[10] The programme is intended to promote greater expertise and train officials from Member States, in particular developing countries, to participate more effectively in international disarmament deliberations and negotiations. The Office for Disarmament Affairs implements the programme each year, selecting up to 25 fellows nominated by their Governments. By the end of 2024, over 1,125 public officials — mostly diplomats or military experts — from 172 States had completed the programme.

The 2024 programme was organized into distinct segments. The various components consisted of mandatory self-paced e-learning courses in April and May, study visits in June and October, and a research period from July to September, allowing fellows to deepen their understanding of chosen disarmament topics.

The introductory e-learning segment, which offered free courses from a list comprising all major international organizations, enhanced the fellows' understanding of the multilateral disarmament architecture, intergovernmental disarmament forums and existing international regulations. This initial phase also introduced participants to key substantive themes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, including a focus on new and emerging technologies that are reshaping the security landscape.

The first of two month-long study visit segments took place from 30 May to 30 June, exposing the fellows to the work of international organizations and various treaty regimes through study visits to Geneva, Vienna and Brussels, complemented by country-specific study visits to Algeria and Germany.

In Geneva, the fellows began with an alumni networking session where Geneva-based former participants shared insights on how the fellowship programme had influenced their professional trajectories. The formal in-person instruction then commenced with discussions on the [New Agenda for Peace](#) and the Summit of the Future. The curriculum went on to address human-centred disarmament through coverage of key conventional weapons issues, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. Practical exercises included drafting a working characterization of lethal autonomous weapons systems. Subsequent briefings addressed cross-cutting themes such as gender and ammunition management, protection of the environment under international humanitarian law, and the environmental impact of weapons. In learning about humanitarian demining operations, the fellows explored the International Mine Action Standards, including recently updated guidelines on environmental management. Their study of the multilateral disarmament machinery included attending a plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on the thematic topic of disarmament education.

Emerging technologies and the outer space domain received significant attention in specialized briefings by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, followed by a quantum diplomacy simulation where fellows could explore the intersection of cutting-edge science and diplomacy.

Nuclear weapons issues were addressed through briefings and presentations covering various dimensions, including the role of AI in the nuclear realm and the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The fellows participated in an exercise focused on negotiating the main provisions of a treaty on negative security assurances.

The implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention received detailed examination at both technical and policy levels. Lectures and interactions with Member States covered national-level implementation, the ongoing activities of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, and the implications of scientific and technological advances for the treaty regime.

High-level diplomatic perspectives enriched the programme through briefings by senior officials. Ambassador Omar Zniber (Morocco), President of the Human Rights Council, addressed the interlinkages between disarmament and human rights. Ambassador Camille Petit (France) provided insights into French strategies across the spectrum of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In a visit to Berne, the fellows travelled to the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs at the invitation of the Swiss Government. The day in Berne included an exploration of the Swiss Drone and Robotics Centre of Armasuisse. In Vienna, the fellows benefited from broad exposure to key organizations and verification regimes. At the Vienna International Centre, the fellows were introduced to the role of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization through lectures and a practical table-top exercise. They further enhanced their understanding through visits to components of the CTBT's International Monitoring System, including a seismic and acoustic site, as well as the Preparatory Commission's international data and operations centres. Meetings with Ambassador Chiru Ochoa (Panama) and Ambassador Susan Eckey (Norway), as well as the Preparatory Commission's Executive Secretary, Robert Floyd, provided a range of perspectives on the organization's work and challenges.

At the IAEA, the fellows received detailed briefings on the international legal frameworks for nuclear safeguards and nuclear safety and security, with particular attention paid to the Agency's ongoing activities in Ukraine. Field visits to the IAEA's Seibersdorf laboratories, Incident and Emergency Centre, and safeguards equipment laboratory provided a first-hand understanding of verification technologies and procedures. In one highlight, the fellows met with IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi — also a former fellow — to discuss the Agency's current work.

Additional Vienna briefings expanded the fellows' understanding of related international issues. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs addressed the peaceful uses of outer space, while the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime covered cybercrime, firearms

trafficking and counter-terrorism. The fellows also learned about the activities of the Vienna Office of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and participated in a Vienna Conversation Series event exploring diplomacy, youth participation, education and artistic engagement as tools to advance disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Vienna study visit included exposure to multilateral export regimes through a briefing at the Wassenaar Arrangement headquarters, where fellows met with its Head Ambassador, György Molnár (Hungary). The study visit concluded with sessions at the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, which provided additional analytical perspectives on regional and global security challenges. The fellows also visited European Union institutions in Brussels, where they gained insights into European approaches to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control policies.^[11]

In The Hague, the fellows visited the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, where they received briefings on its mandate, inspections and verification regime, participated in a practical chemical forensics exercise, and visited the organization's Situation Centre.

The first study visit segment concluded with a historic milestone when, for the first time since the establishment of the fellowship programme, the fellows travelled to Africa. This groundbreaking visit took place at the invitation of the Government of Algeria, which also became the first Arab country to host the programme.

The second month-long travel segment took place from 8 October to 6 November. The fellows took country-specific study visits to Brazil, where they engaged with the [Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials](#), as well as study visits to China, Japan, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea, all at the invitation of their respective Governments. These engagements provided fellows with insights into different national approaches to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

At United Nations Headquarters in New York, the fellows immersed themselves in the work of the General Assembly, First Committee, monitoring real-time developments related to key issues in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control during the Committee's annual session. Their New York visit also featured an ambassadorial-level panel discussion on nuclear disarmament and enabled fellows to present the individual research projects they had developed during the summer study period.

The second travel segment offered in-depth substantive coverage of key topics in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, gender perspectives in disarmament, and emerging technologies, including outer space security. Disarmament education received special attention through a meeting with the winner of the Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge, as

well as briefings on youth engagement in disarmament and youth inclusion in the responsible AI agenda.

Throughout both study visit segments, the fellows learned about the work of the regional centres of the Office for Disarmament Affairs through dedicated virtual meetings with their Directors.

The fellowship programme concluded in the Republic of Korea, where the fellows participated in the twenty-third Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. This event — focused on “The Biological Weapons Convention at fifty: strengthening global biological security in a rapidly evolving technological landscape” — provided an opportunity for fellows to engage with international experts on cutting-edge biosecurity challenges. Upon completion of the programme in Seoul, the fellows received certificates of participation from the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, marking the successful conclusion of their comprehensive training experience.

Education and empowerment initiatives

Promoting responsible innovation in AI for peace and security

The Office for Disarmament Affairs, in the second year of its “[Promoting responsible innovation in AI for peace and security](#)” initiative, continued acting to address the risks posed to international peace and security by the misuse of civilian AI, including by supporting greater civilian AI community engagement in efforts to mitigate those risks. The effort works with AI governance policymakers, educators, civil society and industry representatives, students and young AI practitioners, including stakeholders not traditionally engaged in disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

Working in partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and alongside technical experts, leading universities, private sector actors and non-governmental organizations, the Office delivered a series of four multi-stakeholder dialogues, three in-person capacity-building workshops for AI practitioners around the world, three educator-focused round-table discussions, four expert blogs, six educational podcasts and a side event of the General Assembly, First Committee. The in-person workshops took place in Estonia in February, Portugal in May and Belgium in November, raising awareness among participants about practical approaches to responsible AI development and deployment.

Youth for biosecurity

The second iteration of the [Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship](#) programme ran from March to August, connecting 20 young leaders in life sciences from the global South to address pressing global biosecurity issues. Fellows from 17 States took part in online learning sessions with leading experts, collaborated on a research project, and undertook a 10-day immersive study trip to Geneva that coincided with the fourth session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, in August. The Fellowship experienced a dramatic surge in interest, with over 2,400 applications received from more than 100 countries, reflecting a 200 per cent increase since 2023.

United Nations-Singapore Cyber Fellowship

The Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore co-organized two sessions of the [United Nations-Singapore Cyber Fellowship](#) in 2024, the first from 22 to 27 April and the second from 12 to 17 August.

Hosted at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, the sessions brought together senior government officials representing diverse policy, technical and diplomatic backgrounds. Participants engaged in a week-long series of training panel discussions, workshops, round-table exchanges and visits to national critical infrastructure sites, research laboratories and academic institutions. Each session culminated in an interactive crisis communications exercise, allowing attendees to test their responses to a simulated information and communications technology (ICT) incident. The combined sessions welcomed 47 participants, achieving gender balance with 24 women delegates (51 per cent).

Campaigns

16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence

From 25 November to 10 December, the Office for Disarmament Affairs participated in the Secretary-General's [annual campaign](#) to end violence against women, held in connection with 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. Under the theme "Every 10 minutes, a woman is killed. UNiTE to end violence against women", the Office and its regional centres conducted a sustained social media campaign across their Instagram, LinkedIn and X platforms, posting near-daily messages to highlight the connections between disarmament and preventing gender-based violence.

Throughout the campaign period, the Office amplified messaging from partner United Nations entities, including the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, while also promoting relevant events and initiatives focused on women's empowerment and security.

In a [video message](#) on the campaign's opening day, which coincided with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs called for a fundamental reset to international security approaches. Such approaches, she said, should recognize disarmament and arms control as critical tools for preventing gender-based violence and advancing gender equality worldwide.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UNIDIR is an autonomous institution within the United Nations that conducts independent research on pressing global challenges related to disarmament, arms control and international security. UNIDIR continually works towards building a more secure world in which States and their peoples are freed from the debilitating threats and impacts of arms-related violence.

With complex global security dilemmas converging at an unprecedented pace in 2024, UNIDIR expanded its work to address the growing demand for evidence-based research in support of multilateral initiatives and international security frameworks. Its efforts generate significant benefits for the international community, Member States and ultimately their populations.

Under its strategic research framework for 2022–2025, UNIDIR conducts research and provides advice across an expanding portfolio of security challenges. Its work encompasses increasingly salient innovations in AI and cybersecurity, enabling technologies including quantum computing and 6G networks, biological risks and space security threats. UNIDIR also addresses foundational issues such as gender and inclusion in disarmament processes, conflict prevention, micro-disarmament, and weapons and ammunition management. It prioritizes capacity-building and developing strategic foresight on the future direction of global security.

UNIDIR is organized around five multi-year programmes — on [conventional arms and ammunition](#), [weapons of mass destruction](#), [security and technology](#), [space security](#) and [gender and disarmament](#) — as well as two special projects on [managing exits from armed conflict](#) and the [proposed Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction](#).

In 2024, UNIDIR continued to build on over four decades of expertise on long-standing threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as from conventional arms and ammunition behind 40 per cent of violent deaths in today's world. The Institute also

redoubled its focus on frontier technologies and emerging issues expected to shape peace and security over the coming decades.

During the year, UNIDIR achieved the following:

- Experienced the strongest-ever demand for its independent, innovative, evidence-based research, with an all-time high of [46 regionally diverse donors](#), including all five permanent members of the Security Council.
- Redoubled its capacity-building efforts, launching the [Women in AI Fellowship](#); providing four cohorts of officials from around the globe with [training on norms, international law and cyberspace](#); and offering a new [biological weapons advanced education course](#) to help build a stronger, more effective Biological Weapons Convention. The annual [disarmament orientation course](#) for Geneva-based disarmament diplomats, delivered jointly with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, continued to play its vital role in developing arms control expertise.
- Directed the [UNIDIR Futures Lab](#) towards key emerging issues, contributing findings from the [international security in 2045 foresight study](#) to the Summit of the Future: Action Days; generating innovative projects on [maritime security](#) and [air, land and sea drones](#); and launching a [round table for AI, security and ethics](#) as a vital platform for inclusive, interdisciplinary dialogue on AI in the military and security domains.
- Briefed the Security Council on two occasions, providing expert advice both on [cybersecurity's impacts on international security](#) and on the use of foresight in adapting to [new threats and opportunities from developments in science and technology](#).
- Produced 132 publications and conducted research on a [variety of crucial issues](#).
- Pursued its bridge-building function by engaging in and facilitating dialogue between disarmament stakeholders through 187 conferences, workshops and other activities that attracted over 10,000 participants. These included flagship events such as the [innovations dialogue on quantum technologies](#), the [Cyber Stability Conference on cyber threats to international security](#) and the [Outer Space Security Conference](#), as well as an innovative, data-driven conference on [how arms flow data can reinforce conflict early-warning systems](#).
- Reaffirmed its commitment to global outreach by holding events in Bahrain, Liberia, Pakistan and Togo, among other locations. UNIDIR briefed the five United Nations regional groups on military AI, gender-responsive arms control, space security and explosive weapons in populated areas. It also held hybrid French-language seminars on a wide range of international security issues and expanded [participatory action-research projects for conflict-affected young people](#) across Colombia, Iraq and Nigeria.

- Offered policy and technical advice to States, regional organizations and intergovernmental forums on a wide range of disarmament issues, including [universalization and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty](#) and [data collection relating to use of explosive weapons in populated areas](#).
- Reinvigorated its [fellowship programme](#) to bring in knowledge, ideas and good counsel at every level, from specialists in vital niche technologies to seasoned former leaders of Nobel Peace Prize-winning organizations.
- Expanded its offering of digital confidence-building tools by developing, through its work on managing exits from armed conflict, a suite of [data dashboards](#) that provide real-time, dynamic access to local insights into ongoing conflicts around the world. It also launched the [Middle East WMD-Free Zone Compass](#) to map the statements, proposals and postures of stakeholders in the weapons of mass destruction-free zone initiative, as well as creating a fully interactive version of the groundbreaking [Lexicon for Outer Space Security](#), scheduled for launch in 2025.
- Expanded its sizeable digital footprint, with a total social media audience growing to over 60,000 followers and more than 700,000 visits to its website and policy portals by users from all Member States.

The following subsections include 2024 highlights from UNIDIR research programmes.^[12]

Weapons of mass destruction

Under its programme on weapons of mass destruction, UNIDIR undertook research in three main areas: nuclear risk reduction; transparency and verification in nuclear disarmament; and strengthening the norm against chemical and biological weapons.

In 2024, UNIDIR produced 20 publications in these areas on a range of specific topics, including the [fissile material cut-off treaty](#) and [verification under the Biological Weapons Convention](#). The [Biological Weapons Convention national implementation measures database](#) was also completed, with profiles now available for each of the Convention's 187 States parties.

UNIDIR also organized or co-organized 22 workshops and events on weapons of mass destruction to facilitate discussion around arms control and disarmament-related issues, often bringing parties together across borders amid considerable geostrategic tension. These events included discussions on naval nuclear propulsion and nuclear risk reduction, as well as a webinar series co-organized with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Friends of the Chair of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention. UNIDIR also launched the [Biological Weapons Convention advanced education course](#) for key stakeholders.

Throughout the year, the Institute's research supported work in various multilateral forums, including through expert input to the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention. Programme experts also delivered presentations at 71 external events worldwide and undertook more than 130 media engagements.

Conventional arms and ammunition

UNIDIR research on conventional arms and ammunition in 2024 focused on three priority areas: strengthening weapons and ammunition management; preventing armed conflict and armed violence; and addressing global development and security challenges. It also supported the further development and implementation of multilateral instruments.

The Institute released 32 publications on a wide range of issues in conventional arms and ammunition, including [volunteer security outfits in Nigeria](#) and [the use of uncrewed aerial systems by non-State armed groups in Africa](#).^[13]

During 2024, the Institute organized 38 events to support efforts to prevent and address the illicit proliferation and misuse of conventional arms. In March, UNIDIR and the Liberia National Commission on Arms jointly organized the first pan-African exchange of national experiences, lessons learned and effective measures for [overcoming challenges in the universalization and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty](#). In November, the Institute partnered with Conflict Armament Research, the Peace Research Institute Oslo and the Violence & Impacts Early-Warning System to convene experts for an exploration of [how arms flow data could improve conflict early-warning systems](#).

UNIDIR also continued to support national efforts to strengthen weapons and ammunition management, as well as monitoring progress. In 2024, UNIDIR and the Economic Community of West African States jointly supported the Gambia's national weapons and ammunition management baseline assessment.

The Institute provided technical advisory support to the presidency of the [tenth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty](#). A UNIDIR-Explosive Weapons Monitor [working paper](#) on the reverberating effects of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas was reflected in the outcome statement of the Oslo conference on the political declaration on explosive weapons in populated areas. UNIDIR's report [Inputs for Action on Small Arms](#) informed the fourth Review Conference on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, with the outcome document reflecting the Institute's research on: (a) the role of [baseline assessments](#) for strengthening national controls; (b) the use of [technology for](#)

countering diversion; (c) the means of addressing the [craft production of small arms](#); and (d) the promotion of [prevention-oriented approaches](#) to tackle the illicit small arms trade and armed violence.

Programme experts also delivered presentations and contributions related to their research on conventional arms and ammunition for 81 other events and capacity-building activities around the world.

Security and technology

Throughout 2024, UNIDIR's work on security and technology helped to advance the multilateral agenda on new and emerging technologies, particularly in the fields of cybersecurity and AI. Its activities were aimed at supporting policy and decision-making; reducing the knowledge gap on issues about new technologies and international security; and bridging communities.

UNIDIR focused on the two broad priority areas of cyberstability and AI, the latter including autonomous systems and their weaponization. Within each area, the Institute sought to build knowledge, advance multilateral discourse and convene stakeholders that could develop new thinking on addressing international security implications and risks. Through its workstreams on key enabling technologies and strategic foresight, UNIDIR continued to monitor emerging developments to provide early insights into trends that will shape global security.

In the field of cybersecurity, UNIDIR significantly ramped up its capacity- and knowledge-building activities. These included delivering four [training courses on international law and norms of responsible behaviour in cyberspace](#) that empowered 90 officials from nearly 60 countries across the globe. The Institute also provided in-country assistance to support the development of national positions on the application of international law in cyberspace and to better identify what types of capacity-building activities could boost cyberresilience.

UNIDIR continued to produce research reports and events on key technical, legal and policy issues, tackling issues such as [best practices for developing national positions on international law](#), the risks and opportunities of [cloud computing](#), and the [AI-ICT nexus](#). Additionally, UNIDIR prioritized analysis of [the evolving cyber threat landscape](#), addressing it as the theme of both its [2024 Cyber Stability Conference](#) and [a briefing](#) to the Security Council.

In the field of AI and autonomy, UNIDIR's work continued to advance on parallel tracks: the first supporting the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, and the second dedicated to the wider

impact of AI on international peace and security. Highlights in this area included the launch of a new platform for dialogue among stakeholders (the [round table for AI, security and ethics](#)), the publication of a report on [confidence-building measures for AI](#), and the release of [draft guidelines for the development of national AI strategies](#) in the defence and security domain.

Space security

In 2024, UNIDIR's work on space security continued to generate considerable interest, producing 13 publications, including a report on [Outer Space and Use of Force](#), and organizing 19 events, including a side event on [the future of space security and the importance of complementarity and cooperation](#). Other events covered topics ranging from the [characterization and verification of weapons in space](#) to [regional perspectives on nuclear risk reduction in outer space](#). Programme experts also delivered presentations on space security at over 30 events around the world.

UNIDIR supported the 2024 meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, providing presentations and working papers to the process ahead of its successful conclusion in August.

In September, the annual [UNIDIR Outer Space Security Conference](#) provided an important space for cross-sectoral dialogue and exchange, including a number of next-generation experts who contributed to UNIDIR's inaugural [space security youth video competition](#). Building on various regional outreach activities carried out in recent years, UNIDIR also organized a series of regional workshops on space security, including an in-person regional [space security workshop for small island nations](#).

Gender and disarmament

In 2024, UNIDIR collaborated with States and stakeholders to promote greater understanding of the linkages between gender considerations and weapons-related concerns.

One important area of work was explosive weapons, landmines and cluster munitions, in recognition of the fact that women, girls, boys and men injured by explosive ordnance can have very different needs, even from similar injuries. To increase awareness and understanding of these issues, UNIDIR organized related events and launched a [fact sheet on gendered impacts of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas](#) and a short [explainer on how gender and diversity relate to mine action](#).

UNIDIR also collaborated with the gender focal points of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and organized a [side event at the Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free](#)

World in Cambodia. UNIDIR's [recommendations](#) were reflected in the new Action Plan agreed at the Summit, thereby advancing gender and diversity mainstreaming in mine action and promoting further integration with the women, peace and security agenda.

As part of the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, UNIDIR co-hosted a [side event](#) on the margins of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT to discuss gendered approaches to nuclear policies and their relevance to the NPT regime. To help to raise awareness on this subject, the Institute published the edited volume [From the Margins to the Mainstream: Advancing Intersectional Gender Analysis in Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#), with new research on demographic diversity among policy communities, justice claims of nuclear survivors, gender gaps in public opinion on nuclear weapons, feminist foreign policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, and synergies between nuclear treaties and gender equality frameworks. UNIDIR also launched a report entitled [Gender and Ionizing Radiation: Towards a New Research Agenda Addressing Disproportionate Harm](#), providing an overview of recent research on gendered aspects of harm from ionizing radiation and posing questions for future research on gender, radiation impacts and radiological protection standards.

With a view to enabling greater and more meaningful engagement by women in disarmament, UNIDIR also launched an annual [Women in AI Fellowship](#), which provides a week-long, in-person training programme for women diplomats covering AI and international peace and security. The first edition of the Fellowship took place in May and brought together more than 30 fellows from every United Nations regional group. To mark the occasion of the Fellowship, the Institute's Director published a [commentary on the importance of closing the gender gap in AI](#).

Managing exits from armed conflict

The UNIDIR project on [managing exits from armed conflict](#) is a multi-year collaboration to examine how and why individuals exit armed conflict, while also assessing the efficacy of programmes designed to support their transition away from the battlefield. This work contributes to the Institute's wider insights into "micro-disarmament". It is run in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the Department of Peace Operations, the World Bank, the Lake Chad Basin Commission's Regional Stabilization Strategy Secretariat, and the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research.

In 2024, UNIDIR conducted multi-method research across six countries: Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Iraq, the Niger and Nigeria. This effort included 11 surveys with over 9,300 respondents, complementary focus groups and key informant interviews, and participatory research with marginalized populations, such as children and indigenous communities.^[14]

UNIDIR also organized 31 events in this area, attracting over 1,000 participants. An expanded multi-partner art and action research initiative also saw conflict-affected young people from Iraq, Nigeria and Colombia [use photography, research and storytelling](#) to share their experiences. The resulting [Visions of Peace](#) exhibition at United Nations Headquarters presented their work to policymakers, youth advocates and practitioners as a means of promoting inclusive peacebuilding.

UNIDIR shared key research findings in various international forums, including [Geneva Peace Week](#), [the Berlin Climate Security Conference](#), and the 2024 Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Symposium, while also briefing inter-agency and United Nations forums.^[15] The [Exploring Pathways to Peace](#) closed-door workshop in Geneva brought together regional representatives and international experts to explore alternative conflict-resolution strategies for addressing the Boko Haram conflict. The [Beyond Stereotypes](#) panel in New York, meanwhile, highlighted the complex roles of women and girls in armed groups, as well as the inequalities that hinder their reintegration.

Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction

In 2024, UNIDIR continued to contribute to regional and international efforts to promote a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The second phase of its project in this area aims to: (a) assist in mitigating regional trends concerning the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; (b) encourage regional security arrangements and both norms and processes for arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament; (c) develop a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between the zone and current developments at regional and international levels; and (d) promote an effective, verifiable, inclusive and sustainable zone.

Throughout the year, and despite turmoil in the region, the Institute engaged with more than 300 participants through a series of events that offered innovative analysis, tools and actionable recommendations to address threats related to weapons of mass destruction. Expert-level workshops discussed issues such as regional security and weapons of mass destruction proliferation in the Middle East, as well as [the impact of AI on regional security, threat perceptions and a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction](#). UNIDIR also organized [a briefing ahead of the 2026 session of the NPT Preparatory Committee](#) on key topics related to nuclear disarmament, nuclear cooperation, and regional issues such as the Middle East zone. Project staff contributed to more than 30 events over the course of the year.

UNIDIR supported the drafting of reports, summarized States' positions and helped to bridge positions during regional conferences, including by providing technical expertise to the Secretariat of the fifth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. UNIDIR also organized

the first side event to the Conference, [presenting its suite of online tools relating to the zone](#) and explaining how the tools could support the work of delegations. The event also saw the launch of the project's most recent tool, the [Middle East WMD-Free Zone Compass](#), which maps and tracks statements on the zone from regional and nuclear-weapon States.

Footnotes

[1]The International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness was established by resolution [77/51](#) of 7 December 2022, in which the General Assembly found “that the need has never been greater for disarmament and non-proliferation education, especially regarding weapons of mass destruction”, and invited United Nations entities, civil society, academic institutions, the media and individuals to commemorate the new International Day through “all means of educational and public awareness-raising activities”.

[2]By resolution [64/35](#) of 2 December 2009, introduced at the initiative of Kazakhstan, the General Assembly declared 29 August the International Day against Nuclear Tests to commemorate the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site on 29 August 1991. Member States and others were invited to use the International Day to raise awareness about the effects of nuclear-weapon test explosions and the need to strengthen the international norm against all nuclear tests as a valuable step towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

[3]See *Journal of the United Nations*, high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests ([part 1](#) and [part 2](#)), 4 September 2024.

[4]The International Day was established in 2013 through an initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement following the first high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament. The initiative was introduced under General Assembly resolution [68/32](#), by which the General Assembly called for immediately commencing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, and for enhancing public awareness and education about the threat of nuclear weapons and the necessity of their total elimination.

[5]See *Journal of the United Nations*, high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons ([part 1](#) and [part 2](#)), 26 September 2024.

[6]Holy See, International Committee of the Red Cross, League of Arab States, and Pacific Islands Forum.

[7]International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, and Steppe Organization for Peace (STOP): Qazaq Youth Initiative for Nuclear Justice.

[8]See NHK, [part 1](#) and [part 2](#).

[9]Algeria, Australia, Bhutan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Spain, Viet Nam and Zambia.

[10]The programme was established pursuant to paragraph 108 of the final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly ([S-10/2](#)), which was the first such session devoted to disarmament: "In order to promote expertise in disarmament in more Member States, particularly in the developing countries, the General Assembly decides to establish a programme of fellowships on disarmament."

[11]The European Union Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium provided support for the Brussels visit.

[12]UNIDIR provided a full account of its activities, as well as its proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2024, in the annual report of its Director to the General Assembly ([A/79/146](#)). Detailed information about specific programmes, projects, activities and research is available via the [UNIDIR website](#).

[13]In 2024, United Nations reports on small arms and light weapons, improvised explosive devices, the use of mercenaries, and conflict prevention all cited UNIDIR research.

[14]Findings from the resulting 22 publications were cited in reports such as Amnesty International's "[Help Us Build Our Lives](#)", and media outlets including [BBC News](#), [Jeune Afrique](#) and [Leadership Nigeria](#).

[15]Briefing recipients included the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, and the Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups alliance.



Disarmament resolutions and decisions of the seventy-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly

Disarmament Resolutions and Decisions Database (<https://resolutions.unoda.org>)

The database lists the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly over the years. The platform features filters to pinpoint specific topics and titles, and to track State voting and sponsoring patterns.

Status of multilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements

Disarmament Treaties Database (<https://treaties.unoda.org>)

The database is a comprehensive repository of disarmament-related treaties. It highlights the most recent ratifications, accessions, signatures and other treaty actions. Users may easily filter data, such as actions by date, treaty and State.

Publications and other information materials in 2024*

(Note: Publications jointly authored by programmes have an asterisk next to the title. Please note that co-authored publications appear twice in this list, once in the section of each authoring programme.)

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

Publications

- [United Nations Disarmament Yearbook 2023](#), vol. 48 (condensed and full versions) (Sales No. E.24.IX.3)
- [Youth and Peace in the Age of AI: Stories by the Sci-fAI Futures Youth Challenge Winners](#), Occasional Papers, No. 43 (Sales No. E.25.IX.3)
- [Governance of Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain](#), Occasional Papers, No. 42 (Sales No. E.24.IX.4)
- [The Impacts of the Availability of Firearms in Central America](#), Civil Society and Disarmament 2024 (Sales No. E.25.IX.4)
- [Programmes Financed from Voluntary Contributions, 2023–2024](#)
- [Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management](#) (A/78/111, annex)
- [The Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and its Application in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (background paper)
- [Guidelines for the Development of Protocols to Tackle the Presence and Use of Firearms in Schools](#) (in Spanish) (July 2024)
- [Disarmament Week: 2024 Photo Exhibition Photo Catalogue](#) (October 2024)
- [Synergizing Data Collection Efforts: A Guidance Document on Reporting under the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap in the Context of Existing Reporting Obligations](#) (November 2024)
- [Firearms Marking with Laser Engraving: Technical Insights and Recommendations](#) (working paper) (December 2024)
- [Channeling youth expertise and influence for a world without nuclear weapons](#), blog
- Newsletter for nominated experts and analytical laboratories for the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons ([No. 7](#) (January 2024) and [No. 8](#) (June 2024))
- [UNODA^{\[1\]} Updates](#) (online news updates)

E-learning courses

- "GenerAcción Paz" programme (instructor-led; in Spanish)
- ["Disarmament Toolkit"](#) (2024 edition)
- ["The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons \(CCW\) and its protocols"](#)

- [“Youth and Disarmament”](#)
- [“New and emerging technologies & nuclear weapons”](#)
- [“Humanitarian approaches to nuclear disarmament”](#)
- [“Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention – training for national contact points and other relevant stakeholders”](#)

Podcasts

- [“Reducing the human cost of weapons: human-centred disarmament through a gender lens”](#), 15 March
- [“Non-proliferation, disarmament & global governance: the role of the Vienna community in the preparations for the Summit of the Future and beyond”](#), 30 January
- [“Different means for a common goal: diplomacy, youth participation, education and artistic engagement to advance disarmament and non-proliferation”](#), 12 June
- [“After the Summit of the Future: new momentum for arms control and disarmament?”](#), 8 October
- [“Women, Forces of Change: the podcast”](#) (10 episodes; in Spanish), 8 November

Videos

- [“YLF participants organize the Youth Leader Conference”](#), September 2024
- [Music and visual art competition in Jamaica](#) (November 2024)
- [“Caribbean Firearms Roadmap: implementing partners – overview”](#), November 2024
- [“Caribbean Firearms Roadmap: implementing partners”](#), December 2024
- [UNODA Vienna 2024 highlights](#) (December 2024)
- [Women, Forces of Change](#): Latin American and Caribbean women promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (December 2024)

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Conventional arms and ammunition

Publications

- [The Use of Uncrewed Aerial Systems by Non-State Armed Groups: Exploring Trends in Africa](#)

- *Unregulated: Examining the Global Proliferation of Craft-produced Weapons* (factsheet) (in English, French and Spanish)
- *Inputs for Action on Small Arms: Conclusions and Recommendations from the Thematic Expert Seminars* (in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish)
- *The Role of Interagency Cooperation in the Effective Implementation of Arms Trade Treaty Provisions* (brainstorming workshop summary report) (in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish)
- *Regional Seminar on the Prevention of Violent Extremism and the Management of Conventional Weapons in West Africa* (summary report) (in English and French)
- *Weapons and Ammunition Management – Country Insight Series: Republic of Benin* (in English and French)
- *Weapons and Ammunition Management in Africa*
- *Insight: 2024 Update* (in English and French)
- *Unregulated Production: Examining Craft-produced Weapons from a Global Perspective* (in English and French)
- *Assessing Technologies to Counter the Diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons**
- *Understanding Civilian Harm from the Indirect or Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: Strengthening Data Collection to Implement the Political Declaration*
- *Exploring the Acquisition and Management of Arms among Volunteer Security Outfits in Nigeria's Borno State*
- Small arms control and prevention: Back together again or a flash in the pan? (commentary)
- *Armed and Dangerous? A Brief Overview of Uncrewed Aerial Systems – Risks, Impacts and Avenues for Action**
- Addressing the threats posed by improvised explosive devices in West Africa: Towards a regional approach (commentary)

Journal and working papers

- "Explosive weapons and the 2030 Agenda: How the use of explosive weapons in populated areas undermines sustainable development", *Fragments*, vol. 1, No. 2
- "Strengthening the collection of data on the indirect or reverberating effects of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas", working paper, April
- "The growing and multifaceted global threat of privately made and other non-industrial small arms and light weapons", June

Gender and disarmament

Publications

- [From the Margins to the Mainstream: Advancing Intersectional Gender Analysis of Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#)
- [How do Gender and Diversity Relate to Mine Action?](#)
- [La question des armes dans les violences sexuelles liées aux conflits : Boîte à outils pour la maîtrise des armements et le désarmement](#) (in French)
- [Gendered Impacts of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#) (factsheet)
- [Only our conscious, collective action can counteract the gender biases and inequalities baked into artificial intelligence*](#) (commentary)
- [Política exterior, género, desarme nuclear y ambiente: perspectivas desde el Sur](#) (in Spanish)
- [Advancing gender equality: progress in arms control and disarmament](#) (commentary)
- [Gender and Disarmament Resource Pack](#)
- [Gender and Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems*](#) (factsheet)
- [Five steps towards gender-responsive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration](#) (commentary)
- [Gender and Ionizing Radiation: Towards a New Research Agenda Addressing Disproportionate Harm](#)

Journal and working papers

- ["From research to policy: prospects for gender-transformative small arms control"](#), working paper
- ["Taking stock of gender, diversity and inclusion in the Convention on Cluster Munitions: a mid-point review of the implementation of the Lausanne Action Plan"](#) (CCM/MSP/2024/WP.2)

Security and technology

Publications

- [International Security in 2045: Exploring Futures for Peace, Security and Disarmament](#) (in English and Spanish)

- *International Security in 2045: The Methodology Behind the Future Scenarios*
- *Enabling Technologies and International Security: A Compendium (2023 Edition)* (in Chinese and English)
- *A Compendium of Good Practices: Developing a National Position on the Interpretation of International*
- *Law and State Use of ICT* (in Arabic, English, French and Spanish)
- *Accelerating ICT Security Capacity-Building: Takeaways from the Global Roundtable on ICT Security*
- *Capacity-Building*
- *Assessing Technologies to Counter the Diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons**
- *Unlocking the UNIDIR Cyber Policy Portal: A Comprehensive User Guide*
- *Confidence-Building Measures for Artificial Intelligence: A Multilateral Perspective*
- *Gender and Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems** (factsheet)
- *The Global Kaleidoscope of Military AI Governance: Decoding the 2024 Regional Consultations on Responsible AI in the Military Domain*
- *Governance of Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain: A Multi-Stakeholder Perspective on Priority Areas*
- *Draft Guidelines for the Development of a National Strategy on AI in Security and Defence*
- *Armed and Dangerous? A Brief Overview of Uncrewed Aerial Systems – Risks, Impacts and Avenues for Action**
- *Large Language Models and International Security* (primer)
- *Internet Fragmentation and Cybersecurity* (primer) (in English and Spanish)
- *Quantum Technology, Peace and Security* (primer) (in Chinese and English)
- *Towards a Regular Institutional Dialogue on International ICT Security: Review of Current Proposals and Considerations for Effective Dialogue*
- *Exploring the AI-ICT Security Nexus*
- *Governance Implications of Synthetic Data in the Context of International Security* (in Chinese and English)
- *Cloud Computing and International Security: Risks, Opportunities and Governance Challenges* (in Chinese and English; research note in French and Spanish)
- *Cloud Computing Governance: Research Brief*
- *Enabling Technologies and International Security: A Compendium, 2024 Edition* (in Chinese and English)

- [2024 innovations dialogue: quantum technologies and their implications for international peace and security](#)

Journal and working group papers

- ["Proposal for standard classification of drone by weight under 150kg for standardization of dual-use drones"](#), *Journal of Defense Quality Society (JDQS)*, vol. 6, No. 1
- ["Optimal design of dual-use quad-copter drone for MTOW-based standard platform using CLOUDS program"](#), *Journal of the Korean Society for Aeronautical and Space Sciences*, vol. 52, No. 3

Other publications

- [Scenario 29: Cyber operations against water and water infrastructure](#) (cyber law toolkit)
- ["Technology, economy and war: the disruptive force of AI"](#), in *Research Handbook on Warfare and Artificial Intelligence*
- Background paper for the ASEAN Norms Implementation Checklist [not for publication]
- ["Passive ambitions, active limitations: defence AI in India"](#), in *The Very Long Game: 25 Case Studies on the Global State of Defense AI*
- Summary report on the UNIDIR–Colombia workshop on norms, international law and the State use of ICTs [not for publication]
- ASEAN Norms Implementation Checklist [not for publication]
- [Bytes and Battles: Inclusion of Data Governance in Responsible Military AI](#), Paper No. 308

Weapons of mass destruction

Publications

- [Assessing the SecBio Platform Proposal for the Biological Weapons Convention](#) (in English and French)
- [Revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament: Workshop Report](#) (in English and French)
- [Taking Stock of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty Process](#)
- [2023 Biorisks, Biosecurity and Biological Disarmament Conference Report](#)
- [Voluntary Transparency Initiatives: The Case of Peer Review Exercises in the Context of the BWC](#)

- [The Focus and Function of BWC Verification](#)
- [Possible Models of BWC Verification](#)

Journal and working group papers

- [“How the Biological Weapons Convention could verify treaty compliance”](#), *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March
- [“Preserving the nuclear test ban after Russia revoked its CTBT ratification”](#), *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March
- *CBW Magazine*, vol. 17, No. 2
- [“UNSCR 1540 lessons learned from the ‘tending’ of the biological weapons regime”](#), UNICRI 1540 Compass, April
- [“What will be the impact of AI on the bioweapons treaty?”](#), *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November

Other publications

- [“Strengthening global biosecurity and biosafety efforts: the role of the BWC National Implementation Database in informing and guiding national policies”](#), National University of Singapore – Centre for International Law, April
- [“Restoring Russian-U.S. arms control”](#), *Arms Control Today*, May
- [“Quieting the nuclear rattle: responding to Russia’s tactical nuclear weapons exercises”](#), European Leadership Network, May
- [“The role of open source data and methods in verifying compliance with weapons of mass destruction agreements”](#), in *Open Source Investigations in the Age of Google*
- [The Biological Weapons Convention: Challenges and Opportunities](#), Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Policy Brief No.15
- [“Global stocks and production of fissile materials, 2023”](#), in *SIPRI Yearbook 2024*
- [“The role and limits of transparency measures in disincentivising biological weapons”](#), in *Disincentivizing Bioweapons: Theory and Policy Approaches*
- Demonstrative verification in arms control and disarmament (conference paper; not published)

Space security

Publications

- [A Lexicon for Outer Space Security](#) (in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish)
- [OEWG on Reducing Space Threats: Recap Report](#)
- [Space security and sustainability: Why is it essential for small island nations?](#) (commentary)
- [Verification for outer space security](#) (GE-PAROS/2024/ WP.9)
- [Space Security and Sustainability: Why Is It Essential for Small Island Nations?](#)
- [Space Security Legal Primer 1 – Outer Space & Use of Force](#)

Other publications

- [Australia's growing space agency amid a renewed push to the stars](#)
- ["Existing international governance, current multilateral efforts and contemporary space security developments and trends"](#), in *Space: Exploring NATO's Final Frontier*
- [Bringing the space–nuclear nexus into multilateral discussions](#) (commentary)

Middle East weapons of mass destruction-free zone

Publications

- [Understanding the Middle East WMD-Free Zone Conference](#)

Journal and working group papers

- ["Chemical weapons investigation mechanisms in Syria: standards of proof and methods of work"](#), *Z Friedens und Konfliktforsch*, October
- ["A balanced approach to addressing nuclear risks in the Middle East while preserving the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons"](#), *Peace Review*, April

Managing exits from armed conflict

Publications

- [Observations from Action Research and Programming with Conflict-affected Populations](#)

- *Disengaging from Armed Groups and Desisting from Conflict Activities: Drawing Lessons Learned from Criminology*, Findings Report 34
- *Shadow Crossings: Informal Returnees from Al Hol*, Findings Report 35
- *Prospects for Dialogue and Negotiation to Address the Conflict in the Lake Chad Basin*
- *Banditry Violence in Nigeria's North West: Insights from Affected Communities*, Findings Report 36
- *Child Recruitment and Exits from Armed Groups: Evidence from the Lake Chad Basin to Inform the UNSC CAAC Debate*
- *In Search of a Middle East and North Africa Peace System*
- *Climate Change Is Driving People into Armed Groups: Five Takeaways*
- *From Al Hol to Hope: Navigating Return and Reintegration Challenges*, Findings Report 37
- *Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation*
- *Taking Peace into Our Own Hands: Colombian Feminists Use Local Politics to Advance their Agenda for Peace* (in English and Spanish)
- *Shifting the Focus: Insights from Conflict-affected Children and Youth on Peacebuilding and Recovery*
- *Picturing Conflict: Child Perspectives from Their Time with Boko Haram and Their Exit Journeys*
- *Sexual Violence and the Struggle for Justice: the Involvement of Indigenous Nasa Survivors in Armed Groups in Northern Cauca*, Findings Report 38
- *Survival and Struggle: The Experience of Women and Girls with and after Boko Haram*, Findings Report 39
- *Trust Matters: Community Perceptions Towards Aid Organizations in the North East of Nigeria*, Findings Report 40
- *The Current Needs of Former Boko Haram Associates and Their Communities of Return*
- *Engagement with Boko Haram* (embargoed report, disseminated privately)
- *Banditry in Nigeria's North West: Key Findings*
- *Navigating Humanitarian Dilemmas: Decontextualized Version* (embargoed report)
- *Navigating Humanitarian Dilemmas: Contextualized Version* (embargoed report)

Others

- *UNIDIR Roundup and Outlook 2024*

- "Treaties and tools: architecture of arms control on shaky grounds", in *The Atlas of Disarmament* (in [English](#) and [German](#))
- [Only our conscious, collective action can counteract the gender biases and inequalities baked into artificial intelligence*](#) (commentary)
- [What's next for youth engagement in disarmament?](#) (commentary)
- [Effective, inclusive participation can offer a path out of paralysis for multilateral disarmament](#) (commentary)
- [Securing the Seas: A Comprehensive Assessment of Global Maritime Security](#)

Events held on the margins of the 2024 session of the First Committee

7 October

- Responsible use of artificial intelligence in the military domain (organized by the Republic of Korea)

9 October

- 1540 Committee – Open briefing for Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations (part 1) (organized by 1540 Committee)
- Expert panel on nuclear war impacts and the role of the scientific community (organized by Ireland, New Zealand, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and Princeton University)
- The 2024 UN debate on "International cooperation on peaceful uses": Clarifying the role and purpose of export controls (organized by the European Union and SIPRI)
- Towards a secure world for all: Marking 20 years of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and Ecuador)

10 October

- 1540 Committee – Open briefing for Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations (part 2) (organized by 1540 Committee)
- Approaching the AI-nuclear nexus (organized by Germany and SIPRI)
- Introducing the Global Partnership's flagship initiative on countering WMD disinformation (organized by Canada and King's College London)

- Strengthening UNSCR 1540 implementation: The critical role of regional organizations (organized by OAS-CICTE and Ecuador)

14 October

- Diversion and delivery: Unpacking emerging IED threats (organized by France, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and the Mine Action Service of the United Nations)
- Nuclear risk reduction in the framework of "Creating an environment for nuclear disarmament (CEND)" (organized by Germany and Finland)

15 October

- Escalation risks at the space-nuclear nexus (organized by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and SIPRI)

16 October

- Autonomous weapons systems and the challenge of regulation (organized by Austria)

17 October

- Voluntary information-sharing on legal reviews of new weapons, means and methods of warfare (organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Science and Technology Unit)

18 October

- Responsible AI for peace and security: Meeting the moment in tackling the risks presented by misuse of civilian AI (organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the European Union and SIPRI)

22 October

- [Operationalizing the RevCon4 outcome on small arms and light weapons: Way forward for the OETEG](#) (organized by Costa Rica, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and Conflict Armament Research)
- The HCoC and space (organized by the European Union and Fondation pour la recherche stratégique)

23 October

- [A declaration to prevent harm: Steps to strengthen the protection of civilians from use of explosive weapons in populated areas](#) (organized by Norway, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Ireland, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the International Network on Explosive Weapons)
- [Challenges and opportunities posed by AI in international peace and security: A conversation with the UNIDIR women in AI Fellows](#) (organized by UNIDIR and Germany)
- High-level briefing on building capacity to eliminate the supply of weapons to terrorists in Africa and Central Asia (organized by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre)
- What you(th) can do for disarmament: Exploration of youth champions for disarmament projects (organized by Germany and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs)

24 October

- Arms Trade Treaty Voluntary Trust Fund (organized by the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat)
- [The roundtable for AI, security and ethics: Forging global alignment through multistakeholder dialogue](#) (organized by UNIDIR and Microsoft)

25 October

- [Guidelines for the development of national strategies on AI in security and defence](#) (organized by UNIDIR)
- The Arms Trade Treaty at 10 (organized by the United Kingdom, Australia and the Stimson Center)
- [Weapons of mass destruction disarmament and non-proliferation instruments in an age of accelerated technological change](#) (organized by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, IAEA, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs)

28 October

- [Harnessing regional opportunities for disarmament in Asia-Pacific: The role of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs' Regional Centre](#) (UNRCPD) (organized by UNRCPD)

29 October

- [Space security next steps: How to ensure continued success through complementarity and cooperation](#) (organized by UNIDIR)

- [Strengthening EU-Africa cooperation in space](#) (organized by the European Union)
- The political declaration: Delivering concrete steps toward responsible military AI (organized by the United States)
- Transparency, accountability and strengthening the NPT review process: Why they matter (organized by Japan, Australia and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative)

30 October

- A gamble of our own choosing: Forecasting strategies to reduce nuclear risks (organized by Austria, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Open Nuclear Network and the Forecasting Research Institute)

Footnotes

[\[1\]](#)United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.
