



## Secretary-General welcomes adoption of new Convention on cluster munitions

### IN THIS ISSUE



In a message of 30 May to the Dublin Diplomatic Conference on Cluster Munitions, the UN Secretary-

General said he was delighted that the strong calls to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions had been addressed with the adoption that day of a new Convention. A broad-based coalition of States, international organizations and civil society had brought about a new international standard that would enhance the protection of civilians, strengthen human rights and improve prospects for development. The Secretary-General said he was honoured to accept depositary functions under the Convention and that the entire United Nations system stood ready to support and assist States Parties in implementing their treaty obligations. He encouraged States to sign and ratify without delay, and added that he looked forward to its rapid entry into force.

The Dublin Conference has been part of the so-called Oslo Process that was launched in February 2007 when a group of like-minded States agreed to try and conclude a cluster munitions treaty during 2008. The meeting in Dublin, attended by more than 100 governments, adopted a treaty text that bans the use of cluster munitions by States Parties and calls for their destruction by Parties as soon as possible, but not less than eight years after the entry into force of the Convention. The new Convention will be open for signature at a meeting in Oslo in December.

Some 40 per cent of victims of these weapons are children who are injured or killed long after direct hostilities have drawn to a close. Children are particularly at risk because they are drawn to the devices, which are often small and shiny. Used for more than six decades, cluster munitions have contaminated countries such as Laos, Viet Nam and Cambodia for over 30 years, while more recently they have been used in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and in southern Lebanon. UNDP has noted that there are billions of these weapons still in existence scattered across over 75 countries and that cluster munitions have caused over 13,000 injuries and deaths so far. [[Top>>](#)]

See also: [Secretary-General's message](#) | [Dublin website](#)

Secretary-General welcomes adoption of new Convention on cluster munitions

Second Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review completes its business

UN Disarmament Commission meets in New York but fails to reach agreement on the issues

Security Council discusses Secretary-General's Small Arms Report

Security Council 1540 Committee mandate renewed for an additional three years

Government Experts hold their second meeting in New York to discuss a possible Arms Trade Treaty

African seminars to promote the universality of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

African Workshop on Marking and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In a message to the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Secretary-General notes progress towards peace

## Second Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review completes its business

The Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held its second session from 28 April to 9 May at the United Nations Office at Geneva, Switzerland. Over 100 States Parties to the Treaty, various Inter-Governmental organizations and more than 50 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) took part in the two-week meeting paving the way towards the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2010. The session was chaired by Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko of Ukraine.



Palais des Nations, Geneva

The NPT forms the foundation of the world's nuclear non-proliferation regime. Its objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.

Participants at the PrepCom held constructive discussions on substantive issues, such as nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament, nuclear weapon-free zones and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The meeting ended with the successful adoption of a report detailing substantive and procedural issues which included the decision that the third PrepCom session preparing for the 2010 Review Conference will be held in New York from 4-15 May 2009, and that the Review Conference itself will also take place in New York from 26 April to 21 May 2010. [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [Second PrepCom website](#) | [NPT webpage](#)

## UN Disarmament Commission meets in New York but fails to reach agreement on the issues



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

The Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon opened the proceedings of the three week session of the UNDC on 7 April by telling the participants that he had come to underscore the importance he attached to the Commission, which performs a unique function in the United Nations disarmament machinery, serving as a deliberative body that reports to the General Assembly.

The Commission discussed its two agenda items: nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons in working groups. Both Chairs of the two working groups produced draft papers for their respective groups, but neither was able to achieve consensus on them. At the close of the meeting, Chairman Piet de Klerk (Netherlands), said it was a shame that the hard work during the session had not come to fruition. At the same time, worryingly, the urgency of the issues before the Commission had only increased. However, not all was negative, members were not leaving the room empty-handed. The Commission was a deliberative organ, and members had deliberated. Members had had valuable exchanges of views and had expressed opinions on some of the most crucial topics of the time, perhaps topics of the highest importance. Looking ahead he said he would be at members' disposal for

any suggestions members might have regarding the next sessions of the Commission. He hoped that agreement could be reached on a new agenda before the introduction of a resolution in the General Assembly's First Committee in the fall. [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [Secretary-General's opening remarks](#) | [UNDC report](#)

## Security Council discusses Secretary-General's Small Arms Report

On 29 April the Security Council met in open session on the issue of small arms. The Council heard from almost 50 speakers in the day-long debate, with emphasis being placed on the nexus of armed insecurity and development, fostering cooperation among national authorities and strengthening the international framework for combating the proliferation of illicit small arms.

Introducing the Secretary-General's 13 recommendations on curbing illicit proliferation of small arms, Hannelore Hoppe, Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, said that six of them directly addressed the Security Council, including proposals to encourage strengthened cooperation among sanctions and monitoring groups, peacekeeping missions, States and regional and international organizations.



Hannelore Hoppe, Director and Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

While noting that the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons had resulted in enhanced awareness of the small arms issues, many speakers insisted that much more remained to be done. Linking security with development was vital. Many also expressed concern that, while politically binding, the Programme of Action was not a legally binding instrument. Several speakers insisted on the need to develop effective global norms and agreements to prevent and detect illegal transfers of weapons and ammunition. In that connection, a number of States supported efforts towards the elaboration of an arms trade treaty to standardize the international trade in conventional arms and ensure that small arms and light weapons did not end up in the wrong hands. [\[Top>>\]](#)



See also: [Secretary-General's report \(S/2008/258\)](#)

## Security Council 1540 Committee mandate renewed for an additional three years



Through the unanimous adoption of resolution 1810 (2008) on 25 April 2008, the Security Council extended for three years, until 25 April 2011, the mandate of the Committee established in 2004 to assist the Council in monitoring and

promoting the implementation of its resolution 1540 (2004). That resolution, adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, decided that all States should 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. It also requires all States, in accordance with their national procedures, to adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to conduct such activities, in particular for terrorist purposes. Resolution 1810 (2008) calls upon all States to provide information to the 1540 Committee on their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The new resolution also encourages all States to prepare on a voluntary basis summary action plans, mapping out their priorities and plans for implementing the key provisions of resolution 1540 (2004). The Committee will strengthen its role in facilitating technical assistance for the implementation of the resolution. It was also requested to consider a comprehensive review of the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and to report to the Council by no later than 31 January 2009. The Committee will intensify its efforts to promote the full implementation by all States of resolution 1540 (2004), through the compilation of information on the status of States' implementation of all aspects of resolution 1540 (2004) as well as through outreach, dialogue, assistance and cooperation. [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [Security Council resolution \(S/RES/1810 \(2008\)\)](#)

## **Government Experts hold their second meeting in New York to discuss a possible Arms Trade Treaty**

The Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, held its second session from 12 to 16 May.



**TOWARDS AN ARMS TRADE TREATY**

The Group, which held its first session from 11 to 15 February 2008 was established by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 61/89 of 6 December 2006. It includes experts from Algeria; Argentina; Australia; Brazil; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Egypt; Finland; France; Germany; India; Indonesia; Italy; Japan; Kenya; Mexico; Nigeria; Pakistan; Romania; Russian Federation; South Africa; Spain; Switzerland; Ukraine; United Kingdom; and the United States. Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, former Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Argentina is the Chairman of the Group.

The Group's work is informed by, among other things, the report of the Secretary-General containing a record number of Member States views on the issue, and two analytical studies prepared by UNIDIR on the basis of those views. The Group, which is expected to produce a report for the consideration of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, later this year, will hold its last session from 28 July to 8 August. [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [ATT website](#) | UNIDIR Studies: [Analysis of States' Views](#), [Implications of States' Views](#)

## African seminars to promote the universality of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)



Participants at the seminar

With financial support from the European Union (EU), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa organised two regional seminars in an effort to promote the universality of the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The seminars were held back-to-back in Lomé, Togo in the second half of April; the first for States in West and East Africa, and the second for the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes Region and Southern Africa. The seminars, attended by more than 50 participants, served as a forum to exchange ideas, lessons learned and experience between and within sub-regions on a range of practical accession and implementation challenges. It is hoped that following these

seminars participating representatives will encourage their respective countries to accede or ratify the CCW and its protocols as well as to promote them.

The 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, also known as the Inhumane Weapons Convention, bans or restricts the use of specific types of weapons that are considered to cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to combatants or to affect civilians indiscriminately. The Lomé seminars are part of a UN-EU partnership to promote universality of the CCW through a series of six regional seminars to be held in various regions of the world. Further seminars are planned for the Middle East and Mediterranean; South and South East Asia and the Pacific; and Central Asia. The first of these UN regional seminars was held in March in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic for States of the Caribbean region. [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [CCW](#)

## African Workshop on Marking and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons

The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa organised a two-day capacity-building workshop to assist States of West and Central Africa to implement the International Instrument to enable States to Identify and Trace Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Attended by about 60 participants, the meeting was held in Lomé, Togo on 17 and 18 April with the support of the European Union and the Governments of Japan and Norway.



Participants at the workshop

The workshop familiarized participants with the Tracing Instrument and identified specific actions that States could take in order to implement the provisions of the Instrument. It also provided detailed information on relevant operational aspects and technical tools related to the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons such as INTERPOL's Electronic Weapons Tracing System (IweTS). [\[Top>>\]](#)

See also: [ITI website](#) | [Workshop Programme](#)

## In a message to the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Secretary-General notes progress towards peace



**Rwandan Ex-Combatants Demobilize.** The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) officer explains the process to Rwandan ex-combatants ready to voluntarily demobilize and return back home, Kamina, DRC.

On 15 May, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte, delivered a message on behalf of the Secretary-General to the 27th ministerial meeting of the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Luanda, Angola. The Secretary-General's message noted that recent efforts to promote peace and security in the region have yielded encouraging results. The improved political dialogue in the Central African Republic (CAR), a peace conference in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as well as the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Chad and CAR were all signs of progress. He urged the participants of the meeting to continue to discuss concrete measures that can further strengthen peace efforts, and, most importantly, to enforce the measures that had been devised and adopted together. He assured the group of his and the United Nations continued commitment to supporting the work of this important Committee. The ministerial meeting reviewed a draft Code of Conduct for armed and security forces in Central Africa, and agreed to finalize it in time for the 28th ministerial meeting, to be held in Libreville, Gabon, in September 2008. It also endorsed an approach for the elaboration of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons for Central Africa, a draft of which will be reviewed in Libreville.

The Standing Advisory Committee is a subregional group of eleven Member States (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe) which was created to develop confidence-building measures and to encourage arms limitation and development in the Central African Sub-region.

It was conceived as an instrument of preventive diplomacy aimed at avoiding conflicts and was established by the Secretary-General on 28 May 1992 in response to General Assembly resolution 46/37 B. By the resolution, the Assembly supported and encouraged efforts to further disarmament and non-proliferation measures at regional and subregional levels and welcomed the initiative taken by the States of the Central African sub-region in recommending the creation of such a Committee. It meets twice a year at ministerial level. [[Top>>](#)]

See also: [Secretary-General's message](#) | [Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa](#)

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[Previous issues](#) | [Disarmament home](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Resources](#) | [Site index](#)

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