

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE UPON THE OPENING OF THE NEW OFFICE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PEACE AND
DISARMAMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

18 August 2008

*Delivered by Under-Secretary-General Vijay Nambiar
Chef de Cabinet*

I have the pleasure to convey my warm greetings to President Ram Baran Yadav and the other distinguished guests who have gathered to commemorate the opening of the new office of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. I wish to thank the Centre's host country, Nepal, for its generous assistance and to all forty-three countries of Asia and the Pacific for their shared commitment to support the Centre as it commences its work in Kathmandu.

The General Assembly established the Centre in 1987 to provide, on request, substantive support for peace and disarmament activities agreed upon by the Member States of the region. Formerly headquartered in New York, the Centre has promoted openness, transparency and confidence-building, and has provided an arena for dialogue on regional security concerns.

These include the dangers from the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the illicit trafficking in illicit small arms and light weapons, the hazards of landmines and explosive remnants of war, the costs of armed conflicts, and the rise of organized crime and terrorism. These issues are as vast and diverse as the region itself.

Yet because similar challenges exist in other regions, UN efforts to strengthen international peace and security—its primary mission—have stressed the importance of progress in disarmament and non-proliferation, including at the regional level. Such cooperation is essential in securing global public goods, especially in these fields, and it is now underway at the Regional Centres in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

I would like to call on all Asia-Pacific States to work closely with the Regional Centre in strengthening the capacity of governments and civil society to achieve these goals. In addition to promoting dialogue and confidence-building initiatives, the Center stands ready to assist States in undertaking practical disarmament measures, implementing legal obligations, and training law enforcement and military personnel.

I know the Centre will do all it can to exceed expectations as it commences the important work that lies ahead.