Public entrance to United Nations Headquarters in New York, showing the sculpture “Non-Violence” or “The Knotted Gun” by noted Swedish sculptor Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd. The sculpture was a gift from the Government of Luxembourg to the United Nations. It is an oversized revolver with a knotted barrel, to symbolize peace and non-violence.

KEY PROGRAMMES
- Multilateral negotiations and deliberations
- Weapons of mass destruction
- Conventional arms
- Information and outreach
- Regional disarmament

INDICATIVE RESOURCES
- $30M
  - $14M regular assessed and
  - $16M voluntary contributions

SELECT MANDATES
- Disarmament, General Assembly resolution S-10/2
- The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, General Assembly resolution 74/60
- Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament, General Assembly resolution 74/55
- Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, General Assembly resolution 73/46
- Regional disarmament, General Assembly resolution 74/37
- Study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, General Assembly resolution 73/59
- Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation, General Assembly resolution 74/64
- The Arms Trade Treaty, General Assembly resolution 74/49

SELECT ENTITIES
- Office for Disarmament Affairs
CONTEXT

Given rising military expenditures, a deteriorating security environment and weakening arms control, disarmament remains particularly relevant. In 2019, military expenditure rose to $1.9 trillion, the highest level since the end of the cold war.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The United Nations supports multilateral negotiations and efforts aimed at achieving the goal of general and complete disarmament, focusing on the elimination of nuclear weapons, upholding the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction, regulating conventional weapons and promoting regional disarmament efforts and public awareness.

KEY OUTCOMES

In 2019, the Organization implemented key elements of my Agenda for Disarmament, which proposes and tracks 40 concrete actions to advance disarmament across five domains. Already, the Agenda has contributed to a rethinking of disarmament in the context of new and emerging technologies, threats and actors. Within the Agenda, special emphasis has been placed on explosive weapons in populated areas and supporting Member States in efforts to develop a political declaration.

In pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons, we supported the preparations for the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We have also continued to support disarmament work on lethal autonomous weapon systems, including the adoption of guiding principles and efforts to develop recommendations on the normative and operational framework.
Under the auspices of the United Nations, progress was made on new technologies in the context of international security through two intergovernmental groups on this issue, which held consultations with regional organizations, the private sector, civil society and academia. To uphold norms against the use of other weapons of mass destruction, we enhanced the operational readiness of my Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons, in accordance with its established mandates, including through the training of experts.

In contributing to the regulation and limitation of conventional arms, a group of governmental experts recommended in 2019 to expand the Register of Conventional Arms by encouraging States to report international transfers of small arms and light weapons. In 2020, a new group of governmental experts began consideration of concrete means of addressing arms transfer safety and security challenges, such as unplanned explosions and diversion to the illicit market.
GENDER IN DISARMAMENT FORUMS

Ensuring women’s equal, full and effective participation in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control is a priority of the Secretary-General. Yet despite growing attention to the issue, 2019 saw no significant progress towards achieving women’s equal participation in multilateral disarmament meetings.

2019 General Assembly First Committee
- 33% of delegations are women
- 32% of heads of delegations are women
- 1 in 4 statements were delivered by women and 7% of the rights to reply (of 67 total) were made by women

2019 Conference on Disarmament
- 36% of delegations are women
- 23% of heads of delegations are women

2019 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the NPT
- 30% of delegations are women
- 25% of heads of delegations are women

2019 Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties
- 36% of delegations are women
- 20% of heads of delegations are women

YOUTH FOR DISARMAMENT

On International Youth Day, we launched the Youth for Disarmament (#Youth4Disarmament) initiative to empower young people with knowledge and skills for change. As part of the initiative, 75 young people spent a day during the session of the First Committee with United Nations officials, diplomats and civil society representatives.