

## **FIRST COMMITTEE**

### **Thematic Discussions on Disarmament and International Security Agenda Items 99 (d), (e), (f) and (h) Regional Disarmament and Security**

#### **UNRCPD presentation to the First Committee (70th General Assembly) 24 October 2016 - 10:00-13:00 — Conference Room 4**

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Thank you Mr. Chair,  
Mr. Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to report to the First Committee on the activities of the UNODA Regional Centre in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), for the one-year period since October 2015 up to now. This year concludes the thirty-year period of the Centre's activities to support Member States of Asia and the Pacific in their efforts to maintain peace and security in the region through the implementation of a variety of global agreements in the field of arms control, confidence-building, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Centre managed to achieve a positive dynamic in its operation for the last eight years since its establishment in the region. The number of project implemented individually and in cooperation with other players in the region constitutes 37 and 34 respectively.

During this reporting period, UNRCPD conducted 7 workshops, organized 1 international conference and engaged in 7 collaborative projects, reaching over 500 delegates and trainees.

The promotion of dialogue and confidence-building remains a priority in the region and the Centre cooperated with the Republic of Korea to organize the 14th United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues in Seoul. With over 120 delegates and experts representing 50 Member States, the conference focused on regional issues of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. It also addressed issues of sustainability and security in outer space activity, as well as nuclear security, including action that should be taken by the international community following the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit.

In the area of national capacity building, UNRCPD carried out several projects to assist Member States with the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Programme

of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as UN Security Council resolution 1540.

In cooperation with Governments of the Philippines and Myanmar, the Centre conducted capacity-building workshops in November 2015 and February 2016 respectively, focusing on small arms and light weapons control through the UN PoA. The workshops engaged over 40 delegates in each country, and consisted of plenary sessions, discussions, group exercises and interaction. Special attention was given to the utilization of the International Small Arms Control Standards and its assessment tool to establish a national coordinating mechanism and national action plan to improve small arms and conventional ammunition control. Concrete measures on strengthening weapons control were formulated for further inclusion in the national action plans. The projects were possible thanks to the contribution by the Governments of Germany and the UK respectively.

Furthermore, in March 2016, the Centre organized a national workshop for Thailand. The workshop served to enhance Thailand's capacity in implementing the PoA and meeting import, export and transfer standards of conventional arms stipulated in the ATT. It brought together 33 participants to discuss approaches and measures to combat illicit trafficking in small arms. National representatives requested UNRCPD to assist in consolidating regional efforts to address growing risks caused by illicit trafficking in SALW. The workshop was sponsored by the German Government.

The Regional Centre also conducted two sub-regional capacity building workshops aimed at building States capacity to implement the ATT. One of them sponsored through UNSCAR, was held in Bangkok in April 2016 and served to foster interactive regional dialogue among representatives from 8 countries of the Southeast Asian region and to enhance the capacity of Governments in meeting requirements of the ATT. During the workshop, 25 representatives from 8 States of the region participated in in-depth discussions relating to legal and technical issues, maintenance of a national control system for conventional arms transfers, as well as the Treaty's requirements on reporting. The workshop was also supplemented by a side event on UNSCR 1540, which focused on the ongoing 2016 Comprehensive Review of its implementation.

The second workshop took place in Apia, Samoa in September 2016 and brought together 25 participants from the 12 Pacific Island States. The workshop aimed to highlight the relevance of the Treaty to the region, provide guidance on developing national legislation and national control list, and thus to enhance States' capacities in acceding to and implementing the ATT. The workshop additionally identified region-specific approaches for the Pacific States to fulfil Treaty reporting commitments. The workshop was made possible with the financial support from the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.

The Centre also conducted 3 events in the framework of the joint UNODA-OSCE project on Facilitating the Regional Implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004), consisting of a series of country-specific dialogues in the Central Asian region. The first training, in which representatives from 4 Central Asian States took part, was co-organized with the OSCE and held in Kaliningrad, Russia, in July 2016. At the event, participants discussed national legislative and regulatory frameworks, enforcement of legislation, transshipment, illicit trafficking and brokering control. The role of National Points of Contacts in supporting the implementation of these measures was also clarified and highlighted.

The second event, took place in August 2016 bringing together 38 participants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus in a Peer Review Meeting in Minsk. It was the first event of its kind held in trilateral format. The meeting provided for participants an opportunity to share experiences and discuss progress in their work, as well as to visit national facilities to familiarize themselves with the work of their counterparts from Belarus.

Finally, the Centre organized in September 2016 a national round table meeting of 1540 Committee's experts with representatives of ministries and state agencies of Kyrgyzstan involved in the implementation of resolution 1540 to discuss progress in their work and identified further tasks to be part of the national action plan.

In addition to these activities, the Regional Centre continued its outreach and advocacy efforts to engage regional stakeholders and ensure the regular dissemination of accurate and timely information about its work and relevant disarmament issues. UNRCPD continued to publish its quarterly factsheets and biannual newsletters as well as showcase the Centre's work on its website and Twitter, engaging in real-time with audiences of over 1,400 through its social media platforms.

Apart from that, UNRCPD continued to successfully engage with many stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region strengthening partnerships and contributing substantively to their regional workshops and training activities. Through cooperation with regional organizations, other UN entities and NGOs, the Regional Centre multiplies its ability to reach more countries in the region and support their efforts in implementing respective commitments in the field of arms control and disarmament. These joint activities covered conventional arms control, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, peace and disarmament education issues.

The reporting period became quite productive year of activity for the Centre. This was possible thanks to the support of our sponsors – both donor States and countries of the region who assisted with in-kind contribution to our projects.

UNRCPD would like to express its sincere gratitude to the donors without whom our results would not have been possible to achieve: Australia, China, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, as well as Rissho Kosei-kai of Japan. In addition, the Centre

would like to thank for staffing support of the Centre provided by Japan and Switzerland with one UN Volunteer (since March 2015) and one Junior Professional Officer (since March 2016) respectively.

Looking forward, a priority for UNRCPD is completing the transfer for Kathmandu to enable the resumption of its operations in Nepal as soon as possible. The Centre is also working with donor States and other funding bodies to secure resources for new projects and laying the groundwork for activities in 2017. Our ability to continue delivering target-oriented, effective activities each year depends not only on financial support, but also on the availability of staff that can execute projects. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to request that you consider supporting UNRCPD's efforts by financing Associate Experts, Junior Professional Officers, UN Volunteers, or seconding staff to the Regional Centre.

Thank you for your attention.