

FACT SHEET

UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF FELLOWSHIPS ON DISARMAMENT

Launched by the General Assembly in 1978 at its first special session devoted to disarmament, the Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament aims to train and build the capacity of officials from Member States to enable them to participate more effectively in international disarmament deliberating and negotiating fora.

The Fellowship Programme Itinerary and Content

Implemented by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the Fellowship Programme is composed of three segments.

In August of each year, the first segment starts at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Fellows are introduced to various aspects of multilateral disarmament diplomacy, in particular the work of the Conference on Disarmament and several treaty regimes, such as the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Mine Ban Treaty (APLC), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). This segment includes a study visit to Berne at the invitation of the Government of Switzerland.



2016 Disarmament Fellows with the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Throughout the month of September, the Fellows engage in the second segment of the programme comprised of study visits to several international organizations related to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. These include the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and several export control regimes (Wassenaar Arrangement, Nuclear Suppliers Group, etc.) in Vienna as well as the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the International Court of Justice in The Hague. During this segment, and at the invitation of various Governments, the Fellows also participate in country-specific study visits.

The third segment takes place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York during the month of October where the Fellows follow the work of the First Committee of the General Assembly

and also become familiar with a variety of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control issues.

The Programme tries to balance theory with practice: on the one hand, it consists of lectures, presentations, round tables, panels and other forms of discussion with senior diplomats and officials from international organisations, representatives of the academia, think-tanks and NGOs on the disarmament machinery and key disarmament issues. On the other hand, the Fellows follow demonstrations of in-site inspections, visit weapons destruction sites, nuclear reactor and a test site, laboratories, participate in simulation and other practical exercises.

The Selection Process

Since its inception in 1979, the Programme has trained 956 government officials from 165 States, a large number of whom are now holding positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament within their own Governments and in disarmament-related international organizations.

Participants in the Fellowship Programme are selected by UNODA on the basis of nominations from Member States. The selection process takes into account the greater needs of developing countries and the need for geographical and gender balance. Candidates should be between 25 and 35 years of age.



The 2016 Fellows at the A-bomb Dome in Hiroshima

Fact

In 1999, after twenty four years of guiding fellows, the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament was recognized by the Office of Internal Oversight (OIOS) as the most successful United Nations training programme it had reviewed.

I strongly support the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament and highly recommend it for anyone looking for a jumpstart in a disarmament related career. I can personally testify to the value of the Programme and its importance in educating junior diplomats and future decision-makers on the issues and institutions involved in non-proliferation, disarmament and international security. This experience greatly contributed to my development by preparing me for the many challenges in multilateral disarmament diplomacy that I faced throughout my professional career. The lessons I learned and the relations I established through the programme were of great benefit in my current capacity as the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO. The United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament is a valuable investment in the next generation, and especially important in light of the challenges ahead.

Mr. Tibor Toth (Class 1980)
former Executive Secretary, CTBTO Preparatory Commission

I credit the UN Disarmament Fellowship Programme with igniting a life-long interest in disarmament issues in me. The content is highly stimulating; equally enriching is the opportunity to consider issues from the diverse perspectives of the participating fellows. The programme is also a great networking platform; I am still in touch with several fellows from my batch who continue to work on disarmament issues for their countries.

Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill (class 1999)
Ambassador, Permanent representative of India to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva

For more information: <http://www.unog.ch/disarmament/fellowship>