

Championing disarmament

Advancement of disarmament and non-proliferation



Members of the Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons during an immersive study visit in Japan.

(Nagasaki; August 2024) © Office for Disarmament Affairs

What we do

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

Our team

- Office for Disarmament Affairs



Participants attend a training course in Ghana on effective weapons and ammunition management in a changing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration context.

(Accra; November 2024) © Office for Disarmament Affairs

Our disarmament work

638 rostered experts for the Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of the Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons

133 arms control-related projects funded, benefiting 148 Member States

52% of Member States reported on their implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms

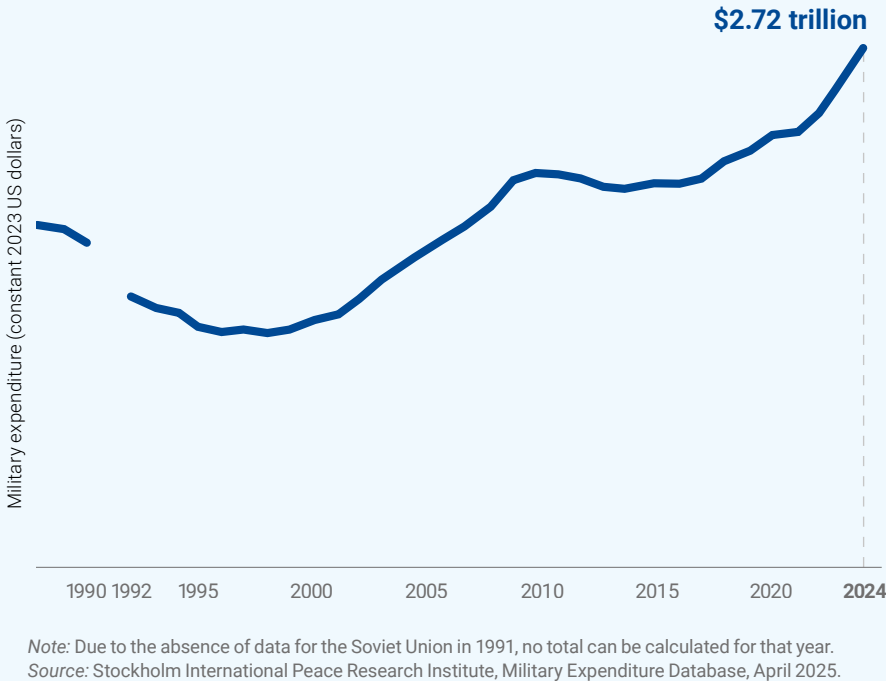
Context

Civilians continue to suffer from armed conflict amid escalating global tensions. The threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction persists, while military spending rises and conventional arms, especially illicit small arms and light weapons, increasingly proliferate. Rapid technological advances add to these security challenges.

Global military expenditure increased to a record \$2.72 trillion

World military expenditure 1988–2024

2024 marked the steepest annual increase in military spending since at least the end of the cold war. The top five military spenders – the United States, China, the Russian Federation, Germany and India – accounted for 60 per cent of the global total.

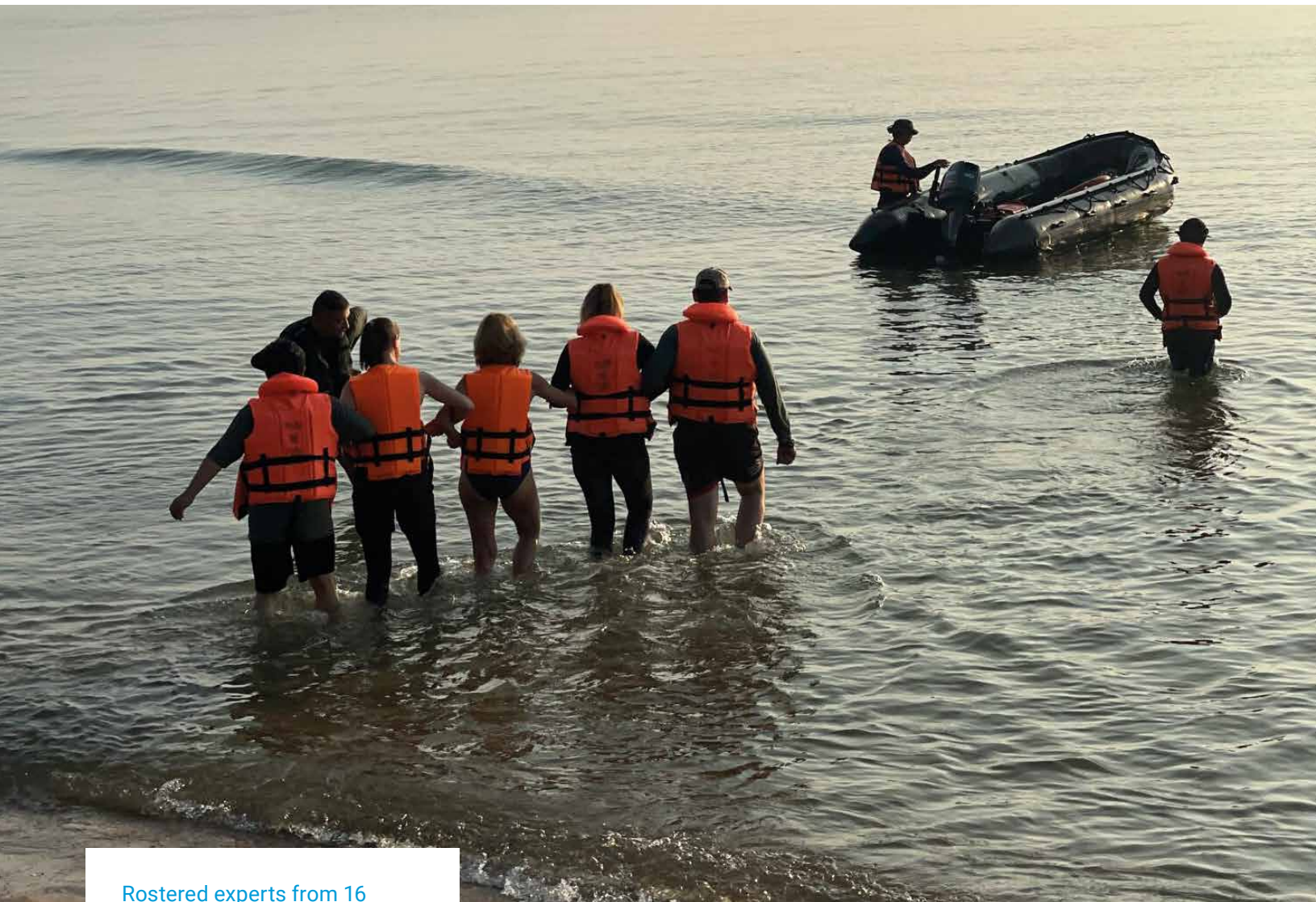


“We must all work to support a cessation of violence, silence the guns and break the vicious cycle that has shattered lives and inflicted profound human suffering.”

Izumi Nakamitsu,
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

Our goals

Our work enables international negotiations and practical disarmament efforts on the ground towards: eliminating nuclear weapons; upholding the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction; regulating conventional weapons; responding to the challenges of emerging weapons technologies; and promoting regional disarmament and public engagement.



Rostered experts from 16 countries participate in training held in Thailand on safe and secure approaches in field environments, organized for the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.

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Courtney Cresap

Our achievements

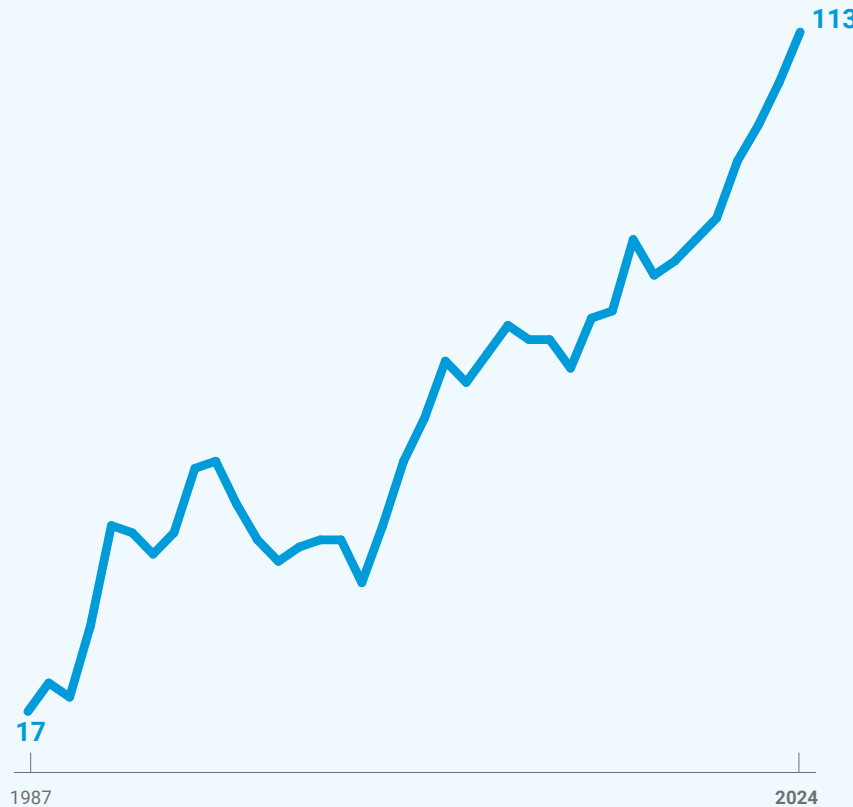
The United Nations advanced work on key disarmament treaties, bringing States together to discuss progress on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We also convened Member States from the Middle East at the fifth session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

We helped States to accelerate the implementation of 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 the International Tracing Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We also convened technical

experts on arms manufacturing, technology and design. Across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, we helped to combat illicit weapons trafficking, prevent armed violence and gender-based violence, and enhance small arms control and ammunition management, including through the Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 and the Central American road map to prevent and address the illicit proliferation and trafficking of firearms and ammunition. We continued to support the implementation and universalization of humanitarian disarmament treaties aimed at eradicating landmines and cluster munitions and regulating other inhumane weapons.

Rising number of confidence-building measure reports

In 2024, a record number of 113 reports were submitted by States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, up from 105 in 2023.



The need for nuclear disarmament

12,241

nuclear weapons remain an existential threat to humanity today

Gender and disarmament

49%

of statements were made by women during meetings of the open-ended working group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies

26

First Committee resolutions include calls for women's participation in disarmament or include other gender aspects, up from 23 resolutions in 2023

We supported the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and facilitated discussions towards the establishment of mechanisms on international cooperation and assistance and on science and technology. Through the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons, we equipped geographically diverse experts with skills in biological and forensic sciences, as well as on interviewing techniques to carry out investigations.

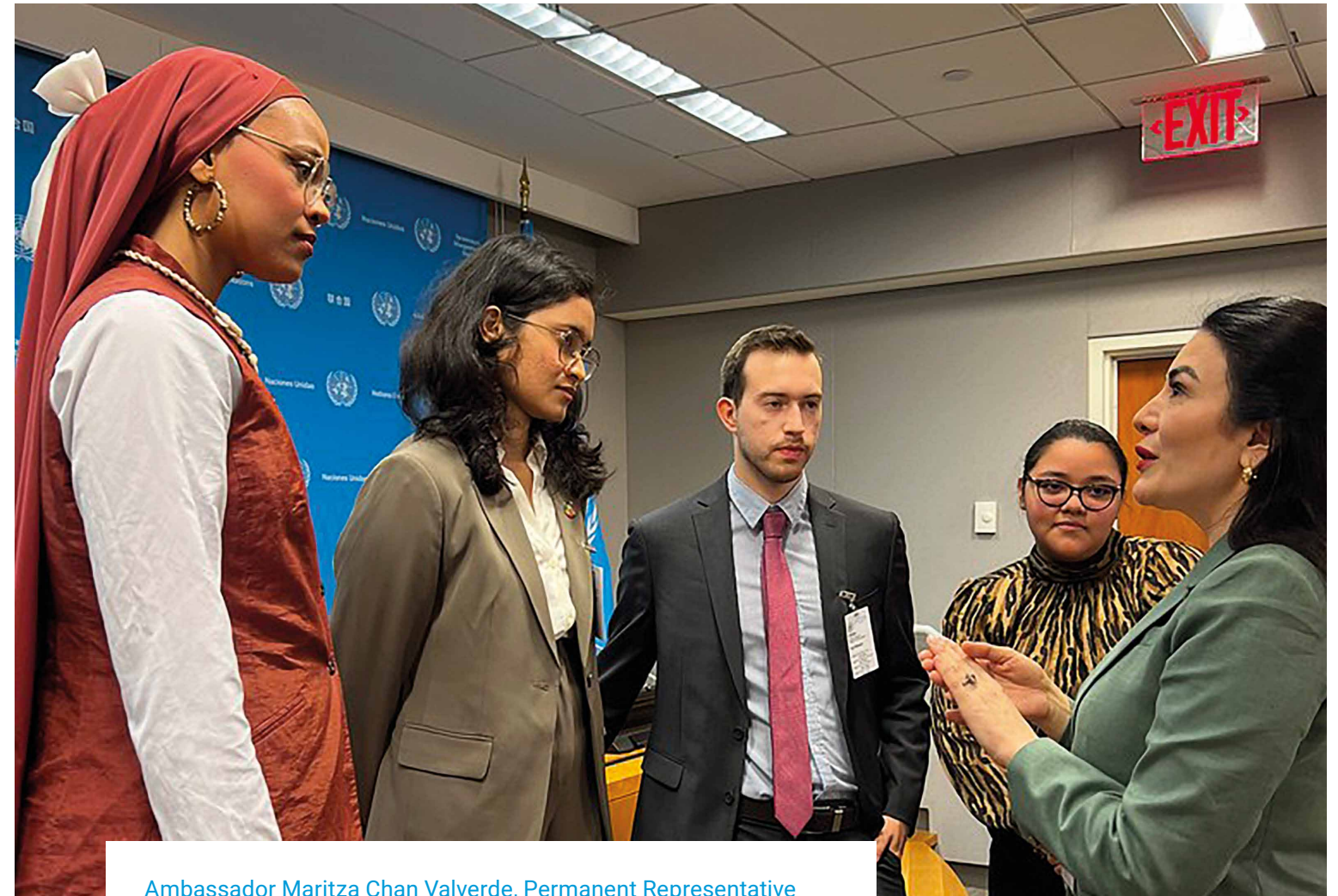
To build a safer, more secure and peaceful cyberspace, we created a global points of contact directory for national authorities, which was joined by 112 Member States, to facilitate cooperation, including during information and communications technology security incidents. We also facilitated the adoption of a final report by the group of governmental experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

We supported efforts under the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects to develop an instrument on lethal autonomous weapons systems and supported new initiatives examining the role of artificial intelligence in military applications.

Through our Youth for Disarmament initiative, we empowered young leaders to address intergovernmental meetings on nuclear disarmament and illicit small arms and light weapons. In August, our Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons enabled young people from 37 countries to visit Japan, connecting with local students, officials and Hibakusha – survivors of the atomic bombings. Their visit resulted in a youth declaration, entitled "DeclarACTION: Declaration for a World Without Nuclear Weapons".

Disarmament and implementation of the Pact

In the Pact for the Future, Member States requested the Secretary-General to provide an analysis on the impact of the global increase in military expenditure on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations system entities are preparing a new report and recommendations in a joint effort to shape global action for years to come.



Ambassador Maritza Chan Valverde, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations and President of the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, meets with four of the Youth Champions for Disarmament on the margins of the Conference.

(New York; June 2024) © Office for Disarmament Affairs

Youth in disarmament

910

applicants from 128 countries for the second edition of the Youth Champions for Disarmament training programme

348

applicants to the GenerAcción Paz programme, a new youth initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean to empower young people for a region free of armed violence