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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General continues to believe that the mandate of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific remains valid and that the Centre has been a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation and disarmament in the region. As evident from General Assembly resolutions, the regional dialogue being promoted by the Centre, through the organization of various disarmament meetings in Asia and the Pacific addressing the whole range of disarmament, non-proliferation and education issues, has received wide support from Member States and academic groups within the region as a means of identifying pressing disarmament and security-related issues relevant to the region and exploring region-oriented solutions.

During the reporting period, from July 2004 to July 2005, the Centre continued to promote disarmament and security through the organization of meetings and conferences in the region (Sapporo, Japan, 26-29 July 2004; Nadi, the Republic of Fiji Islands, 18-20 August 2004; Jeju Island, the Republic of Korea, 6-8 December 2004; Beijing, the People's Republic of China, 19-21 April 2005; Kanazawa, Japan, 13-14 June 2005). The Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the drafting and finalization of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. As a result of intensive negotiations that lasted over seven years, the Central Asian States concluded their negotiations and adopted on 8 February 2005 the text of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the attached Protocol. The Centre also continued to provide assistance to Mongolia

* A/60/150.

in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status. In addition, the Centre continued to encourage the implementation of the recommendations of the *United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education*.¹

Consultations on the relocation of the Centre continued with the host country. The final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be met by the host country were forwarded to the Government of Nepal for consideration in December 2001 and April 2002 respectively. Follow-up reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities in December 2002, February and May 2003. The Department for Disarmament Affairs also provided the Nepalese authorities with information on the issues of immunities and privileges as well as the updated estimates of operational costs by letter of 21 October 2004.

Given the continued financial and logistical difficulties faced by the Centre, the Secretary-General is considering the possibility of co-locating the Centre with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok as a way of ensuring the operational sustainability of the Centre. In this connection, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is undertaking consultations with Member States and donor countries, paying particular attention to solutions that address the demands and needs of the Asian and Pacific region, and enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Centre's operations.

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I. Introduction

1. On 3 December 2004, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 59/100 entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”. In paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities; urged him to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively; and requested him to report to the Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request. It covers the activities of the Centre during the period from July 2004 to July 2005. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre covering the year 2004 is contained in annex I. A list of planned activities of the Centre for which financial support from interested donors is being sought appears in annex II. In addition to the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre, activities of the Centre may be funded from voluntary contributions to other disarmament trust funds.

II. Activities of the Centre

3. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific continues to be a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation for peace and disarmament in the region. Consultations being carried out by the Director of the Centre with Member States and academic institutes within and outside the region, as well as meetings organized by the Centre, have confirmed the strong support for the Centre’s role in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue for the enhancement of openness, transparency and confidence-building and the promotion of disarmament and security. In that connection, the value of regional meetings organized by the Centre has been highly commended by the General Assembly and the Asian and Pacific community.

4. In line with that approach and within the limited financial resources available through voluntary contributions of Member States and other interested organizations, the Centre organized, during the reporting period, a number of conferences and meetings, as described below.

5. From 26 to 29 July 2004, the Centre organized, in close cooperation with the Government of Japan, Hokkaido Prefecture, Sapporo City and Sapporo International Communication Plaza, a regional disarmament conference on “Mounting challenges to peace and security and disarmament today” in Sapporo, Japan. The conference was attended by approximately 60 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, the media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their personal capacity. The Sapporo conference considered, inter alia, the mounting challenges to nuclear non-proliferation and the international response to them, the nuclear black market, strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), challenges and prospects for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), strengthening of the NPT regime, negative security assurances, strengthening multilateralism and

combating terrorism, regional security in North-East Asia, the role of civil society and gender issues in armed conflict.

6. One session was entirely devoted to disarmament and non-proliferation education. Approximately 60 teachers and students from elementary and high schools attended the session, which provided useful opportunities for the exchange of views and sharing of experiences between teachers in Sapporo and disarmament and non-proliferation experts. The discussions reaffirmed the objective of disarmament and non-proliferation education, that is, to impart knowledge and skills to individuals to empower them to make their contribution, as national and world citizens, to the achievement of concrete disarmament and non-proliferation measures and the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

7. The conference was highly commended by the participants as making a useful contribution to endeavours to promote disarmament and non-proliferation dialogue within and outside the Asian and Pacific region. The efforts of the Centre to introduce the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation education into the discussion were appreciated by the education community in Sapporo City and by the press. The participants at the conference unanimously called for the strengthening of existing disarmament-related treaties and conventions.

8. During the period under review, the Centre organized a regional seminar to address the issue of small arms and light weapons, in cooperation with the Governments of Australia and Japan. The seminar, hosted by the Republic of Fiji Islands, was held in Nadi from 18 to 20 August 2004. Approximately 50 participants, including experts from the South Pacific States and from international and regional organizations and NGOs, attended the seminar.

9. The major objective of the seminar was to familiarize the South Pacific States with the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. The seminar also focused on increasing familiarity with and promoting greater participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures. Other topics addressed by the seminar were the implementation by the South Pacific States of the Weapons Control Bill adopted by the Pacific Islands Forum and cooperation among them to strengthen stockpile management in the region. In addition, on the margins of the seminar, a workshop was organized by the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit (Geneva) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help the South Pacific States to prepare their respective national reports on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action. The participants were briefed on the experiences and the security concerns relating to small arms and light weapons issues in some parts of the South Pacific region and on the role of civil society in these matters.

10. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to serve as a forum for the Asian and Pacific community to address security and disarmament concerns in the region through the organization of regional meetings. In that respect, the Centre and the Republic of Korea jointly organized a conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, entitled "How to address challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation today", on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, from 6 to 8 December 2004.

11. This was the third such annual regional disarmament conference organized jointly by the Centre and the Government of the Republic of Korea. Approximately 30 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, as well as NGOs, mainly from the Asian and Pacific region, attended the conference in their personal capacity. The Jeju conference served as a forum for the discussion of pressing security concerns and relevant disarmament issues, and considered recent trends in weapons of mass destruction and their challenges to security, implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, assistance and protection against chemical weapons (article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention), prospects and challenges for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, peaceful use of nuclear energy and the nuclear fuel cycle, the non-proliferation challenges in North-East Asia, activities of the Missile Technology Control Regime for missile non-proliferation and the role of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

12. During the reporting period, the Centre also organized a regional workshop to address issues of small arms and light weapons, in Beijing from 19 to 21 April 2005, in close cooperation with the Governments of China, Japan and Switzerland.

13. Approximately 80 participants, including government representatives, particularly from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the five Central Asian States, and officials and experts from research institutes and NGOs attended the workshop.

14. The workshop provided the participants from South-East and Central Asia with an opportunity to identify the major problems and challenges in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and explore ways to implement effectively the United Nations Programme of Action at the national level. The workshop also enabled participants to exchange information and share experiences on the ongoing regional cooperation and multilateral efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and on how to promote those efforts.

15. The participants stressed the urgent need for international assistance and cooperation, including financial and technical assistance, to support and facilitate efforts at the national, regional and global levels to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. They also encouraged intensified international cooperation and assistance in capacity-building for countries or regions in need in such areas as legislation, law enforcement, tracing and marking, stockpile management and destruction of excessive or confiscated small arms and light weapons. The participants further called for strengthening cooperation and partnerships with civil society organizations to share relevant resources and information which would complement and assist governmental efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

16. The workshop offered the participants an excellent opportunity to share their experiences in addressing the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to gather momentum in attracting both the political will and professional competence to deal with the problem at the national, regional and global levels. It provided valuable inputs to the Open-Ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the Second

Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held in June and July 2005 respectively.

17. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to maintain close interaction with the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) by inviting its members to participate in meetings it had organized. The Director of the Centre participated in the CSCAP Study Group on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in Singapore on 27 and 28 May 2005. The Centre also continued to explore the possibility of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, including the Pacific Islands Forum, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), academic institutes and NGOs in the Asian and Pacific region by inviting them to participate in the dialogue on security and disarmament issues. The Centre initiated consultations with some ASEAN members to explore cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation education.

18. The Centre continued to develop effective working relationships with disarmament-related international intergovernmental organizations. In that connection, IAEA, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) participated in the conferences organized by the Centre in Sapporo and Jeju Island. The Director of the Centre participated in a workshop to promote the United Nations Study on disarmament and non-proliferation education held in Yangon, from 30 August to 4 September 2004. The workshop was hosted by the Government of Myanmar. Experts from OPCW and the provisional technical secretariat of CTBTO attended the workshop. The Centre will continue to promote further interaction and constructive working relationships with these organizations.

19. The value of the regional dialogue promoted by the Centre through the organization of meetings in the Asian and Pacific region and other means has been appreciated in General Assembly resolutions. The continuation of that dialogue aimed at identifying pressing disarmament and security-related needs relevant to the region and at encouraging region-oriented initiatives has gained the strong support of Member States and academic groups within the region. The Centre has developed a network linking the Centre and its interlocutors within the region, as a way of exchanging data and information and exploring further collaboration for joint activities relating to disarmament and security in Asia and the Pacific. The Centre's website was launched in January 2002 and has since been expanded. A brochure providing information on the activities of the Centre is currently being revised. The Centre extended assistance to the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China in the compilation of the speakers' texts presented at the Jeju conference and the Beijing workshop respectively. In order to raise public awareness, the Centre has initiated the preparation of factsheets on major regional disarmament initiatives, such as the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and Mongolia's Nuclear-Weapon-Free status.

20. Pursuant to a request by the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A, 55/33 W and 57/69, and to Assembly decisions 58/518 and 59/513, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in finalizing a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. The Centre organized a series of expert group meetings to facilitate the process. Following the agreement reached by experts of the five Central Asian States on a treaty text (the Samarkand

text) at a meeting in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in September 2002, the Centre organized another meeting, in Tashkent from 7 to 9 February 2005. The five Central Asian States concluded their seven-year negotiations and adopted the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the attached Protocol on 8 February 2005. The treaty reflects new developments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The five Central Asian States concluded that there would be no further expansion of the zone. As the first nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature in September 1996, it reflects the basic obligations contained in the latter treaty and attaches great importance to environmental issues. It encourages the States parties to conclude with IAEA the Additional Protocol. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/38 S of 9 December 1997 and subsequent relevant resolutions, the Centre has provided the five Central Asian States with technical and substantive assistance since 1998.

21. Consultations are under way among the five Central Asian States to seek the support of the nuclear-weapon States for the treaty adopted at Tashkent. The important contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime and to regional and world peace and security has been universally recognized. The Secretary-General welcomed the significant progress made concerning the treaty by the five Central Asian States. In their joint statement adopted in Tashkent (A/59/733-S/2005/155), the five Central Asian States expressed their desire to sign the treaty as soon as possible. It is expected that the signing ceremony will take place in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, in 2005.

22. As a means of promoting cooperation between the Centre and its constituents, the Centre continued to provide technical and substantive services to the United Nations Association of Japan for its organization of "An international symposium on peace and environmental issues in Ishikawa", which was held in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan on 13 and 14 June 2005. The symposium addressed, inter alia, peace and environmental issues today, security concerns in North-East Asia, the Korean peninsula, including the resumption of the six-party talks, the current situation in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the outcome of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, sustainable development and environmental issues, the promotion of education on environmental issues and regional cooperation in this field, regional exchanges and confidence-building. The participants highly appreciated the useful role of the Ishikawa symposium (the successor of the Kanazawa symposium), which can provide the States in the region with an opportunity to address freely their security concerns and common challenges in North-East Asia.

23. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/73 on Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status the Centre held frequent consultations with Mongolia to strengthen further its nuclear-weapon-free status. The Centre organized a meeting of a consultative group of United Nations departments, programmes, funds and agencies on 7 July 2005 to address, in particular, non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's international security. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, IAEA, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme and representatives of Mongolia attended the meeting. The meeting focused on the follow-up of two studies conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on economic vulnerabilities and human security and by UNDP on ecological vulnerabilities and human security, respectively. A separate

report of the Secretary-General on the subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session (A/59/364).

III. Staffing and financing

24. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations might make to that end. In its resolution 59/100, the General Assembly expressed its appreciation for the continuing political support and voluntary financial contributions to the Regional Centre, which were essential for its continued operation. It also appealed to Member States, in particular those within the Asian and Pacific region, as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions, the only resources of the Regional Centre, to strengthen the programme of activities of the Centre and the implementation thereof. The Assembly also urged the Secretary-General to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively.

25. In that connection, consultations continued with the host Government regarding the relocation to Kathmandu. It should be recalled that the final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be met by the Government of Nepal were forwarded to the Nepalese authorities for consideration on 6 December 2001 and 12 April 2002, respectively. As a follow-up, reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities on 9 December 2002, 3 February 2003 and 6 May 2003. The Government of Nepal, in letters dated 26 September 2003 and 15 July 2004, reiterated its readiness to host the Centre and to conclude the relevant agreements. The Department for Disarmament Affairs, in a letter dated 21 October 2004, provided the Government of Nepal with additional information on the issues of immunities and privileges, as well as updated estimates of operational costs, and is awaiting a response from the Government of Nepal in this regard.

26. At the same time, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has continued to focus efforts on identifying ways and means of ensuring the operational sustainability of the Centre, with particular attention being paid to solutions highlighting efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as well as to the demands and needs of the Asian region. Specifically, during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, at an informal meeting of the First Committee devoted to this issue, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs informed the Committee of the financial and logistical difficulties, as well as the additional challenge of increased security requirements. As a possible solution, the Secretary-General is currently considering the possibility of consolidating the activities of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific with other United Nations regional operations by co-locating the Centre with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. To this end, the Department for Disarmament Affairs is undertaking consultations with Member States, including donor countries.

27. During the reporting period, from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004, voluntary contributions in the amount of \$18,500 were received. The Secretary-

General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand for their contributions.

28. In addition, the Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of Australia, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Uzbekistan and to Hokkaido Prefecture, Sapporo City, Sapporo International Communication Plaza, Ishikawa Prefecture and Kanazawa City for their financial and technical support for the United Nations conferences and meetings organized by the Centre during the past year. He is gratified by the continued political and financial support for the Centre from the region. In addition to being funded from the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre, activities of the Centre may also be funded from voluntary contributions to other disarmament trust funds.

29. The Regional Centre's current staff consists of the Director, one associate expert and one General Service staff member. The Centre is seeking an additional associate expert to implement fully its mandate.

IV. Conclusions

30. The Centre continued to serve as a useful forum for regional and subregional dialogue on specific security concerns and global and regional disarmament issues and as an instrument for assisting regional initiatives in the field of disarmament and security concerning weapons of mass destruction and small arms and light weapons. The adoption of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty in Tashkent on 8 February 2005 is an excellent example of collaboration between Member States and the United Nations for the cause of regional and global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In addition, the Centre continued to encourage implementation of the recommendations of the *United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education*.¹

31. In order to promote further cooperation and interaction, the Centre expanded its contacts with academic institutes, foundations and regional and subregional organizations within the Asian and Pacific region, as well as with disarmament-related international organizations. The Centre succeeded in raising public awareness about the developments and trends in the field of disarmament and security in the region. The Centre was able to expand its outreach to its constituents further through its website and through the wide distribution of brochures and factsheets providing information on its various activities.

32. In order for the Centre to ensure its operational sustainability and expand its activities, which are solely dependent on the voluntary contributions of Member States and interested organizations, increased and stable financial support is essential. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation for the contributions received and reiterates his appeal to Member States, particularly those in the Asian and Pacific region, to continue to make or increase contributions to the Centre in support of its programme of activities.

Notes

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. 06.IX.4.

Annex I

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for the period 1 January-31 December 2004

		<i>United States dollars</i>
I.	Fund balance as at 1 January 2004	206 118
II.	Income	
	1 January 2004-31 December 2004	
	Voluntary contributions ^a	18 500
	Interest income	2 893
	Miscellaneous income	2 654
	Subtotal	230 165
III.	Expenditures	
	1 January 2004-31 December 2004	69 960
	Programme support	9 095
	Prior period adjustments	(42)
	Subtotal	79 013
IV.	Fund balance, 31 December 2004	151 152
^a	Republic of Korea	(\$20,000)
	Indonesia	(\$10,000)
	Thailand	(\$3,000)

Annex II

Planned activities of the Centre

Project I

Title: The Sixth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Kyoto on “The United Nations after six decades and renewed efforts for the promotion of disarmament”

Purpose: To assist the Asian and Pacific community to promote dialogue on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and small arms and light weapons issues

Location: Kyoto, Japan

Duration: 3 days (17-19 August 2005)

Number of participants: 60 participants, including government officials, academics and NGO representatives

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Travel of participants	62 000
Travel of staff	25 000
Operating expenses	13 000
Total	100 000

Project II

Title: United Nations — Republic of Korea joint conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues

Purpose: Fourth regional disarmament conference to address security concerns in North-East Asia, including non-proliferation and weapons of mass destruction

Location: Jeju Island, Republic of Korea

Duration: 3 days (1-3 December 2005)

Number of participants: Approximately 30 participants, mainly from the Asian and Pacific region

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Travel of participants	40 000
Travel of staff	15 000
Operating expenses	13 000
Total	68 000

Project III

Title: A symposium on the promotion of the *United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education*

Purpose: To familiarize participants with and encourage the implementation of the recommendations contained in the *United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education*

Location: Jakarta (tentative)

Duration: 3 days

Number of participants: 30

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Travel of participants (costs to be covered by host)	
Travel of two staff members	12 000
Operating expenses	1 000
Total	13 000

Project IV

Title: United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, in Japan

Purpose: To assist the Asian and Pacific community to promote dialogue on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

Location: To be decided

Duration: To be decided

Number of participants: To be decided

Cost estimates

(United States dollars)

Travel of participants	77 000
Travel of staff	20 000
Operating expenses	13 000
Total	110 000
