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General and complete disarmament

Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General

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* [A/75/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/46](#), entitled “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”, urged Member States, relevant subregional and regional organizations, the United Nations and the specialized agencies to promote equal opportunities for the representation of women in all decision-making processes with regard to matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in particular as it related to the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict.
2. The General Assembly welcomed the continuing efforts of the United Nations organs, agencies, funds and programmes to accord high priority to the issue of women and peace and security, and in that regard noted the role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in promoting the implementation of all resolutions related to women in the context of peace and security.
3. The General Assembly also urged Member States to support and strengthen the effective participation of women in organizations in the field of disarmament at the local, national, subregional and regional levels.
4. Furthermore, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of resolution [73/46](#). The present report is submitted in compliance with that request and on the basis of information received.
5. In that connection, a note verbale was sent to all Member States seeking their views on the subject. Member States, relevant United Nations system entities and other international organizations were also invited to provide inputs. The replies received or an executive summary of the reply are contained in sections II, III and IV of the present report. Any views received after 31 May 2020 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs¹ in the original language received. No addenda will be issued.

II. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[11 May 2020]

Since its triumph in 1959, the Cuban Revolution has formulated a policy on the promotion and protection of women’s rights in order to guarantee full equality of opportunity at all levels, including the participation of women in decision-making processes. Remarkable progress has been made in integrating women into employment, education, health, and participation in political and economic life, among other areas.

Cuban women account for more than 70 per cent of professional judges and prosecutors; 81.9 per cent of professors and teachers; 69.6 per cent of public health workers; 53.5 per cent of those working in the science, innovation and technology sector; and more than 80 per cent of secondary and tertiary graduates in the country. The positive impact of these indicators has been felt in all areas of society where

¹ See www.un.org/disarmament/topics/gender.

women are professionally active, including in the defence-related sectors where they work in different areas of specialization, obtain advanced training and perform on an equal footing with men.

The strong female presence in all Cuban State and government bodies, including the armed forces, guarantees their participation in decision-making. Women account for 50.7 per cent of State and government leaders. Following the general elections held on 11 March 2018, the proportion of women in the National Assembly of People's Power, the Cuban parliament, rose to 53.22 per cent. This is a record high, exceeding the targets set by the Beijing Platform for Action and making Cuba the country with the second largest female presence in the legislature. Moreover, 47.6 per cent of the members of the Council of State, which represents the National Assembly of People's Power between sessions, are women.

On 17 July 1980, Cuba was the first country to sign and the second to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to which it continues to adhere strictly.

In our country, the participation and representation of women in policymaking, planning and implementation processes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are guaranteed. A significant number of the officials representing Cuba in events and training programmes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are women.

In 1983, the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces implemented an experimental plan to integrate women into military life, including by deploying them in the chain of command of combat units. In that context, more women were admitted to various courses in military institutes, including at advanced levels of training. The Voluntary Female Military Service was established, and the first Women's Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment was formed.

When the Millennium Declaration was adopted in September 2000, Cuba was one of the 189 countries that committed to achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals and their targets by 2015. Our country achieved three of the Goals prior to the deadline, including the Goal on promoting gender equality and empowering women.

Cuba is aware of the importance of increasing the participation of women at all levels of decision-making, in both national and international institutions, for the formulation of policies on issues relating to the promotion of international peace and security.

We reaffirm our support for the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 25 years after its adoption; and for its appeal to ensure peace for the advancement of women and its recognition of the role of women in achieving peace and general and complete disarmament under strict, effective and efficient international control. Gender equality and women's empowerment are increasingly necessary. It is the responsibility of the United Nations General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council to provide effective monitoring of the international commitments made by the States Members of the United Nations to achieve that goal.

Cuba reiterates its determination to continue working for the advancement and empowerment of women in all spheres of social life.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2020]

The Constitution of Ecuador recognizes the right of persons to be free from any form of violence and the principle of gender equality. Its aim is to eliminate inequality and all forms of discrimination against women.

The criteria of gender equality and equity are the fundamental basis of the laws governing the rights and obligations of the members of the Armed Forces and the National Police.

The 2017–2021 national development plan (“A Whole Life”) mainstreams gender in its goals, policies and guidelines.

Ecuador considers that policies geared to gender equality and empowerment of women are essential to sustainable development.

In the National Defence Policy of Ecuador, the “white paper” drafted by the Ministry of Defence of Ecuador and approved by the President of the Republic in January 2019, it is expressly stated that respect for gender equity is part of the political concept of defence.

Since 2018, women may participate in the voluntary civic-military service, joining the ranks of the specialist women officers who have served in the Armed Forces of Ecuador since the second half of the twentieth century, and as weapons officers in the current century.

The National Police of Ecuador has had female police officers in its ranks since 1975 and the first female police officers joined the force in 1979. A woman is currently the second most senior officer in the National Police, with the rank of General Inspector, acting as Chief of Staff.

It is essential to combat impunity in cases of sexual violence during conflicts and in all circumstances. In such cases, nobody should be beyond the reach of national and international justice.

Ecuador remains committed to supporting and contributing to a genuine culture of peace and new forms of coexistence to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment, including in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It therefore encourages States to nominate women candidates for the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament.

India

[Original: English]
[27 May 2020]

India has voted in favour of the First Committee resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. India has been consistently supportive of the objectives of the resolution.

Indian women have been at the forefront in the United Nations and various international organizations and occupied prominent positions as negotiators. In 1953, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit became the first woman to be elected President of the General Assembly. Earlier, Hansa Mehta had represented India on the Subcommission on the Status of Women in 1946. As the Indian delegate to the Human Rights Commission in 1947/48, she was instrumental in changing the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from “all men are born free and equal” to “all human

beings are born free and equal”, highlighting the need for gender equality. This was well before equal rights for women and men were recognized in most legal systems.

A number of women ambassadors have ably represented India’s interests at various multilateral forums dealing with issues of disarmament and international security, including the Conference on Disarmament, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

India is of the firm belief that the differential impact of weapons on women and girls should be one of the critical factors for addressing conflict situations and designing disarmament solutions. India believes in promoting the meaningful participation of women in all processes of prevention, management and resolution of armed conflicts and decision-making, and in strengthening gender equality. India also has a long tradition of sending women to United Nations peacekeeping missions. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a peacekeeping mission, in Liberia.

The Secretary-General’s disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament* (2018) noted that women’s increased involvement could revitalize disarmament discussions. India is cognizant of the same and has supported various proposals for achieving gender balance in disarmament discussions. To this effect, the Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme instituted by India in 2019, as part of its commitment to promoting arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation education, strongly encourages women applicants. So far, women have constituted 53 per cent of the total participants in the Fellowship Programme. India will strive to further enhance participation by women.

India will continue to highlight the importance of the participation of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control forums and work towards this goal.

Ireland

[Original: English]
[29 May 2020]

Ireland welcomes that resolution [73/46](#) reaffirms that the equal, full and effective participation of both women and men is one of the essential factors for the promotion and attainment of sustainable peace and security. Ireland is firmly of the view that gender equality and diverse participation in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control frameworks will contribute to more effective and sustainable policy outcomes, in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the women and peace and security agenda, the youth, peace and security agenda and the Secretary-General’s disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*.

In line with paragraph 4 of resolution [73/46](#), Ireland’s third national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and related resolutions renews Ireland’s commitment to strengthening women’s representation and gender perspectives in all of its peace and security work. The national action plan includes among its strategic outcomes for efforts on peace and security: (a) the prioritization of gender equality and women’s leadership and meaningful participation; (b) the integration of gender analyses into policymaking, planning and implementation processes; and (c) efforts to address the effects and drivers of harmful masculinities and discriminatory gender norms. Ireland considers that these strategic outcomes provide mutually reinforcing ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and achieving effective and sustainable outcomes in policy and in practice, with human security at the core.

Ireland strives to ensure that women are represented at all levels of its delegations to international meetings on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and we actively promote such efforts as part of our multilateral engagement. Among the actions that Ireland encourages delegations and office holders within the international framework to take are: to ensure that women are equally represented in all official functions; to provide financial and capacity-building support to realize cross-regional representation of women; to adopt meeting agenda items that specifically examine issues of equal representation and gender perspectives; to collect, track and publish sex-disaggregated data on gender balance in delegations; and, when organizing panels, side events and other discussions, to ensure gender balance among the selected experts. In recent years, Ireland has furthermore actively engaged in efforts to include gender-responsive language in resolutions of the General Assembly's Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee). We welcome the trend that First Committee resolutions increasingly recognize the importance of women's participation in disarmament processes, and encourage Member States to support future efforts in this regard.

In 2019, Ireland remained actively engaged with partners in the promotion of gender perspectives across the multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control machinery, including in the context of the First Committee and the Arms Trade Treaty. Ireland, along with its partners, Canada and Sweden, led a joint statement on gender and the disarmament machinery in the First Committee in 2019. The joint statement secured the support of 78 Member States and the European Union, and recognized the gendered impacts of armed conflict and weapons, and the direct relevance of these harmful impacts for the realization of the goals of the women and peace and security agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ireland, Canada and Namibia also led a joint statement on gender and the Arms Trade Treaty at the Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, in 2019, which secured the support of 46 States parties to the Treaty and which, among other issues, stressed the importance of gender perspectives in arms control.

In 2019, Ireland, as one of the Co-Chairs of the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group in Geneva, supported the publication by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) of a gender and disarmament resource pack for multilateral practitioners, the second iteration of which was released in 2020. It includes practical recommendations for promoting equal participation and gender perspectives in multilateral disarmament frameworks, and Ireland encourages Member States to consider and utilize this resource. In 2019, the Disarmament Impact Group also promoted awareness of the importance of gender equality and diverse participation in the contexts of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, the Arms Trade Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Ireland remains actively engaged in promoting awareness of the gendered impacts of conflict and weapons, including in the context of nuclear disarmament frameworks. Ireland has submitted working papers on the gendered dimensions of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons each year during the current review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, recommending that the Preparatory Committees recognize the disproportionate impact on women and girls of ionizing radiation from the detonation of nuclear weapons and encourage delegations to ensure gender diversity across all levels of representation, among other recommendations. Ireland is also proud of its role in working with partners to integrate gender perspectives into the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons during its negotiation.

Ireland welcomes the important contributions of United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society in conducting research and promoting awareness of the importance of gender equality in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. In particular, Ireland would like to draw attention to the important research and advocacy conducted by the UNIDIR Gender and Disarmament Programme and by Reaching Critical Will, the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Ireland is of the view that, going forward, the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control community must afford greater attention to increasing the diversity of representation in its frameworks and to improving the integration of gender perspectives into policy development, in particular in recognition of the gendered impacts of armed conflict, violence and weapons. Increasing synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the women and peace and security agenda, the youth, peace and security agenda and the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament will be beneficial in this regard.

In conclusion, Ireland welcomes the decision taken in resolution 73/46 to include in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control". Ireland stands ready to engage with Member States in a fruitful discussion on this issue.

México

[Original: Spanish]
[28 May 2020]

Mexico attaches the utmost importance to the gender perspective, which is mainstreamed in all areas of its domestic and foreign policy. In this regard, the country's advocacy for gender equality in various multilateral forums has informed its foreign policy.

In particular, Mexico believes that a gender perspective in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control is essential, bearing in mind that it is women who indirectly and disproportionately suffer the consequences of the illicit traffic in weapons and who are exposed to domestic, sexual and gender violence.

Mexico believes that the international community should continue to call for women's presence in peace negotiations, longer lists of women candidates for senior positions and peacebuilding processes with a gender perspective.

Mexico promotes the equitable representation of women across all sectors and levels of government, particularly in the security sector, as it recognizes women's critical role in influencing public policies on security, disarmament and arms control.

In January 2020, Mexico made significant strides in that regard by adopting a new feminist foreign policy. The policy is made up of five pillars whose aim is to mainstream a gender perspective into actions taken within and outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The aim of pillar 4 of the policy, entitled "Equality is visible", is to confer dignity upon the public perception of the contribution of women to the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to Mexican foreign policy. It will thereby contribute to strengthening women's role in and significant influence on peace processes.

Mexico firmly believes that women's participation in mediation processes and in the negotiation of peace agreements and the cessation of hostilities is crucial to

promoting national reconciliation by respecting and upholding human, social and civil rights.

However, Mexico has acknowledged that there are issues related to the women and peace and security agenda established pursuant to Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) that have yet to be addressed. For instance:

- Women continue to be victims of sexual exploitation and abuse in many conflict zones.
- The number of women serving in peace operations remains low, as does the number of women acting as mediators and negotiating peace agreements.
- Women continue to face obstacles to participating in the governance of their countries and to exercising their fundamental rights and freedoms.

Measures taken by the Government of Mexico to promote gender equality and women's leadership in peacebuilding processes include the following:

- Mexico recognizes that women play a vital role in peacebuilding processes; consequently, their participation in preventive measures and in reconstruction and national reconciliation efforts is crucial. That is why equality, non-discrimination and the inclusion of women and girls are at the heart of the process of formulating the new National Development Plan and the National Programme for Equality 2019–2024.
- In that regard, efforts have been made to ensure that women play a key role in decision-making, which will give them a greater presence and representation in public life, as well as greater involvement in decision-making on issues related to peacekeeping.
- The number of women involved in national security duties and institutions has gradually increased. Instead of being relegated to tasks traditionally carried out by women, such as nursing, women have also become involved in areas that were once the province of men, such as artillery and cavalry, among others, where they may be appointed to senior positions.
- Since the country resumed its participation in United Nations peace operations in 2015, a total of nine highly trained women have been deployed in three peace operations. They have served as observers with the special political mission in Colombia to ensure compliance with the peace agreement, and with the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara to monitor the ceasefire, in addition to occupying such positions as military staff officer at the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. Mexico thus meets the Organization's requirement for contributing countries, namely, that women account for at least 15 per cent of staff.
- Since 2016, six Mexican military women have served as observers in the United Nations special political mission in Colombia and in the current United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, helping to implement the peace agreement in that country, carrying out activities related to the surrender of arms and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).
- Mexico has a joint training centre for peace operations in Mexico. The centre promotes the training and capacity-building of personnel to be deployed in peace operations, emphasizing protection and respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law and gender equality. Since 2019, the centre has been administering an essential pre-deployment course. The course includes a focus on the participation of women United Nations officers and provides

training on the women and peace and security agenda, as well as on the importance of women's participation in peacekeeping operations.

- In addition, the domestic security agencies have departments that promote gender equality and human rights and employ experts on the subject. For instance, there is a General Directorate of Human Rights and an observatory for gender equality within the Ministry of National Defence. For its part, the Ministry of the Navy has a unit for the promotion and protection of human rights and a Directorate of Institutional Policy on Gender Equality; while the Federal Police have a substantive equality unit.
- As part of the process of establishing the National Guard in Mexico, an agreement is being concluded with the United Nations on providing officials with human-rights training. Preventing gender-based violence is one of the agreement's main objectives.
- Similarly, as a member of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security and the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, the Government of Mexico will continue to make multilateral efforts to promote the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).
- Mexico addresses the women and peace and security agenda by actively participating in the open debates of the Security Council and in other relevant multilateral forums seized of the matter. In these forums, Mexico has reiterated its support for efforts to guarantee the protection of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflict. It has also endorsed measures aimed at strengthening gender equity, mainstreaming a gender perspective and promoting the substantive participation of women in peace processes, including mediation and negotiations of peace agreements, and United Nations peace operations.
- Currently, the country's national plan on women, peace and security is awaiting approval. The plan sets out various ways to strengthen the gender perspective in security tasks and reinforce women's participation in these areas.

A leader on questions of gender equality and the rights of women and girls, Mexico has taken into account General Recommendation 30 (2013) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. It has given particular consideration to preventing conflict and all forms of violence, as well as to implementing the various international treaties and conventions on the arms trade and preventing the circulation of illicit conventional weapons and their use to perpetrate or facilitate grave acts of gender-based violence.

Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]
[29 May 2020]

Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to the principles of international peace and security as espoused in the Charter of the United Nations and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2010, Trinidad and Tobago introduced the first-ever General Assembly resolution that established a link between disarmament and women, entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control" – a biennial resolution.

Trinidad and Tobago is not a producer of small arms and light weapons. However, its geographical location has rendered it susceptible to the ills associated with transnational illicit drugs and weapons trading networks. Thus, the consequential

increase in armed violence within its borders has negatively affected many in society, including women and children.

Trinidad and Tobago remains strongly supportive of ensuring that women are equally represented in all spheres. This includes decision-making at all levels, including in the field of peace and security. In this regard, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago continues to recognize the importance of women's participation in matters relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. This recognition is evidenced by the ascendancy of women to senior ranks of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force.

For Trinidad and Tobago, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women remain pivotal to the achievement of the country's national development strategy, Vision 2030, which is in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago subscribes to the rule of law as a fundamental safeguard in the advancement and protection of the rights of women. Further, the country's continued adherence to its obligations under international human rights instruments, which seek to protect the rights of and eliminate discriminatory practices against women, is of the utmost importance. In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago has consistently highlighted the successes of women, the significance of the involvement of women at all levels of development, the need for gender parity and the elimination of discrimination against women, as well as other gender issues, in its statements and interventions at the United Nations and at other multilateral forums.

Trinidad and Tobago remains a strong proponent of the Arms Trade Treaty. For Trinidad and Tobago, the Treaty not only represents a significant achievement in the global fight to eliminate the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit market, but could also contribute to the reduction of, if not the end to, the untold suffering experienced by those in vulnerable situations, including women and girls. In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago acknowledges that men and women have different vulnerabilities with respect to access to and participation in the illegal trade in drugs, as well as arms and ammunition. As a result, emphasis has been placed on enhanced educational and training opportunities as a means of reducing the reliance of segments of the population on livelihood strategies related to the illegal trade in drugs, as well as arms and ammunition.

In pursuit of its commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in all areas, including disarmament, Trinidad and Tobago has embarked on capacity-building initiatives, which include strategic partnerships with agencies such as the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Most recently, in November 2019, the Regional Centre collaborated with the Ministry of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago to host a regional seminar in Port of Spain on preventing armed violence against women through arms control.

In January 2020, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service announced the launch of the Gender-based Violence Unit, which would address, *inter alia*, domestic violence cases, with a view to treating these sensitive cases with due confidentiality and care.

Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its commitment to the advancement and empowerment of women and therefore remains resolved to continue working with other Member States and partners at the regional, hemispheric and global levels to ensure the full engagement of women at all levels, including decision-making, in all aspects of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and to promote the involvement of women as equal partners in matters related to peace and security.

In view of the foregoing, Trinidad and Tobago will continue to robustly support international and regional initiatives to advance these goals and strongly encourages Member States to report on their progress made in the field of women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago further commits itself to continuing to fortify its resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control at meetings of the First Committee during successive sessions of the General Assembly.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[11 May 2020]

Ukraine pledges full support for the resolution on the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and recognizes the importance of providing equal rights for women and men in all fields of this endeavour.

The proportion of women employed in the Armed Forces of Ukraine has reached about 23 per cent and is increasing gradually. A high proportion of women (more than 10 per cent of all military personnel) take part in the Joint Forces Operation in the east of Ukraine. They serve on an equal basis at military posts, performing duties related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The Armed Forces of Ukraine take complex measures aimed at raising the representation of women at all decision-making levels and preventing cases of sexual or other types of violence. Within the framework of this activity, there is regular monitoring of the percentage of women in key positions and their involvement in peacekeeping missions and international security cooperation, as well as the development of appropriate service conditions for women.

Meanwhile, the percentage of women and men staff members in the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine is 21 and 79 per cent, respectively. Overall, there is a trend towards the greater involvement of women in operational service activities.

In addition to the above, the Armed Forces of Ukraine have been implementing the United Nations policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, and an appropriate system of impartial investigation in cases of sexual and other types of violence, based on gender, age and social diversity.

The Armed Forces of Ukraine are working on the development of a military legislation system to bring it into compliance with United Nations standards, including those relating to gender.

III. Replies received from the United Nations system

Office for Disarmament Affairs

[Original: English]
[31 May 2020]

General observations and intergovernmental processes

In multilateral, regional and national disarmament and arms control discussions, activities and initiatives, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has observed a strong gender focus with regard to small arms and light weapons and a recognition of the need for more in-depth research and policymaking to ensure gender-responsive approaches in areas such as nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and new and emerging technologies. Since the publication of the 2018 report on women,

disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control ([A/73/115](#)), the equal participation of women and the integration of gender perspectives have advanced in a variety of disarmament and arms control contexts and remained central to discourse among many Member States. An unprecedented number of disarmament resolutions with gender references were adopted by the General Assembly in 2018 and 2019,² many of which addressed women's equal participation in discussions, processes or decision-making, including for the first time in areas related to conventional arms,³ nuclear weapons,⁴ biological weapons,⁵ regional disarmament and security⁶ and other disarmament measures.⁷

Gender and gender-based violence were the thematic priorities of the Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in August 2019, which led to agreed recommendations and actions that were later welcomed by the General Assembly in resolution [74/49](#). Significant progress was also made on gender-related issues at the Third 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, in 2018, when, for the first time, States adopted an outcome document containing a specific reference to the connection between the implementation of the Programme of Action and combating gender-based violence ([A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3](#)). Gender dimensions, including the underrepresentation of women, were also highlighted by several States at the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, held in November 2018, and at the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in November 2019, in which States took concrete steps to integrate gender into the work of the Convention.

Since 2018, the United Nations, Member States and civil society have collectively made significant strides in strengthening the linkages between multilateral disarmament frameworks and broader agendas aimed at promoting gender equality. Among others, the links between arms control and the women and peace and security agenda were further deepened, including by the Secretary-General in his annual reports on women and peace and security and in his 2019 report on small arms and light weapons to the Security Council ([S/2019/1011](#)). The Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network discussed disarmament and arms control for the first time, delivering recommendations on strengthening the synergies between disarmament, arms control and the women and peace and security agenda.

² In both 2018 and 2019, a total of 17 First Committee resolutions adopted by the General Assembly included language on gender dimensions or women's participation.

³ Resolutions on the Arms Trade Treaty ([73/36](#) and [74/49](#)), the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects ([73/69](#) and [74/60](#)), 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 ([73/84](#) and [74/76](#)) and problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus ([74/65](#)).

⁴ Resolutions on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices ([73/65](#)), united action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons ([73/62](#)), joint courses of action and future-oriented dialogue towards a world without nuclear weapons ([74/63](#)) and nuclear disarmament verification ([74/50](#)).

⁵ Resolution on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction ([74/79](#)).

⁶ Resolution on conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels ([73/34](#) and [74/38](#)).

⁷ Resolutions on consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures ([73/53](#)) and youth, disarmament and non-proliferation ([74/64](#)).

During the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, States parties demonstrated an increased interest in promoting the inclusion of gender perspectives and women's equal participation (see [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.49](#)). The need for States parties to recognize the disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on women and girls was also recalled. On the margins of the Preparatory Committee session in 2019, two side events were held and three working papers were released that further underlined the linkages between gender and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Linkages to other weapons of mass destruction have not yet been as widely discussed in multilateral forums, but in 2019 the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) launched a research report offering ideas to promote gender-responsive assistance within the regimes of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

In the area of new technologies and innovation, it was acknowledged that, with the many opportunities that the industry offered to advance gender equality, there were also inherent risks, including gender bias in artificial intelligence. During the first substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, held in September 2019, delegations raised the gendered impacts of information and communications technologies and discussed the need for gender perspectives and women's participation. Similar issues were also raised by several High Contracting Parties during the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems.

Women's participation in disarmament forums

The Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, launched in May 2018, prioritizes the equal, full and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and aims to address the shortage of women participating in key decision-making forums. That gap was reaffirmed in the 2019 report of UNIDIR entitled "Still behind the curve",⁸ which found that women made up only a third of the diplomats accredited to arms control and disarmament conferences between 2008 and 2018. In smaller, more specialized forums, the average number of women participating was as low as 20 per cent. In 2019, that problem persisted, and women continued to be underrepresented in multilateral disarmament meetings and conferences.⁹ In the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, during the meetings of the First Committee, 33 per cent of delegates and 32 per cent of heads of delegation were women, with 25 per cent of the statements being delivered by a woman during the general debate and thematic clusters.

Efforts are under way to remedy that situation, however. In 2019, gender parity was included for the first time as a selection criterion in the mandate of a disarmament-related group of governmental experts, and the composition of groups

⁸ Available at www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/still-behind-the-curve-en-770.pdf.

⁹ For example, at the Conference on Disarmament (36 per cent), the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (36 per cent), the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (32 per cent), the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (30 per cent), the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (33 per cent), the Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II (31 per cent).

of governmental experts is increasingly gender balanced.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters has been composed of an equal number of women and men in 2020. The first female Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament was appointed in 2019. The Office for Disarmament Affairs further promoted gender parity in its activities and work streams, including in the composition of expert panels, regional consultations and workshops. Internally, the Office continued efforts to support equal opportunities and gender parity among staff at all levels, including by issuing new guidance on advancing a conducive and enabling work environment.

Activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs

The gender-related work of the Office for Disarmament Affairs is guided by its gender mainstreaming action plan; the implementation plan for the United Nations system-wide strategy on gender parity; the Sustainable Development Goals; the women and peace and security resolutions; and the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, became an International Gender Champion in 2018 and, as such, pledged not to sit on single-sex panels, to contribute to the equal representation and meaningful participation of women and men in activities of the Office and multilateral disarmament mechanisms and to raise global awareness about the gendered impact of weapons. She also participated in the launch of the Geneva-based International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, co-chaired by Canada, Ireland, Namibia, the Philippines and UNIDIR, which aims to translate gender awareness into practical action in the disarmament community.

Since the publication of the previous report, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has strengthened its internal network of gender focal points and actively participated in United Nations inter-agency networks and working groups related to gender equality, women and peace and security and sexual violence. The Office has further supported gender mainstreaming in all activities and meetings, including by launching two online gender mainstreaming and disarmament training courses in collaboration with the Training Centre of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The Office has also supported the operationalization of the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium module on the theme "Women, men and the gendered nature of small arms and light weapons".

In April 2019, the Office for Disarmament Affairs launched a multi-year project in support of gender mainstreaming policies, programmes and actions to combat small arms trafficking and misuse, in line with the women and peace and security agenda and with funding from the European Union.¹¹ The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation continued to integrate gender as an important criterion for funded projects, and gender perspectives have been a foundational element of the Saving Lives Entity fund, which was launched in October 2019. Thirty per cent of the total project budget will be allocated to activities in direct pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Office for Disarmament Affairs also engaged at the regional and national levels with Member States to build capacity, foster gender equality and promote the

¹⁰ In the two groups of governmental experts starting their work in 2018, women accounted for 16 and 8 per cent of experts, respectively. The two groups starting their work in 2019 achieved gender balance within 40 to 60 per cent. In 2020, the groups of governmental experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/55](#) achieved gender parity.

¹¹ Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/2011 of 17 December 2018.

meaningful participation of women in disarmament, non-proliferation, security and related fields. Some examples are:

- The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa incorporated gender considerations into six training workshops on security and stockpile management for defence and security forces in the Sahel in 2018, highlighting the link between inadequate stockpile management, the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and the impact of those weapons on girls and women.
- The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific developed and implemented a project from July 2018 to March 2020 on gun violence and illicit small-arms trafficking from a gender perspective, promoting gender-responsive efforts to combat the uncontrolled spread of and enhance national control over small arms and light weapons and to prevent gun violence. Findings from three subregional workshops and a regional seminar were published in a handbook for national practitioners.
- The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean launched a multi-year project in 2018 focused on building momentum for the regional implementation of the resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, with technical training activities in Colombia and El Salvador. In 2019, extensive legal reviews to cross-reference small arms laws with domestic violence provisions throughout 22 Latin American and Caribbean States were undertaken as part of the project.
- The Vienna office of the Office for Disarmament Affairs partnered with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to provide scholarships for an online and in-person training course on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control through the Scholarship for Peace and Security. In 2019, a total of 90 per cent of participants were women and the initiative received the OSCE Gender Champion Award.

The year 2020 held much promise for celebrating and further accelerating progress and partnerships for gender equality and women's empowerment given that it marked anniversaries for the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), on women and peace and security. However, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic forced the Office for Disarmament Affairs and its partners to adapt, and in some cases postpone, its activities and meetings, limiting the opportunities to advance its gender mainstreaming efforts. Despite the challenges presented by the global pandemic, the Office remains committed to promoting women's leadership and meaningful participation in disarmament processes, including in meetings held in an online format, and to strengthening analysis and approaches for gender-responsive disarmament in order to achieve sustainable peace and security for all.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

[Original: English]
[22 May 2020]

Developments at the policy level

Over the past years, gender-related considerations have increasingly been integrated into discussions in the framework of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Convention

against Transnational Organized Crime (Organized Crime Convention). In May 2017, at its twenty-sixth session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted its first resolution on mainstreaming a gender perspective into crime prevention and criminal justice policies and programmes and into efforts to prevent and combat transnational organized crime. It also called upon Member States to take a gender perspective into account in the implementation of the Organized Crime Convention and the Protocols thereto, including the Firearms Protocol, by considering how crime, including transnational organized crime, had different impacts on men and women, in order to ensure that policies, programmes and actions to address crime were effective. The Commission further recognized, among other things, the need to develop and implement appropriate and effective national strategies and plans for the advancement of women in criminal justice systems and institutions at the leadership, managerial and other levels. Moreover, in October 2018, at its ninth session, the Conference of the Parties to the Organized Crime Convention recognized the negative impact of illicit trafficking in firearms on the lives of women, men, girls and boys. The Conference invited States parties to collect sex-disaggregated data on illicit trafficking, including through national reporting, and to increase understanding of gender-specific impacts with a view to mainstreaming gender perspectives into firearms policies and programmes. Such language is important in strengthening the gender-responsiveness of efforts to control small arms and light weapons and in particular those efforts focused on crime prevention and criminal justice.

Activities and initiatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), through its Global Firearms Programme, is committed to addressing the issue of illicit firearms trafficking and related forms of crime in a gender-responsive manner, by promoting gender mainstreaming, the equal representation of women in criminal justice authorities and the equal participation of women in its efforts, in line with the Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2018–2021). The Programme thus incorporates gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting priority in its five key pillars: (a) legislative and policy development on firearms issues; (b) implementation of preventive, security and regulatory measures to impede legal weapons from being diverted into the illegal circuit and misused for illicit purposes; (c) strengthening criminal justice responses to illicit firearms trafficking and related crimes; (d) international cooperation and information exchange leading to more effective and systematic tracing of illicit firearms; and (e) identification and monitoring of illicit firearms flows to develop an evidence base for policy and operational decision-making.

Working along that approach, concrete measures taken by UNODC to make arms control and firearms-related crime prevention and criminal justice efforts more gender-responsive included:

- Facilitating the representation of women experts and civil society organizations when providing legislative drafting support on the incorporation into national law of the Firearms Protocol, to ensure that firearms-relevant laws take into account the needs and realities of women in a particular country
- Promoting the participation of, and contribution by, women in crime prevention and criminal justice activities, including training activities, workshops and meetings
- Collecting sex-disaggregated data on individuals arrested, prosecuted or convicted for illicit firearms trafficking in the context of the UNODC Monitoring Illicit Arms Flows initiative, with a view to enhancing the

understanding of the gender dimension of such trafficking on the perpetrator side

- Considering gender dimensions as regards the possession of firearms and the readiness of individuals to voluntarily surrender them in the context of voluntary surrender campaigns
- Raising the awareness of authorities and educators with regard to the gender dimension of armed violence, particularly homicide, through the UNODC Education for Justice initiative¹²

In 2019, as part of its *Global Study on Homicide 2019*, UNODC published booklets on the killing of children and young adults and on gender-related killings of women and girls, providing more details on some phenomena that were already well known:

- When addressing the risk factors for child homicide, the report showed that, in countries where a large proportion of young victims were killed with firearms, a lack of or weak firearm control among young people was clearly a risk factor for homicide.¹³
- The study on gender-related killings of women and girls concluded that femicide represented just a small percentage of the overall number of homicides, but the report's analysis indicates that the drivers of that type of lethal violence require tailored responses. Killings carried out by intimate partners are rarely spontaneous or random and should be examined as an extreme act on a continuum of gender-related violence that remains underreported and too often ignored.¹⁴ For example, research carried out in the United States of America shows that the perpetrators of child homicide-suicide are usually male, with a history of intimate partner violence, and such crimes are often committed using firearms.¹⁵
- The report also highlighted various findings considering the link between the use of firearms and gender-related killings from different regions. With regard to the Asian region, it was noted that the mechanisms used for committing honour killings often included firearms.¹⁶ In addition, the report outlined a study in Ghana that revealed that mechanisms predominantly used for killing female intimate partners involved firearms and machetes.¹⁷
- With regard to criminal justice responses to violence against children, the report highlighted that laws that prohibited the possession, carrying and use of firearms and other weapons among young people could reduce firearm-related injuries and lethal victimization.¹⁸ The report concluded that tackling youth homicide related to organized criminal groups and organized crime called for dedicated community-based programmes that sought not only to limit the availability of firearms, but also to promote child development, education and mental health

¹² See www.unodc.org/e4j/en/firearms/module-1/key-issues/indirect-impacts-of-firearms-on-states-or-communities.html.

¹³ UNODC, *Global Study on Homicide: Killing of Children and Young Adults* (Vienna, 2019), booklet 6, p. 45. Available at www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet_6new.pdf.

¹⁴ Ibid., booklet 5, preface. Available at www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet_5.pdf.

¹⁵ Ibid., booklet 6, p. 39.

¹⁶ Ibid., booklet 5, p. 31.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁸ Ibid., booklet 6, p. 53.

support and to improve the educational, training and employment prospects of children.

As part of the technical assistance provided by UNODC to enhance crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women, the Office is promoting the use of risk assessment tools and criteria by police, prosecution services and the judiciary, in order to take into account the danger posed by firearms and other weapons and to support women in safety planning. More details and examples are included in the following UNODC publications:

- *Strengthening Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Responses to Violence against Women*¹⁹
- *Handbook on Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women*²⁰
- *Handbook on Effective Prosecution Responses to Violence against Women and Girls*²¹
- *Handbook for the Judiciary on Effective Criminal Justice Responses to Gender-based Violence against Women and Girls*²²

The Office continues to work at the national level to address issues concerning trafficking in illicit firearms and related forms of crime in a gender-responsive manner. For example, in Mexico, UNODC developed a methodology for the selection and review of ministerial investigation records of violent deaths of women classified as femicides or intentional homicides, in the framework of a system of alerts on gender violence against women in Mexico. The methodology has been tested and is considered to be good practice that can be replicated throughout the country, or even adapted to other crimes. A comprehensive strategy was then developed to strengthen the capacity of the staff of the Attorney-General's Office in Nuevo León (northern border of Mexico) to effectively investigate gender-based crimes. That strategy included the development of a diagnosis of a sample of unresolved cases of femicide in the country, with specific recommendations. The sample consisted of a detailed analysis of each case (87), providing specific recommendations with regard to investigations in order to establish the facts of the case and successfully prosecute it. The strategy also included several capacity-building activities for prosecutors and police officers who investigate femicide cases, which were specifically designed and adapted to the findings of the diagnosis. In addition, UNODC drafted a document on contributions for the delimitation of the crime of femicide, which contains an assessment of the criminal codes in the 32 states of Mexico and specifies convergences and divergences in how crimes are sanctioned. That effort focuses on the importance of characterizing crimes at the national level to facilitate access to justice and identify the challenges that derive from that conceptual discrepancy.

In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UNODC delivered awareness-raising sessions to the Security and Defence Commission, which comprises mainly women, at the Bolivian Congress to promote the ratification of the Firearms Protocol, which was successfully approved in October 2019.

UNODC also continued to support national Governments in Europe and West and Central Asia in promoting the equal representation of women in decision-making

¹⁹ Available at www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Strengthening_Crime_Prevention_and_Criminal_Justice_Responses_to_Violence_against_Women.pdf.

²⁰ Available at www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Handbook_on_Effective_police_responses_to_violence_against_women_English.pdf.

²¹ Available at www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/14-02565_Ebook_new.pdf.

²² Available at www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/HB_for_the_Judiciary_on_Effective_Criminal_Justice_Women_and_Girls_E_ebook.pdf.

processes and women's empowerment, including through capacity-building efforts. Specifically, UNODC assisted in drafting and promoting the adoption of new laws on gender equality and women's empowerment, establishing and supporting women's committees to address crime and gender-based violence, and increasing the knowledge and skills of criminal justice practitioners on a wide range of issues in the area of criminal justice and crime prevention, including by promoting the participation and engagement of youth, women and girls in efforts to prevent gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, to promote the development of life skills and to prevent crime among youth through sports. UNODC also continued to encourage the participation of women in training activities, conferences and workshops at the national and regional levels.

IV. Replies received from other international organizations

Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

[Original: English]
[28 April 2020]

The Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean was created under article 7 of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco). The Agency, comprising all 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, is the intergovernmental body responsible for ensuring compliance with the obligations established under the Treaty more than 50 years ago. It is the specialized agency in which all the countries in the region articulate joint positions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

More than 50 per cent of the officers currently working at the secretariat of the Agency are women. Both the Secretary-General and the membership of the Agency recognize the link between gender and disarmament as a fundamental aspect in the international debate and the valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures carried out at the local, national, subregional and regional levels in the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict, and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

The Agency, pursuant to resolution 73/46, supports the request to seek the views of Member States on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

European Union²³

[Original: English]
[20 May 2020]

The promotion of gender equality and awareness of gender issues and the empowerment of women are important cross-cutting priorities for the European Union. The European Union is fully committed to mainstreaming gender into all non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control work. The European Union believes that the active participation and leadership of women at all levels in peace and security decision-making and action is crucial to achieving peace, security and

²³ The full text of the information provided by the European Union will be available on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (www.un.org/disarmament/topics/gender). A summary was provided for inclusion in the present report.

sustainable development. Although progress has been made in recent years, research shows that significant work remains to be done in order to achieve gender equality in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. In that regard, the European Union, in early 2020, decided to become a supporter of actions 36 and 37 of the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, toward the full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes.

The European Union is supporting the universalization and implementation of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control conventions by means of dedicated projects (Council Decisions) that systematically consider the gender dimension. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97, in support of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, provides that seminars would bring together youth from the global South, with particular emphasis on encouraging the participation of young women therefrom. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/538, in support of activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, pertains to forums for women on the peaceful uses of chemistry and a development course on basic analytical skills for women.

In November 2018, the Council of the European Union adopted a new strategy against illicit small arms and light weapons. As part of the strategy, the European Union committed itself to mainstreaming gender considerations in the design of new projects relating to efforts to combat gun violence and small arms control in general, and to sharing good practices in that regard. Since the adoption of the new strategy, all new assistance projects systematically integrate gender perspectives through the provision of technical advice and expertise, the development of knowledge products, and/or training. In addition to small arms control projects with a specific geographical focus, the European Union is also supporting a global approach to increase knowledge and build capacity on the gender and small arms nexus. The Office for Disarmament Affairs start to implement Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/2011, in support of gender-mainstreamed policies, programmes and actions in the fight against small arms trafficking and misuse, in line with the women and peace and security agenda. The project has funded activities such as online-based training on gender mainstreaming small arms control for United Nations staff and wider communities of practitioners. The effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty can contribute to eliminating violence against women and girls, as set out in target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Women, girls, boys and men may be affected in both similar and different ways by mines and explosive remnants of war. In its conclusions of 25 June 2019 on a European Union position on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines in the light of the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Oslo from 25 to 29 November 2019, the Council committed itself to pursuing a strong gender dimension in the outcome document of the Review Conference, and to considering gender in delivering all aspects of mine action.

Southern African Development Community

[Original: English]
[19 May 2020]

To promote equal opportunities for the representation of women in all decision-making processes, building on the efforts made by the States members of the Southern African Development Community to demonstrate firm political commitment to

support initiatives that are focused on alleviating gender inequality, women are enrolled in national armies and given high ranks, positions and assignments.

Regarding matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, the policy of member States is to recognize women's role at all levels of planning and decision-making. Women are assigned to and participate in all tactical operations.

To accord high priority to the issue of women and peace and security, although some member States are still formulating a national action plan to implement Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, national armies in the region have been at the forefront of the subject, including in the field of peacekeeping.

With regard to gender equality and gender empowerment, women are given command and control of certain working stations and entrusted with such responsibilities as accorded to men.

To support and strengthen the effective participation of women in organizations, women soldiers are treated as combatants and are integrated into the organization to operate with men in the conduct of operations. In the field of disarmament at the local level, planning cells at all levels of operation comprise women who work cooperatively. At the tactical level, women are integrated into the units and subunits to fulfil the specified gender tasks.

To empower women, including through capacity-building efforts, women are given training together with men, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts. Moreover, women's gender-specific tasks in the conduct of actual operations are taught and emphasized during training.
