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General and complete disarmament

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [75/43](#), pertains to the need for further strengthening of the relationship between disarmament and development within the United Nations and also contains information received from Member States on the subject.

* [A/76/50](#).



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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 1 of its resolution [75/43](#), on the relationship between disarmament and development, the General Assembly stressed the central role of the United Nations in the relationship between disarmament and development and requested the Secretary-General to strengthen further the role of the Organization in that field.
2. In paragraph 2 of the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted on 11 September 1987 at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development (see [A/CONF.130/39](#)).
3. In paragraph 6 of the resolution, the General Assembly reiterated its invitation to Member States to provide the Secretary-General with information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development. Furthermore, in paragraph 7, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-sixth session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.
4. On 17 February 2021, the Secretariat sent a note verbale to Member States seeking their views on the issue by 31 May 2021. At the time of writing, replies have been received from Albania, Colombia, Cuba, Ireland and Mexico. The European Union also sent its views. The replies are contained in sections III and IV below. Any views received after 31 May 2021 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the language of submission.¹ No addendum will be issued.

II. Implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/43](#)

5. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued its efforts to underscore the importance of and strengthen the innate link between disarmament and development. It continued, for example, to work in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations also continued to support inter-agency coordination through the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism, which is chaired by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Efforts in that regard included further developing and updating the mechanism's terms of reference in order to better reflect the need to mainstream disarmament efforts in the field, in view of the disarmament-development nexus.
6. The United Nations maintains an active awareness of the interrelationship between peace, security and development and recognizes that effective arms regulation and management are a precursor to economic and social development. Furthermore, the United Nations recognizes that the effectiveness of arms regulation and management depends on their enforcement, if the preconditions for sustainable development are to be fulfilled.
7. The critical link between the prevention and reduction of violence and development is made explicit in Sustainable Development Goal 16. The link is particularly clear in target 16.4, which is focused on the need to significantly reduce illicit arms flows. The United Nations endeavours to assist States in further strengthening their capacity in this regard. In this context, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime have continued to perform

¹ www.un.org/disarmament.

their roles as co-custodians of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.2,² supporting States in the collection and management of data and information relating to illicit arms flows. Such efforts are facilitated by the illicit arms flows questionnaire and the national reports submitted by States on their implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism has also facilitated the exchange of views and coordinated field actions in support of the implementation of activities under indicator 16.4.2. Last, the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation has provided financial support to implementing partners for the execution of a quick-impact project relating, in particular, to target 16.4. In a bid to further strengthen the disarmament-development linkage at the country level, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme undertook pilot scoping missions to Jamaica and Cameroon during the first half of 2021 within the framework of the Saving Lives Entity fund, a facility launched by the Secretary-General within the Peacebuilding Fund. Funds from that facility assist countries most affected by illicit flows of weapons in integrating small arms control and violence reduction perspectives into development processes.

8. In accordance with Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States have committed themselves to the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources. Since 1981, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has maintained the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, a voluntary transparency instrument through which Member States report their levels of annual military spending. Accordingly, both the reduction of military expenditure and the promotion of transparency and confidence among States with regard to the matter have long been on the agenda of the United Nations. The information provided by Member States through the instrument may serve as a basis for determining trends in military spending and fostering discussions among Member States on appropriate levels of such spending. It may also help to set the conditions for development through disarmament. The information submitted by States is available in the online database maintained by the Office for Disarmament Affairs.³

III. Replies received from Governments

Albania

[Original: English]
[31 May 2021]

The Republic of Albania is continuously working towards the effective implementation of all its international obligations, including the implementation of provisions contained in international treaties and conventions.

On many occasions, the Republic of Albania has highlighted the importance of achieving synergy and complementarity between areas relating to security and development, while effectively protecting human rights and providing humanitarian assistance. We believe that these are interlinked and interdependent elements that should guide the elaboration of effective strategies for peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. All functions related to these operations must target a peace-consolidation scenario that, from our perspective, may pave the way for sustainable development through various means, such as capacity-building and institutional development.

² Indicator 16.4.2: "Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments".

³ www.unroca.org/.

Albania exchanges military information, defence planning information and all data concerning all arms control agreements with members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), demonstrating goodwill with regard to cooperation, transparency and openness among all OSCE countries.

Concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, Albania has continued to align its positions with those of the European Union, OSCE and other international organizations dealing with these issues.

The Albanian authorities remain committed to the sustained implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The State Export Control Authority is responsible for managing the international transfer control of dual-use goods and military items. Albania does not produce, store or transport nuclear, biological or chemical weapons or similar devices. Albania has approved a national strategy to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Albania is a proactive contributor to regional security concerning weapons of mass destruction.

The Military Export Import Company is a State-owned enterprise under the Ministry of Defence. It was established in 1991 and has since carried out activities to meet the needs of the Albanian Armed Forces and other institutions with regard to specific imports of military goods, as well as exports of new military goods, Armed Forces stocks and products of the military industry.

In accordance with the national legal basis and the instructions of the Ministry of Defence, the revenues from the demilitarization processes (among other processes) have been used to cover the cost of cleaning up hotspots (for the purpose of environmental protection) and as investment in the modernization of the Armed Forces.

Albania has made substantial commitments to responsible international arms transfer control. Albania regularly reports in conformity with its obligations as a State party to the United Nations conventions on disarmament issues and also in respect of its commitments regarding agreed confidence- and security-building measures as a member of OSCE.

The Armed Forces are organized and prepared and function according to the basic formation principles of military organizations in democratic societies. Despite their size, the Armed Forces are able to fulfil their mission. They support the Albanian Government in international arms control negotiations and implement international treaties and agreements to which Albania is a party.

The organizational structure of the Armed Forces has developed and has implemented the recommendations of the Strategic Defence Review, 2019, which defines how the Albanian Armed Forces will develop in the future, their size and the number of personnel. The ambitions, expectations, requirements and operations of the Armed Forces require effective organization management and operation, which is achieved through a functional and simple organizational structure.

The completed and planned improvements in resource management and the increase in budget allocation are aimed at ensuring the resources needed to maintain the ongoing reform programmes. The 2020 defence budget was focused on improvements in the modernization of equipment, improvements in training infrastructure, increases in operational capability and support for training and exercises.

One of the most important processes in the planning, programming, budgeting and execution system is the organization and development of defence programmes, which represent the support with resources for all planned activities for a period of six years.

Defence resource programming ensures the development of the Albanian Armed Forces according to the priorities. Defence programme drafting is aimed at turning/

changing the capabilities of objectives, priorities and tasks provisioned for in the main strategic planning documents into long-term programmes integrated in the context of the integrated planning process of the Albanian Government. In this context, the Ministry of Defence will operate with defence programmes that will be more flexible to conform to the development necessities of the Armed Forces, mainly with regard to modernization and infrastructure.

The development of Albanian Armed Forces capabilities is closely related to the effective management support and financial resources required. The financial support shall be referred to the macroeconomic data of the Ministry of Finance, with an increasing trend of development of the economy at a constant rate. Keeping a check on inflation at an average level will lead to an increase in the defence budget. The defence budget will be increased gradually in order to accelerate the development process of the future force.

The defence budget directs the allocation of resources to the important budget categories: personnel expenses, operational and maintenance expenses, modernization of infrastructure and research-development expenses.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2021]

The Republic of Colombia, as a State committed to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and to the promotion of national development, gives the highest priority to the development of national policies whose aim is to eliminate the possible causes of negative effects on growth and development indicators in the environmental, economic and social spheres.

It has thus made efforts to strengthen national policies for the prevention of violence and the promotion of development and to fulfil international commitments to address and resolve these issues.

The measures adopted by the national Government for the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, within the framework of the implementation of national strategies for poverty reduction and the promotion of sustainable development, are worthy of note in this respect.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[14 May 2021]

The international community cannot be content with the actions that have been taken to promote development. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda requires a renewed commitment. The many crises triggered by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic created a discouraging situation in all countries, mainly those of the South.

According to the *World Economic Outlook Update* of January 2021, produced by the International Monetary Fund, amid this uncertainty, the global economic growth contraction for 2020 is estimated at a negative 3.5 per cent; the global economy is projected to grow 5.5 per cent in 2021 and 4.2 per cent in 2022.

According to the *2020 Sustainable Development Goals Report*, the pandemic was likely to push 71 million people into extreme poverty, in what would be the first

rise in global poverty since 1998, while school closures have affected 90 per cent of students worldwide (1.57 billion) and caused more than 370 million to miss out on school meals they depend on.

The efforts of the United Nations and its Member States are also threatened by drought, rising temperatures, sea level rise and other phenomena associated with the negative effects of climate change. In a context of increasing annual economic losses as a result of disasters, making the Declaration on the Right to Development a reality is more necessary still. The Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 1986, states that resources released through disarmament measures should be used for development.

Conflicts and the arms race undermine international efforts to promote progress. In 2019, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 80 million, the largest number in almost 70 years – an estimated 30 million to 34 million of those people were children – while military spending continued to rise.

In 2019, global military spending rose to \$1.917 trillion – 3.6 per cent more than in 2018, making the increase the largest global increase since 2010 – an amount equal to 2.2 per cent of global gross domestic product, according to statistics from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

These figures confirm the need for a United Nations–supervised international fund, to which half of current military expenditures should be allocated, in order to help the least developed countries achieve sustainable economic development.

The United Nations must play a central role in the relationship between disarmament and development, in particular through the implementation of the provisions on the relationship between disarmament and development of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and the 1987 action programme of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, a conference at which Cuba had the high honour of being one of the Vice-Chairs. The action programme provides for the adoption of measures to reduce the level and magnitude of military expenditures and reallocate those resources to social and economic development, particularly in developing countries.

Cuba will continue to fulfil its commitments under the action programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

The commitment and political will of the Cuban Government can be seen through various examples, including the contribution to the country's economic, social and environmental development by the Youth Labour Armies, which are part of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. The members of the Youth Labour Armies are involved in agricultural and industrial production, in construction and in evacuation and search and rescue operations during natural and climatic disasters. When COVID-19 was at its worst, the armed forces provided support for food production and distribution.

In his speech to the officers of the armed forces on 4 November 1969, our historic leader, Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, said:

It is a highly revolutionary event that in an underdeveloped country such as ours, in a country that must confront hard work, our armed forces do not constitute a privileged sector of the population, as is the case in almost all of the countries of Latin America. They do not constitute an unproductive sector of the country; rather, the armed forces are fundamental factors in the development and the work of the country.

The objectives set forth in Cuban legislation and the National Economic and Social Development Plan 2030 pertain not only to economic and social development but also to ongoing commitments in respect of nuclear, biological and chemical disarmament.

Cuba devotes the majority of its public resources to spheres that contribute directly to sustainable development. The prevention and containment measures taken to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, the care provided to the ill and those suspected of being ill, the operation of isolation facilities, medicines and the protection of workers who, for various reasons, stopped working temporarily were estimated to have cost more than 1.3 billion Cuban pesos in 2020.

Under the 2021 State Budget Act, budgeted expenditures of 243.788 billion Cuban pesos are planned. Of these planned expenditures, 24 per cent will be earmarked for education and 28 per cent for public health and social assistance.

As part of Cuba's call to escalate international solidarity, not war, and in support of efforts to combat COVID-19, a total of 55 brigades of the Henry Reeve Contingent was sent to 40 countries; in January 2021, 38 brigades, with a total of 2,544 members, were active.

General and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, under effective international control remains an urgent and imperative task for humankind. Member States must respect and strictly comply with their obligations under international agreements on disarmament and arms control. The arms race must be stopped and those substantial resources reallocated to ensure a dignified life for all human beings on the planet and to achieve sustainable development that contributes to the well-being of future generations.

Ireland

[Original: English]
[27 May 2021]

In accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution [75/43](#), Ireland is hereby submitting to the Secretary-General information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries.

Ireland welcomes the fact that, in the resolution, the General Assembly stressed the importance of the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development, and shares the concern noted at the increasing global military expenditure, which could otherwise be spent on development needs. Ireland further welcomes that the Assembly urged the international community to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development and encouraged the international community to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Ireland believes that development, peace and security are mutually reinforcing, and our efforts in these areas recognize the interconnections between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, as well as the youth, peace and security agenda and the women and peace and security agenda. These connections are embodied in our work on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Ireland remains a committed champion of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, in particular action 1 on facilitating dialogue for nuclear disarmament, action 14 on avoiding the use of explosive weapons

in populated areas and action 21 on building understanding of the impact of arms on conflict management.

Addressing the humanitarian harm from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas remains a priority for Ireland. The destruction of critical infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and sanitation facilities can have devastating impacts, impeding both the immediate humanitarian response and post-conflict development. Ireland continues to lead the consultations to agree on a political declaration on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and encourages all States to take part in this process.

In *A Better World*,⁴ Ireland's policy for its overseas development programme, Ireland sets out its approach for a more comprehensive response to peace and security challenges, which demonstrates its collective commitment to peace and disarmament as essential to building a secure, stable world where people can live in dignity and without fear. In the implementation of its development policy, Ireland engages across the entire spectrum of conflict prevention and resolution, thereby reaching the furthest behind first. Particular areas of alignment between its disarmament and development priorities are gender equality, reducing humanitarian need and strengthening governance. The review in 2020 by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of Ireland's development programme found that Ireland's efforts to support global sustainable development are underpinned by its advocacy on broader foreign policy priorities. The report noted in this regard Ireland's successful advocacy for the reflection of gender equality in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and Ireland's efforts as one of the Co-Chairs of the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group. Ireland has also provided core and project funding to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as part of its support for Sustainable Development Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and efforts to expand existing coordination and learning across human rights, gender equality, conflict resolution, peace, and humanitarian and development work.

Humanitarian mine action helps to save lives, protect people from life-changing injuries and give communities access to reclaimed land. Humanitarian mine action directly contributes to reducing global hunger and building resilience. Such action contributes significantly to achieving the priority policy in *A Better World* of reducing humanitarian need. Ireland has been a supporter of humanitarian mine action since the early 1990s and has provided almost €50 million in funding since 2006. In 2020, as part of its ongoing humanitarian mine action support, Ireland provided over €3.2 million in support of mine action programmes in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

Ireland is also a consistent supporter of efforts to realize the goals of the international conventions in this area. We have been a long-term supporter of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit and the Convention on Cluster Munitions Implementation Support Unit, whose effective functioning are crucial to the implementation of the respective conventions. Ireland also supports research on the disarmament-development nexus. In 2020 and 2021 we are funding the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to undertake a project that examines the socioeconomic impact of unexploded ordnance. Two case studies will be conducted for the project, in Cambodia and Colombia, using a methodology established by previous research to assess the impact of unexploded

⁴ Available at www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/aboutus/abetterworldirelandspolicyforinternationaldevelopment/A-Better-World-Irelands-Policy-for-International-Development.pdf.

ordnance on sustainable development in the medium and long term, with the Sustainable Development Goals as an analytical framework. Ireland considers that such efforts, which create the links between disarmament and development, are crucial to furthering the 2030 Agenda and can be applied in a range of contexts to enable progress towards the realization of the Goals.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons forms a persistent barrier to a more secure, stable world in which economic and social development can prosper. Such weapons exacerbate conflict and contribute to regional insecurity. While combating the illicit trade in weapons is explicitly linked to the achievement of target 16.4, its implementation cuts across all 17 Goals and contributes to the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole. Armed violence is the leading cause of forced migration and displacement in the world, as well as the leading cause of hunger. Insecurity affects access to food, water and shelter, and impedes humanitarian assistance efforts. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons also has an impact on development outside conflict zones. Violent crime affects societies and economic development by rendering cities unsafe to live and work in, expending resources that could otherwise be spent on socioeconomic development and hindering investment opportunities.

Ireland attaches great importance to the Arms Trade Treaty as a major step forward in the international community's efforts to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons, combat weapons diversion and prevent the conflict, human rights abuses and economic instability that arise from the illegal and unregulated flow of small arms and light weapons. Ireland is a consistent supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty and its voluntary trust fund. Ireland's support for the Arms Trade Treaty also aligns with the priority policies in *A Better World* of gender equality and reducing humanitarian need, with the aim of reducing armed gender-based violence and preventing armed conflict.

Ireland has also been a consistent supporter of the technical cooperation programme of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which, through its projects, aims to address key development priorities in areas such as health and nutrition, food security and agriculture, and climate action. These efforts make an important contribution to the 2030 Agenda and demonstrate the contribution that peaceful uses of nuclear energy can make to sustainable development.

Ireland is conscious of the high human, social and economic cost that would result from the use of chemical or biological weapons. We are a consistent advocate of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and continue to provide funding to the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Ireland is furthermore a member of the Australia Group, a multilateral export control regime and information-sharing forum that helps Member States to identify which exports should be controlled so as to not contribute to the spread of chemical and biological weapons.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[28 May 2021]

Mexico recognizes the interdependence of peace, security and development, which are related objectives; it also recognizes the relationship between arms regulation and economic and social development. Mexico is therefore of the view that

there must be a balance between the resources allocated to military spending and those allocated to development.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, military spending amounted to \$1.981 trillion (about €1.65 trillion) worldwide in 2020. That amount represents an increase of 2.6 per cent year-on-year – despite the pandemic caused by the spread of the COVID-19 virus – while world gross domestic product fell by 4.4 per cent.

For Mexico, the imbalance shown by these figures is of great concern, as is the announcement by some States that, despite the urgency of using economic resources for pressing health needs and community development, they intend to improve and refine their military arsenals. Those developments are made all the more alarming by the complex global situation, which has widened the inequality gap even more and made access to goods and the means of meeting the basic needs of a large part of the world's population even more difficult.

For its part, Mexico, aware of the link between preventing and reducing violence and social development, has implemented the following public policies:

- As part of the National Development Plan 2018–2024, actions with a focus on promoting development were taken in Mexico with a view to combating and preventing crime and violence. Since 2019, for example, the building of a network of places of innovation, freedom, art, education and knowledge (better known as the PILARES programme) has been under way in Mexico City. These places, located especially in the most marginalized and violent neighbourhoods, give communities access to educational and training and development opportunities. Access to cyberschools, entrepreneurship workshops and training for various trades has created these opportunities.
- Despite the pandemic and a brief interruption, the campaign “Yes to Disarmament, Yes to Peace” was implemented in 2020. It seeks to help reduce the high rates of violence by raising awareness among the population about the risks of having firearms and ammunition. The campaign involves encouraging civilians to surrender the arms in their possession in exchange for benefits for their families (economic resources, basic necessities or household appliances). Between 1 January 2019 and 13 March 2020, 5,394 firearms were recovered and destroyed (4,047 handguns, 1,002 long guns and 345 grenades); 976,462 cartridges, 13,533 ignition devices and 6 sticks of dynamite were also recovered and destroyed. In this way, 4,017 people, of whom 1,471 were women and 2,546 were men, benefited from economic support. The campaign is an inter-institutional social initiative made possible by coordination bringing together civil society, the Catholic church and the three levels of government, with the participation of the Ministry of National Defence and the involvement of the following local government ministries: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Public Safety; the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, the Ministry for Women and the Ministry of Inclusion and Social Welfare.
- In Mexico, social programmes focus primarily on families living in highly marginalized areas or areas with high rates of violence, as well as in areas with a majority indigenous population, with a view to dealing with the structural obstacles to development. In 2020, the Ministry of Welfare made a historic social investment by earmarking more than 143 billion pesos (about US\$ 7.1 billion) for social programmes, which provided bimonthly grants or other forms of support to approximately 8 million older adults, nearly a million people with disabilities and more than 190,000 working mothers, fathers or guardians.

- With regard to disarmament and development, Mexico, at the regional and international levels, has focused on developing strategic documents, visions and analyses, a focus that has given it a comprehensive and specific view of arms trafficking issues.
- Mexico also participates both in international meetings aimed at reducing the impact of conventional weapons and in multilateral forums geared towards achieving nuclear disarmament and reducing military spending on armaments. The allocation of more resources for development is, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, promoted at these events.
- Lastly, in strict compliance with the resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, Mexico promotes cooperation in activities related to disarmament, transparency in military spending and increased confidence-building.

IV. Reply received from the European Union

[Original: English]

[31 May 2021]

Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations set the goal to “promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources”.

The European Union acknowledges that there can be no peace and security without development and no development without peace and security. Disarmament and development are interrelated and the European Union has made major contributions towards this objective. Disarmament policies and processes contribute to improving stability and to increasing the resources made available for development.

Based on the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy, the European Union strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the new lines of action, the guiding principles of the European Union continue to relate to:

1. Effective multilateralism through diplomatic action and financial assistance to third countries and international organizations;
2. Enhancing close cooperation with countries to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime;
3. Addressing non-proliferation issues in all European Union dialogue meetings and in more informal contacts;
4. Using all relevant financial instruments.

The European Union “non-proliferation clause” must be included in any mixed treaty between the European Union and a third country. This clause commits the signatory parties to complying with their non-proliferation obligations.

The European Union regularly undertakes targeted démarches on disarmament and non-proliferation, aimed, inter alia, at persuading third countries to accede to important arms control agreements such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.

The European Union is also supporting capacity-building to prevent and combat illicit small arms and light weapons and projects that address the threats of anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war with the aim of enhancing socioeconomic development in certain affected States.

The European Union recognizes the linkages between sustainable development, humanitarian action, gender equality, and conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as well as the importance of diplomatic and political solutions to support peace and security, in line with the European Union Global Strategy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The multilateral and international cooperation efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control of the European Union take into account the interrelationship between disarmament and development, with a view to realizing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

All European Union member States are parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 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, the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Arms Trade Treaty.

The European Union is an official supporter of the relevant actions of the 2018 disarmament agenda of the Secretary-General, *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*.

The link between disarmament and development with regard to several weapon categories

Chemical and biological weapons

Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/538 was adopted in support of activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. It has funded training for chemists, chemical engineers and other professionals who assume managerial responsibilities in OPCW member States whose economies are developing or in transition. Through a new Council Decision, the European Union also participates in the funding of OPCW efforts to improve its cybersecurity and resilience.

Through Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 in support of the Biological Weapons Convention, the European Union has funded projects focused on universalization of the Convention, national capacity-building and the preparedness of States Parties to prevent and respond to attacks involving biological agents, and fostering biosecurity networks in the global South.

In the context of the implementation of Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), the European Union has funded projects in support of strengthening biosafety and biosecurity in Ukraine and in a number of countries in Latin America. These projects are aimed at raising awareness and improving the legislative and regulatory basis of biosafety and biosecurity.

The European Union has funded projects to support the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons in recognition of the high human, social and economic cost of the use of chemical or biological weapons. A development approach was introduced by encouraging

nominations of experts and laboratories from the global South and of female experts to the roster, besides enhanced participation of laboratories from developing countries.

The European Union has supported projects to strengthen health security at ports, airports and ground crossings in cooperation with the World Health Organization by providing technical guidance, tools, information and knowledge-sharing.

Anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war

The European Union is committed to mine action that addresses the socioeconomic impact on civilian populations of anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions, anti-vehicles mines and other explosive remnants of war. The universalization of the multilateral treaty that outlaws anti-personnel mines, the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, and its swift implementation has long been a priority for the European Union. The key objective of the related Maputo Action Plan 2014–2019 and Oslo Action Plan is to achieve a mine-free world by 2025.

The European Union has a long history of support for actions that address the threat of mines and explosive remnants of war. European Union assistance covers all key aspects: mine clearance, risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity-building, and research and development on mine detection and clearance technology.

During the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention from 25 to 29 November 2019 in Oslo, the European Union delivered a statement highlighting the role of mine action in the long-term development of post-conflict regions and countries as critical for fostering a conducive environment for the normalization of life and livelihoods for civilians, opportunities for income generation and the reintegration of both former combatants and civilians. That position is grounded in the fact that anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war thwart the personal and economic development of individuals, families, communities, regions and States. Explosive contamination blocks access to agricultural land, hinders tourism and increases the cost of investment in infrastructure and industrial development. Mines can strip entire regions of a fair chance of economic development.

For many years, the European Union has directly supported the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit, which is critical to the work of the Convention, by means of decisions of the Council of the European Union. Following the adoption of Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/1428 in support of the Maputo Action Plan for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, a new successor framework has ensured a seamless transition since March 2021. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257 provides €2.7 million in support of mine clearance, victim assistance and stockpile destruction activities. It includes a comprehensive approach to implementation, ranging from mine clearance to victim assistance.

The European Union and its member States are major donors for mine action assistance worldwide, supporting mine clearance, risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity-building and research and development in technology for mine detection and clearance. The European Union invested more than €300 million in its mine action projects worldwide over the period 2017–2021. European Union mine action is a success story of effective multilateralism and disarmament policy and strengthens the rules-based order.

Small arms and light weapons

In *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, which was launched on 24 May 2018, the Secretary-General called for an inclusive, integrated and participatory approach to small arms control at the country level and, in some situations, at the subregional level. The European Union engages in support of these aims, including through the frameworks of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. As already recognized in 2001 in the Programme of Action, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has a wide range of humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences and poses a serious threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable development at the individual, local, national, regional and international levels. The links between armed violence, conflict and poor development are well established. Under Sustainable Development Goal target 16.4, States have committed, by 2030, to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime. Therefore, alongside addressing security goals, the supporting actions should aim to mitigate and prevent negative effects on sustainable development from the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

The European Union strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, adopted by the Council of the European Union on 19 November 2018, established the guidelines for Union action in the field of small arms and light weapons. The strategy takes into account the guiding principles of the 2016 European Union Global Strategy, which requires an integrated approach across external policies.

It also takes into account the outcome of 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, held in June 2018, at which States Members of the United Nations undertook to strengthen, as appropriate, partnerships and cooperation at all levels in preventing and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in particular on border control; stockpile management and security; destruction and disposal; marking, record-keeping and tracing; and illicit brokering. They also undertook to strengthen cooperation with relevant subregional and regional organizations.

In specific follow-up to its strategy, the European Union provides considerable assistance through a number of projects to various countries and regional organizations to strengthen the action against illicit small arms and light weapons. Since 2004, more than €100 million has been allocated to projects for the control of small arms and light weapons. The priorities include stockpile management, the destruction of surplus and confiscated small arms and light weapons, capacity-building for marking, record-keeping and tracing of small arms and light weapons, and support for law enforcement capacities in countering arms trafficking and tracking the sources of illicit weapons and ammunition in conflict-affected areas. The European Union is also assisting countries in enhancing their national arms transfer control systems to prevent weapons from falling into unauthorized hands. In addition, the European Union financially supports activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in support of gender-mainstreamed policies, programmes and actions to combat small arms trafficking and misuse, in line with the women and peace and security agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2191, adopted in support of a global reporting mechanism on illicit conventional arms and their ammunition to reduce the risk of

their diversion and illicit transfer (“iTrace IV”), sought to enhance the frequency and duration of in-field research into conventional arms and their ammunition circulating illegally in conflict-affected areas.

Development is also fostered by specifically targeting vulnerability. The European Union supports the inclusion of gender perspectives in national legislation and policies on disarmament and arms control. This encompasses consideration of the gendered aspects of the ownership and use and misuse of arms, the differentiated impacts of weapons on women and men, the ways in which gender roles can shape arms control and disarmament policies and practices, and the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security. An example is Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/2011, adopted 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.

Promoting development and disarmament at a regional level is a priority. Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/2010 was adopted in support of countering illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms, light weapons and ammunition and their impact in Latin America and the Caribbean. Projects assessed armed violence patterns and issues in three member States of the Organization of American States to identify populations suffering a high index of crime using small arms and light weapons and the State and civil society services available to assist victims.

The European Union adopted Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/979 in support of the development of an internationally recognized system for the validation of arms and ammunition management according to open international standards. The related project is implemented by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and its specialized agency, the Ammunition Management Advisory Team.

Strategic export control

Criterion Eight of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment requires European Union member States to consider the compatibility of exports of military technology or equipment with the technical and economic capacity of the recipient country, taking into account the desirability that States should meet their legitimate security and defence needs with the least diversion of human and economic resources for armaments. The Common Position further states that: “Member States shall take into account, in the light of information from relevant sources such as United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development reports, whether the proposed export would seriously hamper the sustainable development of the recipient country. They shall consider in this context the recipient country’s relative levels of military and social expenditure, taking into account also any European Union or bilateral aid.”

The European Union and its member States also support the export control regimes on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear dual-use goods and missile technology. The European Union puts a major emphasis on globally enhancing the security of dual-use chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials, whose malevolent use poses a risk for international peace and development. With a budget of €155 million for the period 2014–2020, the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative provides a platform for voluntary regionalized cooperation with 62 partner countries on all chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material-related hazards. Special attention is thereby given to terrorism-related threats.

The European Union partner-to-partner export control programme is aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of export control systems for dual-use items and military equipment and covers 30 countries across the globe.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform

Under various development-related financial instruments, the European Union funds projects relevant to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within its larger post-conflict peacebuilding and security sector reform efforts.

The Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2018/1789 in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the member States of the League of Arab States to sustainably build national capacity to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, combat terrorism and enhance security in post-conflict situations, while fully respecting human rights standards and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

The European Union Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform in Ukraine pursues engagement with Ukraine and the region and systematically integrates the fight against illicit small arms and light weapons into any dialogue on security matters with partner countries in the neighbourhood.
