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## Seventy-fourth session

Item 102 of the preliminary list\*

### Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

## United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

### Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits to the General Assembly the report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on the activities of the Institute for the period from June 2018 to April 2019 and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2019 and 2020.

The Board of Trustees of UNIDIR reviewed the report and approved the programme of work and financial plans at the seventy-second session of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, held in New York from 26 to 28 June 2019.

The Board considered that the report of the Director captured the breadth of the Institute's current work programme and the increased level of activity currently under way. It welcomed the active engagement of UNIDIR in advancing implementation of the initiative of the Secretary-General, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, as well as the Institute's forward-looking efforts to integrate arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. In the light of the demonstrated added value of the work of UNIDIR for multilateral disarmament processes, the Board encouraged the Director, going forward, to include details on the impact of the Institute's work in annual reports and recommended that future reports cover the calendar year.

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\* [A/74/50](#).



## **Report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on the activities of the Institute for the period from June 2018 to April 2019 and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2019 and 2020**

### *Summary*

The present report covers the activities and financial status of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for the period from June 2018 to April 2019, and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2019 and 2020. It was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution [39/148 H](#), in which the Assembly invited the Director of UNIDIR to report annually to it.

UNIDIR is an autonomous institution within the United Nations that conducts independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. The role of UNIDIR is to support Member States, the United Nations, and policy and research communities in identifying practical measures that contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world.

Through the delivery of four core services – promoting knowledge, generating ideas, facilitating dialogue and providing advice – UNIDIR serves as a responsive provider of support to Member States, the disarmament expert community and United Nations entities. It is a key implementing partner of the initiative of the Secretary-General, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*.

The three-year research agenda of UNIDIR was approved by its Board of Trustees in June 2018. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters ([A/73/259](#)), the agenda reflects the Institute's work in response to the current security environment and is aimed at identifying pathways to reinvigorate multilateral arms control and disarmament, including through enhancing linkages between disarmament, prevention and sustainable development as well as facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue, in particular, on the implications of new technologies. Through its four work programmes UNIDIR addresses a balanced range of long-standing and emerging disarmament issues relevant – and in support of – all Member States and multilateral processes.

On the basis of recommendations contained in the first report of the Secretary-General on the Institute in over 15 years ([A/73/284](#)), UNIDIR has initiated reforms to its structure, operating and financial models in order to establish a more stable and sustainable foundation for the Institute and its activities. Working together with the Secretariat, Member States and other stakeholders, UNIDIR will continue to seek efficiencies to improve delivery and better respond to the needs of all partners.

As UNIDIR approaches its fortieth anniversary in 2020, a more strategic and strengthened Institute can help to stimulate and contribute added value to the efforts of States, the United Nations system, regional organizations and the wider expert community to collectively bring disarmament and arms control back to the centre of the work of the United Nations.

## I. Introduction

1. Established in 1980, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is an autonomous institution within the United Nations that conducts independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. The role of UNIDIR is to support Member States, the United Nations, and policy and research communities in identifying and promoting practical measures that contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world. It carries out that role through four core services: promoting knowledge, generating ideas, facilitating dialogue and providing advice.

2. Over the course of 2018, UNIDIR sought to orient its research and activities to respond to what is widely recognized as a crisis in multilateral arms control and to support efforts to preserve and advance progress on long-standing as well as emerging disarmament subjects. In May 2018, the Secretary-General launched his initiative, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, in which he outlines a set of practical measures across the range of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and future weapon technologies. In the *Agenda for Disarmament*, the Secretary-General underscores the need for new ideas and reinvigorated dialogue to create new momentum for progress on disarmament. As part of that effort, the Agenda contains a call for UNIDIR to play a greater strategic role in disarmament processes and deliberations and to take forward more than 10 of 40 proposed actions.

3. It was also a year of profound review of UNIDIR operations, administration and financing. In 2015, the General Assembly, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 70/69, requested the Secretary-General to present at its seventy-third session a report on a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for UNIDIR, on the basis of an independent, third-party assessment. In that report (A/73/284) – the first on UNIDIR in over 15 years – the Secretary-General noted the important contribution that the Institute could make to encouraging momentum and potential progress on key disarmament issues and highlighted the independent assessment's finding that the credibility, independence, relevance, reach and convening power of UNIDIR represented a unique asset for multilateral disarmament processes. The report contained a number of recommendations regarding the Institute's research agenda, cost structure, staffing and financing. UNIDIR launched an ambitious internal change management plan in late 2018 to implement the recommendations and to strengthen its capacity to contribute to broader efforts to adapt multilateral arms control to changing patterns of warfare, new political and strategic challenges, and risks arising from technological innovations.

4. As UNIDIR approaches its fortieth anniversary in 2020, a more strategic, strengthened and responsive Institute will continue to assist States, the Secretariat, the United Nations and other stakeholders to address the complexity of the international security environment through the proactive delivery of policy-relevant information, ideas, dialogue and advice, thereby contributing to the call contained in the *Agenda for Disarmament* to bring disarmament back to the centre of the work of the United Nations.

## II. Programme of work

### A. Performance and status of implementation of activities for the period from June 2018 to April 2019

#### 1. Research agenda and programmes of the Institute

5. In June 2018, following the endorsement by the Board of Trustees (A/73/259, paras. 85–88), the Institute established a three-year strategic research agenda. The agenda is aimed at responding to long-standing security challenges and at supporting multilateral efforts to address new issues, identify new approaches and engage with new actors. It reflects the priorities identified in the *Agenda for Disarmament* and the call to mainstream disarmament across the work of the Organization, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The importance of multi-stakeholder engagement with the United Nations, regional organizations, civil society, research and private sector partners for effective policy responses is a cross-cutting theme of the UNIDIR research agenda.

6. The research agenda comprises four programmes: conventional arms; weapons of mass destruction and other strategic weapons; security and technology; and gender and disarmament. The structure reflects the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/73/284) that UNIDIR establish a multi-year research agenda. By adopting that model, UNIDIR is creating the conditions for investing in expertise, intellectual leadership and sustained engagement on specific topics, while providing flexibility to respond to evolving events and the needs of Member States, regional organizations and United Nations processes. The programmatic model also serves to increase the transparency and visibility of UNIDIR work while promoting economies of scale particularly with regard to monitoring, evaluation and donor reporting. The Institute's internal structure has been aligned with the four programmes.

7. During the reporting period, UNIDIR convened over 57 workshops, seminars, conferences and events and produced over 30 publications, covering subjects as varied as the changing role of conventional arms control in preventing and managing violent conflicts, nuclear disarmament verification, the weaponization of increasingly autonomous technologies to gender-responsive action in the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (see annex I). All publication resources are available online and an increasing number are available in French and Spanish.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Conventional arms*

8. The illicit proliferation, excessive accumulation and misuse of conventional arms and ammunition pose a persistent problem for States and communities in many parts of the world. Progress on peace, security and development goals is severely hampered in contexts where conventional arms and ammunition are poorly regulated. The programme on conventional arms – the Institute's largest – is aimed at strengthening links between arms control, prevention and the Sustainable Development Goals, reflecting “disarmament that saves lives”, a critical theme of the *Agenda for Disarmament*.

9. The programme has three workstreams: (a) supporting national and regional policies and frameworks for weapon and ammunition management; (b) integrating conventional arms control into multilateral and national conflict prevention; and

<sup>1</sup> See [www.unidir.org](http://www.unidir.org).

(c) exploring the increasing urbanization of violence and conflict and how arms control tools might respond to and help to mitigate impacts on civilians.

10. Over the course of the reporting period, the workstream on weapon and ammunition management was focused primarily on West Africa, where, in cooperation with national partners, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and relevant United Nations bodies, country assessments were conducted and baselines were established for the development of road maps in three States (Burkina Faso, Liberia and Niger) in order to strengthen weapon and ammunition management in line with regional and international standards and guidelines. Drawing on nine national additional baseline assessments undertaken between 2015 and 2018, UNIDIR prepared a report in which it identified lessons that highlighted the role of effective national weapon and ammunition management in preventing conflict and supporting security transitions. UNIDIR also produced, in cooperation with the SaferGuard Programme, guidance to support States, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in safely and securely managing ammunition in low-capacity and conflict-affected environments. In November 2018, a series of seminars were conducted on exploring conventional ammunition management with a view to promoting knowledge and dialogue among States on key safety, security and accountability issues.

11. Effective arms trade regulation is essential to successful weapons and ammunition management at the global, regional and national levels. With a view to identifying options for and supporting implementation by Member States of their commitments in the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Arms Trade Treaty, a series of brainstorming meetings were convened in the context of the programme on conventional arms during the reporting period to explore the role of private sector actors in mitigating the risk of diversion in arms transfers; in enhancing the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons; and in strengthening reporting on the conventional arms trade.

12. As part of its work to better integrate conventional arms control into preventive strategies and actions, UNIDIR issued a study in September 2018 on the changing role of arms control in preventing and managing conflicts. Pursuant to Security Council resolution [2370 \(2017\)](#), and in the context of the programme, UNIDIR facilitated dialogue among States and specialized organizations on ways to prevent the supply of weapons to those involved in terrorist acts and, in cooperation with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and relevant panels of experts, contributed knowledge and ideas on the role of conventional arms control in the assessment and implementation by Member States of United Nations arms embargoes.

13. Over the course of the period 2019–2020, the programme will facilitate work with partners across the United Nations system on exploring how conventional arms control tools, such as mapping the circulation of illicit arms, can support the prevention and management of conflicts and how peacemakers and development actors can effectively utilize those tools. The work will be aimed enhancing dialogue among the peace, security and development communities on the linkages between arms control, conflict prevention and development, as well as at identifying opportunities to better assess risks and impacts associated with arms and ammunition into United Nations conflict prevention efforts.

14. A new research stream on urban violence, initiated in January 2019, is aimed at assisting States and practitioners to better understand the scope of urban violence and its impact, particularly on civilians, and to explore how arms control instruments may contribute to reducing and addressing its effects. Research will focus on illicit flows

of ammunition in urban environments, the means and methods to measure and mitigate the risks posed by explosive weapons in populated areas, as well as ways to develop regulatory frameworks to address the fabrication of improvised explosive devices.

*Weapons of mass destruction and other strategic weapons*

15. A world without weapons of mass destruction is a long-standing goal of the United Nations. Yet progress toward that end has faltered in a period of heightened tension between major powers and the stalling or termination of bilateral and multilateral nuclear arms control arrangements. UNIDIR seeks to identify ways to preserve and strengthen existing norms and agreements while exploring new approaches and options for effective weapons of mass destruction-related governance that contribute to international security and stability. As part of this effort the Institute's programme on weapons of mass destruction and other strategic weapons, which now incorporates UNIDIR space security activities, the Institute seeks to explore the implications of new strategic technologies for nuclear regimes and the doctrines and systems associated with them.

16. One example of such work during the reporting period was a joint report prepared with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the challenges and opportunities that hypersonic weapons present for arms control. A workshop held in Geneva in November 2018 on the subject elicited strong interest among Member States, as a result of which UNIDIR will undertake follow-up activities on the strategic arms control implications of the technology. Work was also undertaken on the role of autonomy in nuclear early-warning, command and control systems.

17. Research on new tools and approaches for greater transparency and accountability focused on how new verification technologies can support nuclear disarmament and strengthened nuclear security. A study on the theme "Evidence of absence: verifying the removal of nuclear weapons" contained a proposed model for a disarmament verification arrangement to verify the absence of weapons in a given territory. Research is ongoing research with regard to exploring new technologies and methods for enhancing the security of military materials, as well as the transparency of existing stocks of fissile materials, through non-intrusive means.

18. Building on a 2017 UNIDIR study, the Institute initiated new work in late 2018 on reducing the risk of use of nuclear weapons, one of the priority actions in the *Agenda for Disarmament* (action 6). The work includes mapping risk reduction measures, fact-finding and consultation, with a view to offering a framework to inform policy discourse on reducing the risk of use of nuclear weapons, including in the context of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Given the high level of Member State interest in the work, UNIDIR organized an event on the issue in the margins of the Preparatory Committee, held, of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

19. The Institute's long-standing work on effective measures for transparency, confidence-building and preventing an arms race in outer space continued, with a series of briefings on space security issues for New York-based delegations, a briefing paper on shared risks prepared for the Disarmament Commission and preparations for the Institute's annual space security conference, the next one of which is to held in May 2019.

20. A new workstream is aimed at identifying lessons from recent efforts to enforce compliance with arms control and disarmament obligations related to weapons of mass destruction. The research will go beyond the Institute's traditional nuclear focus to address developments in the regulation of chemical and biological weapons with a view to strengthening links across regimes and advancing new ideas in each. Outputs

will include analyses of what compliance and enforcement means in conceptual and legal terms, the current and looming challenges for nuclear, chemical and biological regimes, as well as bilateral nuclear arms control, and possible options to enhance confidence and compliance in arms treaties.

#### *Security and technology*

21. As policymakers seek to respond to the pace of profound technological change and address the risks and benefits that such advances present for an understanding of security, as well as the policies and practice of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, UNIDIR has expanded its work on the security dimensions of innovations in science and technology. The Institute launched a cross-cutting programme on security and technology in January 2019 that builds on previous work in cyberstability and autonomous weapons systems. The objectives of this programme are to: (a) support the development and implementation of multilateral norms on responsible and safe policy and practice; (b) increase multilateral knowledge and understanding of digital destabilization risks; and (c) explore how the arms control toolbox can adapt to take advantage of the benefits of technology as well as address the risks it presents for the definition, development, deployment and use of weapons. The programme puts particular emphasis on expanding UNIDIR engagement with diverse governmental and non-governmental stakeholders so as to enable inclusive policy dialogue on what is a fundamental global challenge. The facilitation of multi-stakeholder dialogue on technological innovations is one of the explicit requests made of UNIDIR in the *Agenda for Disarmament* (actions 27 and 28).

22. The Institute's cyberactivities in 2018 included exchanges between regional organizations on regional cybersecurity concerns and approaches as well as dialogue on the roles and responsibilities of the private sector. The most recent UNIDIR annual cyberstability conference, held in September 2018, was its largest yet and demonstrated the interest in and value of the multi-stakeholder event for the diplomatic and international organizations community in Geneva. As part of its efforts to support transparency and confidence-building through information-sharing on cyberissues, in January 2019 UNIDIR launched a cyberpolicy portal, an online tool containing concise cyberpolicy profiles of all Member States and regional and international organizations. The portal has been widely welcomed: as at 15 April 2019, the portal had been accessed by 4,700 users from 143 States, with nearly 22,000 page views.

23. Building on Geneva's long history as a centre for multilateral arms control and disarmament, as well as a global hub for international law, in January 2019 UNIDIR hosted the fifth meeting of the Global Commission on the Stability of Cyberspace and its public hearings at the Palais des Nations. The hearings, which attracted over 130 participants, provided a unique opportunity to integrate human rights, humanitarian affairs and development perspectives into consideration of international norms for cyberstability and security.

24. The Institute's work on uncrewed aerial vehicle systems, particularly swarm technology, offered an innovative approach to addressing the issue of human control over weapons systems, a central theme in discussions within the Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems, established by 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. A scenario exercise for policymakers and additional studies on the expanded transfer and deployment of armed uncrewed aerial vehicles and the implications of their use in situations of inter-State tension and/or crises reinforced the Secretary-General's call, in his *Agenda for Disarmament*, for transparency and

accountability measures on the transfer and use of armed uncrewed aerial vehicles (action 19).

25. At the request of the General Assembly in its resolution [73/32](#), UNIDIR will initiate an annual seminar to explore the potential benefits and risks of, and promote multi-stakeholder engagement on, emerging technological innovations. The new flagship event, Innovations Dialogue, will focus on newer and converging technologies that are not currently on formal international security and disarmament agendas, with a view to assisting Member States in navigating technological change and overcoming siloed policy responses to complex challenges. The event will be open to representatives from States, the private sector and the research community. The theme of the inaugural dialogue, to be held in Geneva in August 2019, is “Digital technologies and international security”.

#### *Gender and disarmament*

26. In August 2018, UNIDIR established a dedicated programme on gender and disarmament to assist policymakers in bridging gender and disarmament frameworks through expert analyses and practical tools. The programme is aimed at: (a) contributing to the goals set out in the *Agenda for Disarmament* to achieve gender equality in disarmament forums (actions 36 and 37); and (b) effectively applying gender perspectives in disarmament processes. Building on previous UNIDIR work in this area, initial research was focused on gathering and analysing data on gender equity and participation in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament forums.

27. In September 2018, UNIDIR together with Canada, Ireland and Namibia launched a new initiative – the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group – to promote dialogue, shared knowledge and the pursuit of concrete opportunities to advance gender-responsive action within multilateral disarmament processes. The Group partnered with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to organize the side event on the theme “Securing our common future: promoting gender-responsive disarmament and security”, which was held in the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and was attended by over 180 participants. A similar event will be organized in the margins of the 2019 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference.

28. With a view to providing officials with practical resource tools for applying a gender “lens” to their work, UNIDIR and the Disarmament Impact Group produced a resource pack with information on the relevance of gender perspectives to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. The Group also developed fact sheets identifying entry points for gender mainstreaming in the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and across the different sections of the Arms Trade Treaty. In recognition of the impact of this work, the co-chairs of the Disarmament Impact Group were nominated for the 2018 Arms Control Person of the Year award, organized by the Arms Control Association.

29. Work under way by UNIDIR includes the establishment of an online gender and disarmament resource centre, including a toolkit to assist policymakers translate gender awareness into practical actions. A new report, entitled “Still behind the curve: gender balance in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament diplomacy”, was released in April 2019, and the Institute will conduct a series of workshops in Africa and Latin America to disseminate research findings and offer practical support to national actors in applying gender perspectives to the substance of their work.



## 2. Knowledge and advisory support

30. UNIDIR responded to a record number of requests for information, analysis and technical expert support by Member States and United Nations entities over the course of the reporting period. At the request of their respective Chairs, UNIDIR offered substantive expertise through briefings, background papers and analyses to all five of the Conference on Disarmament's subsidiary bodies, which convened between May and August 2018. Topics ranged from negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States to the ban of the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices and reflected the first substantive discussions held by the Conference in a number of years. To mark the fortieth anniversary of the Conference on Disarmament, UNIDIR commissioned a study on the Conference's mandate and working methods and convened a high-level panel in February 2019 to discuss options to strengthen the functioning of the Conference.

31. UNIDIR support was also extended to other parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery. The Institute produced background papers and provided briefings at informal consultations in April 2019 to the Disarmament Commission on space security issues. It organized eight side events in the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly with a view to providing information and insights on issues on the agenda of the First Committee, while the Director participated in high-level briefings on the *Agenda for Disarmament* on the United Nations disarmament machinery. During the reporting period, UNIDIR served as the technical consultant to two groups of governmental experts on the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as to the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. The provision of United Nations regular budget resources for UNIDIR consultancy support to groups of governmental experts is the only source of dedicated financial support for such knowledge and advisory activities.

32. During the reporting period, UNIDIR also increased its support to other parts of the United Nations system. It assisted the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [2127 \(2013\)](#) concerning the Central African Republic and engaged with partners such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and others on relevant areas, including conflict prevention and conventional arms control, mitigating civilian harm caused by explosive weapons use, the cyberthreat landscape and existing normative frameworks for the prevention and mitigation of malicious acts.

33. The Institute continues to seize opportunities to engage new audiences through, for example, organizing workshops in countries that are not members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with an initial focus on West Africa, and participating in high-level events at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the International Telecommunication Union, and the Women, Peace and Security Network. UNIDIR co-convened a series of meetings from June to September 2018, the Geneva Dialogues, to explore different chapters of the *Agenda for Disarmament* and how Geneva-based actors and processes might support implementation of its proposed actions. UNIDIR has also instituted regular briefings to regional groups, including on new security and technology issues, which have been highlighted as of particular value to support the informed participation of all States in discussions thereon.

34. Given the importance of continuing to provide education and training on disarmament and non-proliferation, UNIDIR staff provided briefings and lectures and participated in a wide range of training events in Geneva and elsewhere, including for the annual nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation training programme of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, conducted in Hiroshima, Japan. Briefings to visiting scholars, government officials and student groups continued throughout the reporting period. Mindful of the breadth and diversity of the disarmament agenda, UNIDIR, together with the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, is introducing an orientation course for newly-arrived diplomats to Geneva. The first pilot will be undertaken in August 2019.

### **3. Resources and expenditure for 2018 and 2019**

35. As a trust fund of the United Nations, UNIDIR is financed through voluntary contributions and a small subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations towards the cost of the Director and staff.<sup>2</sup> With the generous support of a total of 24 donors, revenue in 2018 amounted to \$7,514,578. The increase in revenue reflects donor support for the strategic research agenda described in paragraphs 5 to 29 above and in particular the signature of multi-year programmatic-level funding agreements with two donors. In accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, while the totality of the amount of these agreements has been registered as income in 2018, funds will be disbursed over a three-year period in 2019, 2020 and 2021. The majority of voluntary contributions received by UNIDIR continue to be earmarked for specific programmes or activities.

36. Total expenditure in 2018 was \$3,143,790 (see annex II, table 1). In 2018, the subvention received from the United Nations regular budget was \$271,900 (see annex II, table 2). This figure constitutes 6 per cent of the total funds received in 2018, once the two multi-year pledges for 2020 and 2021 as well as refunds to donors and investment/other revenue are excluded. Actual revenue and expenses for the first quarter of 2019 are shown in annex II, table 1, while projected revenue and expenses for 2019 are indicated in annex III. As funding agreements are signed throughout the year, budgetary projections are of an indicative nature.

37. Actual expenditure in 2018 was higher than provisions indicated in annex II of the previous report (A/73/256). The increase reflects an investment in several activities related to change management over the course of the year, including staff training, investments in communication materials, growth of research programme activities and advisory services, and outreach and networking for the purposes of resource mobilization by the Director. It also comprises an increase in staff-related costs, with the engagement of a communications officer (see para. 44 below) and additional administrative support required by expanding research programmes. In 2019, expenditures related to personnel will continue to increase, in large part owing to costs associated with the movement of resident consultants to the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) administered contracts (see para. 42 below) as well as the continuing engagement of the communications officer and administrative support functions.

## **B. Programme of work and financial plan for 2020**

38. With the transition to multi-year programming, the UNIDIR research agenda and workstreams described in the previous section will continue in 2020. The strategic research agenda allows flexibility for new activities to be introduced within respective research programmes, both in response to global disarmament and international

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<sup>2</sup> See UNIDIR statute, article VII, paragraph 2. Available at [www.unidir.org](http://www.unidir.org).

security events and developments. It also builds upon openings for new partnerships or initiatives over the course of the three-year programme. The Institute will continue to explore ways to further support and contribute value to United Nations disarmament deliberations, including through activities that increase participants' knowledge and awareness of relevant issues as well as enhancing opportunities for informal and inclusive dialogue. It will also seek, in 2020, to respond to increased interest from regional and national actors for knowledge, ideas, dialogue and advisory services.

39. Resource mobilization efforts will focus on broadening the donor base and continuing to build support for the Secretary-General's recommendations concerning the UNIDIR financial model set out below. The financial expenditure to support the 2020 programme of work is conservatively projected at \$4,195,000, as shown in annex IV. The projected institutional operations budget for 2020 is \$1,789,000 (see annex V). Projected revenue and expenses are based on an assessment of the desired accomplishments of UNIDIR for the year and historical trends in funding.

### **III. Towards a sustainable and stable Institute**

40. In his report on the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR (A/73/284), the Secretary-General noted the reliance of the Institute on year-by-year voluntary funding and called on donors to consider the provision of multi-year unearmarked or softly earmarked contributions to its programmes so as to create a more predictable and sustainable foundation for the Institute. The Secretary-General also noted that the subvention from the regular budget was the only consistent source of funding for UNIDIR and that it had remained largely constant since 2000 in absolute terms. In real terms, it had progressively decreased and now constituted only a minor portion of the UNIDIR total annual budget. The Secretary-General recommended an increase in the regular budget subvention to cover four mandated functions of the Institute: (a) the salary and related costs of the Institute's Director so as to ensure the independence, impartiality and accountability of UNIDIR leadership; (b) the costs of at least one additional Professional post to serve as certifying officer and assist or replace the Director in management and administration functions; (c) the provision of regular briefings to Member States and groupings with a view to implementing the UNIDIR mandate to support the informed participation of all Member States in disarmament deliberations; and (d) facilitation of the organization of three UNIDIR events annually in countries that are not members of OECD to promote disarmament knowledge and engagement.

41. Subsequent to the issuance of the report (A/73/284), and building on its conclusions and recommendations, the Institute developed a detailed implementation plan to strengthen its funding and operations, which was endorsed by the UNIDIR Board of Trustees at its meeting in January 2019. The reform plan, which has also been made available to interested Member States and UNIDIR funders, comprises 83 concrete actions across four areas: leadership and management; administration, finance and budget; outreach and communications; and resource mobilization and partnerships. As of April 2019, 84 per cent of the 2019 reform actions had been completed (64 per cent) or initiated (20 per cent).

#### **A. Staffing and operations**

42. During the reporting period, in addition to the establishment of a multi-year research agenda and multi-year programmes, the Institute considered steps to attract and retain diverse research expertise as a priority reform. UNIDIR engaged UNOPS

as a service provider in order to be able to offer more attractive and flexible consultant modalities through individual contractor agreements. The transition of UNIDIR research staff from United Nations consultant contracts to UNOPS-administered individual contractor agreements is currently under way and will be completed by the end of the second quarter of 2019. The resulting increased costs will be offset, in part, through expected efficiency gains for the Institute in outsourcing a majority of human resource and travel-related administrative processes.

43. The Institute also undertook steps to expand and diversify its research community through the establishment of a fellowship programme for visiting researchers. The initiative will be pursued through partnerships with established research institutes in countries that are not members of OECD with a view to expanding access to multilateral disarmament processes to a wider range of experts.

## **B. Communications and outreach**

44. In September 2018, UNIDIR engaged a communications officer for the first time in over two decades. That investment reflects the priority the Institute is placing on reaching policy, expert and research communities outside Geneva and New York and engaging a wider set of stakeholders.

45. The UNIDIR strategic communications plan is aimed at increasing the Institute's visibility and building greater awareness of its research and activities. It is prioritizing digital platforms with a view to reaching a global audience. During the reporting period, the Institute expanded its social media presence. Posts on the UNIDIR Twitter account (@UNIDIR) made over 1.8 million impressions, an increase of nearly 400 per cent over the previous year. In addition, the number of times UNIDIR posts were shared increased by 300 per cent and likes increased by 500 per cent. Original multimedia content, including over 30 original films and animations, reached over 120 countries. UNIDIR expanded to presence with Instagram and LinkedIn and surpassed 15,000 followers across all digital platforms. Guidance has been issued to staff on social media use, and staff were offered media training.

46. The Institute will continue to expand its strategic communications activities to raise the global visibility of its work and share its expertise with new audiences over the course of 2019. This includes a redesign of the UNIDIR website, the further expansion of social media channels and an investment in generating engaging multimedia content for these platforms. To encourage increased interest in and engagement in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament issues, UNIDIR is streaming Institute events online, producing short explanatory videos on its work and reaching out to universities and cultural centres on appropriate partnership opportunities. Flagship events, like the outer space security conference, are being paired with art exhibitions and film screenings to engage new audiences beyond the disarmament expert community.

## **C. Resource mobilization**

47. The near total reliance of UNIDIR on voluntary funding makes resource mobilization a priority of its reform agenda. Many Member States have responded positively to the Institute's new programmatic model and the potential visibility, expertise and cost efficiencies that it offers. During the reporting period, UNIDIR pursued opportunities with donors to move contributions from a short-term project-based approach to multi-year programming. A number of States have already committed to multi-year, softly earmarked funding at the programmatic level. UNIDIR is actively engaging with interested Member States, through its newly-

established donor forum, to provide regular updates on the implementation of UNIDIR activities and finances.

48. Recognizing the relatively limited nature of funding in the fields of multilateral arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, UNIDIR commissioned, in late 2018, a review of resource mobilization options with a view to expanding donor State contributors; identifying non-State funders in these fields, particularly philanthropic foundations and private sector actors; and exploring options for joint funding initiatives with the United Nations and research institute partners. As part of these efforts, UNIDIR is pursuing eligibility for OECD development assistance funding.

49. While positive Member State funding trends are welcome and highly appreciated, it is noteworthy that contributions to the UNIDIR operating budget (institutional operations budget) continue to decrease and represented only 10 per cent of all voluntary contributions in 2018. In 2018, nearly 85 per cent of UNIDIR voluntary funding was earmarked for specific programmes and activities. The Institute has already taken steps to reduce its institutional overhead but further reductions will be dependent upon receiving some operating budget income. The subvention from the regular budget is a critical, albeit small, contribution to that operating budget and the only relatively predictable source of income. As UNIDIR prepares for its fortieth anniversary in 2020 and a quintennial resolution in the General Assembly, it looks forward to exploring with member States options to take forward the Secretary-General's recommendation for an increase in the regular budget subvention.

#### **D. Partnerships**

50. As part of its reform agenda, UNIDIR has taken steps to strengthen its engagement with a wider range of stakeholders both in order to promote its research and activities and to better contribute added value to multilateral, regional and, as appropriate, national arms control and disarmament processes. With a view to better integrating disarmament across the work of the Organization, UNIDIR has also pursued partnerships with the United Nations Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, the *Agenda for Disarmament* the wider United Nations peace and security objectives.

51. Actions taken in Geneva include regular briefings by the Director to regional groups and six-monthly executive briefings convened by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva on UNIDIR research and activities. The Institute will also pursue similar awareness-raising opportunities in New York to promote more regular engagement with representatives from permanent missions to the United Nations and across the Secretariat.

52. In addition, UNIDIR has committed to strengthening its strategic partnership with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs through joint planning retreats at the senior management level, regular exchanges on joint substantive activities between heads of the Office's branches and UNIDIR Programme Leads, and informal quarterly exchanges between UNIDIR and the Office's Geneva Branch staff.

53. As mentioned in paragraphs 42 and 43 above, UNIDIR pursued administrative efficiency gains by signing a support services agreement with UNOPS to support UNIDIR human resources needs, including recruitment and administration of UNIDIR staff contracts. Furthermore, as recommended by the Board of Auditors and in order to align with the standard applied to extrabudgetary clients, UNIDIR is discussing a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office at Geneva for support services received in the areas of finance, procurement and information

technology. As a next step, UNIDIR is developing scenarios and analysing the services offered by UNOPS and the United Nations Office at Geneva for other administrative actions, particularly with regard to processing of travel services, low value procurement and budgetary actions, in order to seek further cost and time efficiencies.

## **IV. Conclusion**

54. The call by the Secretary-General to put disarmament back at the centre of the work of the United Nations has been echoed in multiple statements and reports by national, regional and international actors over the past 12 months expressing concern at the erosion of existing arms control agreements. The lack of progress in forging new frameworks to address the threats that the proliferation of new – and older – weapons pose and that better reflect today’s multipolar, multi-actor world, is leading some to question the relevance and effectiveness of the entire arms control enterprise.

55. At such moments of juncture, the need for accurate information, impartial insights, fresh ideas and inclusive dialogue has never been so great. UNIDIR was established for the purposes of assisting Member States to identify critical issues in international security and disarmament and to negotiate arrangements to preserve and enhance international peace and security. In the past year, the Institute has undertaken a comprehensive reform of its research agenda and activities, operations, and communication and outreach, with a view to contributing more effectively to what must be a global effort to reinvigorate disarmament in ways that can save humanity, lives and futures.

56. UNIDIR will celebrate its fortieth anniversary in 2020, a year that marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and the fiftieth anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, a cornerstone of multilateral arms control and disarmament. While it is important to look back on what has been achieved and learned over the course of these decades, even more critical is the question of what future the international community is seeking and how processes that regulate weapons can be reinforced to advance more effective and sustainable security for all. The Institute looks forward to the opportunity for considered dialogue and reflection of the value and potential reinforcement of multilateral disarmament institutions to address these challenges.

## Annex I\*

### Publications issued between June 2018 and April 2019

#### Conventional arms

- A Menu of Options to Enhance Common Understanding of End Use/R Control System to Prevent Diversion
- Applying Conventional Arms Control in the Context of United Nations Arms Embargoes
- Key Issues and Processes Pertinent to Management of Conventional Ammunition (*available in French and Spanish*)
- Preventing Diversion in Conventional Arms Transfers: Exploring Contributions of Industry and Private Sector Actors (*available in French and Spanish*)
- The Changing Role of Conventional Arms Control in Preventing and Managing Violent Conflicts
- The International Tracing Instrument: Examining Options to Support Operationalization (*available in French*)
- The Role of Weapon and Ammunition Management in Preventing Conflict and Supporting Security Transitions
- Utilizing the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines in Conflict-Affected and Low-Capacity Environments

#### Limited distribution

- Implementing United Nations Resolution [2370 \(2017\)](#) and Identifying Ways Forward: Food-for-thought Paper
- Towards a National Framework on Weapon and Ammunition Management in Burkina Faso
- Towards a National Framework on Weapon and Ammunition Management in Iraq
- Towards a National Framework on Weapon and Ammunition Management in the Niger
- Towards a National Framework on Weapon and Ammunition Management in the Central African Republic

#### Weapons of mass destruction and other strategic weapons

- Evidence of Absence: Verifying the Removal of Nuclear Weapons
- Hypersonic Weapons: A Challenge and Opportunity for Strategic Arms Control (with Office for Disarmament Affairs)
- Nuclear Weapon Risk Reduction: The State of Ideas
- Reversing the Slide: Intensified Great Power Competition and the Breakdown of the Arms Control Endeavour
- Shared Risks: An Examination of Universal Space Security Challenges
- Space Security 2018: Conference Report

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\* Annex I is being issued without formal editing and in the language of submission only.

### **Security and technology**

- Algorithmic Bias and the Weaponization of Increasingly Autonomous Technologies
- Armed UAVs in Conflict Escalation and Inter-State Crises
- Change in the Air: Disruptive Developments in UAV Technology
- Preventing and Mitigating ICT-Related Conflict: Cyber Stability Conference 2018 Summary Report
- Tabletop Exercise on Armed UAVs: Summary Report
- The Role of Regional Organizations in Strengthening Cybersecurity and Stability: Experiences and Opportunities
- Weapons of Choice? The Expanding Development, Transfer and Use of Armed UAVs

### **Gender and disarmament**

- Gender & Disarmament Resource Pack for Multilateral Practitioners
- Gender in the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: Factsheet
- Gender in the Arms Trade Treaty: Factsheet
- Still Behind the Curve: Gender Balance in Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Diplomacy

### **Other**

- Mandate and Working Methods in the Conference on Disarmament: a Historical Perspective



## Annex II

Table 1  
**Actual revenue and expenses for 2018 and first quarter of 2019**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Description</i>	<i>2018<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>First quarter 2019<sup>b</sup></i>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Voluntary contributions	6 922 <sup>c</sup>	434
Other transfers and allocations	487	195
Other revenue	1	62
Investment revenue	105	23
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>7 515</b>	<b>714</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 365 <sup>d</sup>	334 <sup>e</sup>
Non-employee compensation and allowances	908 <sup>f</sup>	243 <sup>g</sup>
Grants and other transfers	117	25
Supplies and consumables	3	–
Travel	243	57
Other operating expenses	299	94
Programme support expenses	140	41
Other expenses	69 <sup>h</sup>	–
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>3 144</b>	<b>794</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year<sup>i</sup></b>	<b>4 371</b>	<b>(80)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Figures from the statement of financial performance of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for 2018. The statement was prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS); contributions, including multi-year, are accounted for in the year when the pledge is signed. For further information on IPSAS, as well as the basis for the preparation of UNIDIR financial statements, see [A/71/162](#), annex I, and [A/72/154](#), annex I.

<sup>b</sup> Position as of 4 April 2019; subject to changes until the close of the March 2019 accounting period.

<sup>c</sup> Includes multi-year pledges for future years from the Governments of the Netherlands (\$1,200,000) and Norway (NOK 9,000,000, equivalent to \$3,161,222).

<sup>d</sup> Of this total, institutional staff costs in 2018 amounted to \$1,229,384.

<sup>e</sup> Of this total, institutional staff costs for the first quarter of 2019 amounted to \$280,835.

<sup>f</sup> Of this total, \$127,625 represents travel of consultants.

<sup>g</sup> Of this total, \$31,201 represents travel of consultants.

<sup>h</sup> Represents net foreign exchange losses.

<sup>i</sup> These funds include multi-year pledges signed in 2018 and are earmarked in accordance with financing agreements with donors. The amount at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received as well as by programme and project implementation periods, which do not systematically cover a calendar year.

Table 2  
**Voluntary contributions for 2018<sup>a</sup>**

(United States dollars)

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>A. Voluntary contributions<sup>b</sup></b>	
Australia	32 362
Finland	115 093
France	160 000
Germany	1 137 656 <sup>c</sup>
Hiroshima Prefecture	18 423
Ireland	73 864
Japan	40 000
Lebanon	5 000
Luxembourg	11 364
Netherlands	1 200 000 <sup>d</sup>
New Zealand	13 937
Norway	3 161 223 <sup>e</sup>
Pakistan	5 000
China	20 000
Philippines	5 000
Russian Federation	100 000
Sweden	229 885
Switzerland	461 711
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	6 386
Fondation pour la recherche stratégique	24 691
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	245 000
Northeastern University	5 000
Simons Foundation Canada	20 000
Refund to Donors	(101 078) <sup>f</sup>
Present Value Adjustments	(69 030) <sup>g</sup>
<b>Subtotal, voluntary contributions</b>	<b>6 921 487</b>
<b>B. Other transfers and allocations</b>	
Subvention from the United Nations regular budget	271 900
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs <sup>h</sup>	66 175
United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation	149 220
<b>Subtotal, other transfers and allocations</b>	<b>487 295</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 408 782</b>

(Footnotes on following page)

## (Footnotes to table 2)

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- <sup>a</sup> Figures from statement of financial performance of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for 2018. The statement was prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS); contributions, including multi-year, are accounted for in the year when the pledge is signed.
- <sup>b</sup> Contributions from these donors are used for implementation across multiple years.
- <sup>c</sup> Contribution received in 2018 for implementation of programme activities in 2019.
- <sup>d</sup> Multi-year pledge for the period 2019–2021. Funds received in 2018 for 2019 implementation amounted to \$400,000.
- <sup>e</sup> Multi-year pledge for the period 2019–2021. Funds received in 2018 for 2019 implementation amounted to \$1,053,741.
- <sup>f</sup> In accordance with financing agreements, refunds are issued to donors when activities are modified and result in actual expenditures being lower than the amount received to fund the initial activity budget. Of the total, 83 per cent pertains to activities that concluded on 31 December 2017.
- <sup>g</sup> IPSAS-based adjustment for long term receivables presented at discounted present value.
- <sup>h</sup> Earmarked funding for advisory services to support groups of governmental experts.

## Annex III

### Projected revenue and expenses for 2019<sup>a</sup>

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Description</i>	<i>2019</i>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Voluntary contributions	5 131
Other transfers and allocations	42
Other revenue	375
Investment revenue	20
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>5 567</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 585
Non-employee compensation and allowances	756
Grants and other transfers	1 547 <sup>b</sup>
Supplies and consumables	4
Travel	236
Other operating expenses	254
Programme support expenses	219
Other expenses	24
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>4 625</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>943</b>

<sup>a</sup> Projections for 2019 were updated from those presented in [A/73/256](#) based on actual revenue and expenses for 2018 and the first quarter of 2019 to more appropriately reflect expected revenues and expenses.

<sup>b</sup> This includes forecasted costs associated with the movement of resident consultants to the contracts administered by the United Nations Office of Project Services.

<sup>c</sup> These funds are earmarked per financing agreements with donors. The amount at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received as well as by programme and project implementation periods, which do not systematically cover a calendar year.

## Annex IV

### Projected revenue and expenses for 2020<sup>a</sup>

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Description</i>	<i>2020</i>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Voluntary contributions	3 744
Investment income	48
Other transfers and allocations	461
Other revenue	24
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>4 277</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 950
Non-employee compensation and allowances	1 390
Grants and other transfers	48
Supplies and consumables	1
Travel	188
Other operating expenses	408
Programme support and prorated expenses	200
Other expenses	10
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>4 195</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>82</b>

<sup>a</sup> Projections for 2020 are on the basis of an average of the period 2015–2019, plus 5 per cent, except for expenses related to salaries, allowances, benefits and compensation, as well as other operating expenses, and programme support costs, which include additional consideration for changes in planned activities requiring specific resources.

<sup>b</sup> These funds are earmarked per financing agreements with donors. The amount at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received as well as by programme and project implementation periods, which do not systematically cover a calendar year.

## Annex V

### Institutional operations budget for 2020

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>Institutional staff<sup>a</sup></b>	
D-2 (Director)	321.4
P-5 (Deputy Director)	265.6
P-4 (Finance and Budget Officer)	225.8
P-4 (Public Information Officer)	225.8
P-2 (Associate Administrative Officer)	153.1
2 GS (OL) (Personal Assistant and Events Support)	347.4
<b>Subtotal, institutional staff</b>	<b>1 539.1</b>
<b>Travel</b>	<b>40.0</b>
Communications and outreach	70.0
Information and Communications Technology Service	30.0
Telecommunications	10.0
Miscellaneous operating costs	15.0
<b>Subtotal, institutional operating costs</b>	<b>165.0</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 704.1</b>
Programme support costs	85.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 789.3</b>

*Abbreviations:* GS (OL), General Service (Other level).

<sup>a</sup> Based on Budget Information System standard salary costs for 2019, applicable to Geneva (version 6). The institutional team is responsible for: support and supervision of research-related activities; provision of support and advisory services to various stakeholders; and delivery of institutional tasks. Institutional tasks are independent of the amount of research-related work and include tasks necessary to conceptualize and oversee the research agenda and resource mobilization strategy; communicate research findings; represent the Institute; establish and maintain research networks; report to Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research; and comply with other United Nations requirements.