



General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 July 2004

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session

Item 67 (e) of the provisional agenda*

Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

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

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

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

During the reporting period, from August 2003 to July 2004, the Centre continued to promote disarmament and security through the organization of meetings and conferences in the region (Osaka, Japan, 19-22 August 2003; Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, 3-5 December 2003; and Almaty, Kazakhstan, 16-18 March 2004). The Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the drafting and finalization of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia by organizing a series of informal consultations among the Central Asian States. The Centre also continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status. In addition, the Centre initiated a dialogue in the region on the outcome and recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

* A/59/150.

Consultations on the relocation of the Centre continued with the host country. The final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be provided by the host country were forwarded to the Government of Nepal for consideration in December 2001 and April 2002 respectively. Follow-up reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities in December 2002, and in February and May 2003. The Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Nepalese authorities are currently pursuing agreement on the remaining issues with a view to finalizing the host country agreement and memorandum of understanding.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–2	3
II. Activities of the Centre	3–21	3
III. Staffing and financing	22–26	7
IV. Conclusions	27–29	8
Annexes		
I. Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific covering the year 2003		9
II. Planned activities of the Centre		10

I. Introduction

1. On 8 December 2003, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 58/62 entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”. In paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities; urged him to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively; and requested him to report to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request. It covers the activities of the Centre during the period from August 2003 to July 2004. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre covering the biennium 2002-2003 is contained in annex I. A list of planned activities of the Centre for which financial support from interested donors is being sought appears in annex II.

II. Activities of the Centre

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

4. In line with that approach and within the limited financial resources available through voluntary contributions of Member States and other interested organizations, the Centre organized, during the reporting period, a regional disarmament conference on “Arms Control, Disarmament and their Future” in Osaka, Japan, from 19 to 22 August 2003.

5. The conference, organized in close cooperation with the Government of Japan and the City of Osaka, was attended by approximately 50 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, the media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their personal capacity. The Osaka conference considered, inter alia, the current international security situation, the role of the United Nations, the threat of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction in the light of current challenges to multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament norms, nuclear-weapon-free zones and ways to overcome the current deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference also focused on issues such as small arms and light weapons, transparency in armaments, gender perspectives in disarmament and the need to promote a shift from a culture of violence to a culture of peace.

6. One session was entirely devoted to disarmament and non-proliferation education. Approximately 50 teachers from elementary and high schools attended the session. The session was briefed on the background and recommendations of the United Nations study on the subject. It also heard presentations by the Parliamentarians for Global Action, the World Conference on Religion and Peace, Nagasaki University and international organizations on their respective experience and activities in the fields of disarmament and peace education. Numerous interactions among the participants demonstrated the interest of teachers in disarmament and non-proliferation education, proving the usefulness of the United Nations study on this subject.

7. The conference was highly commended by the participants as it provided them with an opportunity to analyse current threats to security and review a wide spectrum of disarmament measures to address those threats. The Regional Centre's introduction of the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation education in the discussion was highly appreciated by the education community in Osaka City and the press. It should be noted that the participants unanimously called for the strengthening of existing disarmament-related treaties and conventions.

8. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to serve as a forum for the Asia-Pacific community to address security and disarmament concerns in the region through the organization of regional meetings. In that respect, the Centre and the Republic of Korea jointly organized a conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, entitled "Challenges to Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Norms in East Asia" in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, from 3 to 5 December 2003.

9. This was the second such annual regional disarmament conference organized jointly by the Centre and the Government of the Republic of Korea. Approximately 30 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, as well as NGOs, mainly from the Asia-Pacific region, attended the conference in their personal capacity. The conference dealt with, among other matters, proliferation and disarmament challenges in East Asia, response to threats of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and issues of non-proliferation on the Korean peninsula, as well as proliferation concerns and issues of verification. Within this framework, the conference addressed: the prospects of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, export control, the Proliferation Security Initiative, Missile Technology Control Regime and verification in the fields of the weapons of mass destruction and missiles.

10. The Jeju conference was highly commended by the participants, as it served as a forum for them to discuss pressing security concerns relevant to disarmament including the issue of nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula, new challenges to the NPT and ways to deal with the possible risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and verification.

11. During the period under review, the Centre organized a regional conference to address the issue of small arms and light weapons, in close cooperation with the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Japan. The conference was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 16 to 18 March 2004. This was the first conference on small arms and light weapons organized in Central Asia. Approximately 40 participants, including experts from the five Central Asian States, namely, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the conference.

12. The conference reviewed the role of national contact points and national coordination agencies, transborder cooperation and information sharing, national laws and legislation and administrative procedures, export/import licensing system and marking, stockpile management, and the role of civil society. The major objective was to familiarize the group of five Central Asian States with the Programme of Action adopted by the 2001 United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. The Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat provided the participants with detailed information on the background, substantive aspects and implementation of the provisions of the Programme of Action. Additionally, a workshop hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during the conference was useful for the group in preparing national reports. The participants were also given an opportunity to listen to experiences and lessons learned outside Central Asia and to hear from international organizations and NGOs.

13. The group of Central Asian States highly appreciated the organization of the conference by the Centre as they were given a first opportunity to exchange information on key aspects of the Programme of Action. It is encouraging to note that, despite technical, financial and other constraints, all the group expressed their willingness to prepare their national reports. By adopting the final communiqué, the group expressed their wish to jointly tackle the flow of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the region. The Centre will continue to provide the group of Central Asian States with the necessary assistance to effectively implement the Programme of Action.

14. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to maintain close interaction with the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific by inviting its members to participate in meetings it had organized. It also continued to explore the possibility of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), academic institutes and NGOs within the Asia-Pacific region by inviting them to participate in the dialogue on security and disarmament issues. The Centre initiated consultations with some ASEAN members to explore cooperation in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation.

15. The Centre also continued to develop effective working relationships with disarmament-related international organizations. In that connection, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization were invited to participate in the conferences organized by the Centre held in Osaka and Jeju Island. The Director of the Centre attended the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific and the General Conference of the Council in Jakarta from 7 to 9 December 2003, and the Council's Working Group on confidence- and security-building measures in Singapore from 10 to 12 December 2003. The Centre intends to further promote interaction and constructive working relationships with these organizations.

16. The value of the regional dialogue promoted by the Centre through the organization of meetings in the Asia-Pacific region and other means has been fully appreciated in General Assembly resolutions. The continuation of that dialogue

aimed at identifying pressing disarmament and security-related needs relevant to the region and at encouraging region-oriented initiatives has gained the strong support of Member States and academic groups within the region. The Centre has developed a network, linking the Centre and its interlocutors within the region, as a way of exchanging data and information and exploring further collaboration for joint activities related to disarmament and security in Asia and the Pacific. The Centre's web site was launched in January 2002 and has since been expanded. A brochure providing information on the activities of the Centre has been widely distributed. Additionally, the Centre has published the "Pacific-Asia Dialogue" series reflecting the discussions that took place during the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Kyoto in 2002.

17. Furthermore, the Centre has initiated preparations for a United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, entitled "Mounting Challenges to Peace and Security and Disarmament Today", to be held in Sapporo, Japan, from 26 to 29 July 2004. The conference will address, among others, mounting challenges to nuclear non-proliferation and international response to those challenges, nuclear black markets, strengthening IAEA, challenges and prospects of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, regional security in north-east Asia and the role of civil society.

18. Pursuant to a request of the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A, 55/33 W, 57/69 and Assembly decision 58/518, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in finalizing a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. Since 1998, the Centre has organized six United Nations-sponsored expert group meetings to facilitate the process. At the latest of such meetings in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in September 2002, experts from the group of five Central Asian States reached agreement on a treaty text for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia (the Samarkand text).

19. Consultations are under way among the group of five Central Asian States to seek support of the nuclear-weapon States for the Samarkand text. In relation to the preparation of the seventh United Nations-sponsored expert group meeting scheduled for September 2004, the Centre also organized a series of informal consultations among the group with a view to resolving the remaining issues. The Secretary-General earnestly hopes for an early conclusion and signing of a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia as a concrete contribution to efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that respect, he wishes to express his appreciation to the Government of Japan for its generous financial support of that initiative.

20. As a means of promoting cooperation between the Centre and its constituents, the Centre provided technical and substantive services to the United Nations Association of Japan for its organization of the tenth Kanazawa Symposium on North-East Asia, on the theme "The Tenth Anniversary of the Kanazawa Process", which was held from 7 to 9 June 2004. The symposium addressed, inter alia, community building in North-East Asia and its future, how to prevent conflicts, crisis management, nuclear black markets, nuclear fuel cycle, the rapidly changing world and the adaptation of international institutions, the role of the military today including the Proliferation Security Initiative and food, energy and ecological security. The Korean peninsula, the future of the six-party talks, security assurances and humanitarian aspects were also discussed. At the close of the symposium, the

participants adopted a commemorative resolution through which they encouraged the Kanazawa process to explore a road map for peace and prosperity in the region, institutional arrangements and broadening the financial basis.

21. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/67 the Centre held consultations with the five nuclear-weapon States, the group of five Central Asian States and Mongolia to further strengthen the latter's nuclear-weapon-free status. A separate report of the Secretary-General on this subject has been submitted to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

III. Staffing and financing

22. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations might make to that end. In its resolution 58/62, the Assembly expressed its appreciation for the continuing political support and voluntary financial contributions to the Regional Centre, which are essential for its continued operation. It requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities. The Assembly also urged the Secretary-General to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively.

23. In that connection, consultations continued with the host Government regarding the relocation to Kathmandu. It should be recalled that the final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be provided by Nepal were forwarded to the Nepalese authorities for consideration on 6 December 2001 and 12 April 2002, respectively. As a follow-up, reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities on 9 December 2002, 3 February 2003 and 6 May 2003. The Government of Nepal, via its letters of 26 September 2003 and 15 July 2004, reiterated its readiness to host the Centre and to conclude the relevant agreements promptly. The Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Nepalese authorities are currently pursuing agreement on the remaining issues, with a view to finalizing the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding so as to enable the relocation of the Centre to Kathmandu.

24. During the reporting period from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2003, voluntary contributions in the amount of \$64,500 were received. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Pakistan and Thailand for their contributions.

25. In addition, the Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of Japan, Kazakhstan and the Republic of Korea and to the city of Osaka for their financial and technical support for the United Nations conferences and meetings organized by the Centre during the past year. He is gratified by the continued political and financial support for the Centre from the region.

26. The Regional Centre's current staff consists of the Director and one General Service staff member.

IV. Conclusions

27. The Centre continued to serve as a useful forum for regional and subregional dialogue on specific security concerns and global and regional disarmament issues and as an instrument for assisting regional initiatives in the field of disarmament and security dealing with both weapons of mass destruction and small arms and light weapons. In addition, the Centre initiated a dialogue in the region on the outcome and recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education. The activities carried out by the Centre were highly commended by States members of the Asia-Pacific community.

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

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

Annex I

**Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional
Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific
for the biennium 2002-2003**

		(United States dollars)
I.	Fund balance as at 1 January 2002	137 196
II.	Income	
	1 January 2002-31 December 2003	
	Voluntary contributions ^a	64 500
	Interest income	15 054
	Miscellaneous income	44 240
	Subtotal	123 794
III.	Expenditures	
	1 January 2002-31 December 2003	43 352
	Programme support	5 092
	Prior period adjustments	3 000
	Subtotal	51 444
IV.	Fund balance, 31 December 2003	209 546
^a	2002: Republic of Korea	(\$15,000)
	2003: Republic of Korea	(\$40,000)
	Mongolia	(\$1,000)
	Pakistan	(\$5,500)
	Thailand	(\$3,000)

Annex II

Planned activities of the Centre

Project I

Title of the project

Sixteenth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, under the theme, "Mounting Challenges to Peace and Security and Disarmament Today"

Purpose

Assist the Asia-Pacific community to promote dialogue on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

Location

Sapporo, Japan

Duration

4 days (26-29 July 2004)

Number of participants

60 participants, including government officials, academics and representatives of non-governmental organizations

Cost estimates

<i>(United States dollars)</i>	
Travel of participants	133 000
Travel of staff	24 000
Operating expenses	17 900
Total	174 900

Project II

Title of the project

United Nations-sponsored expert group meeting on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in Central Asia

Purpose

To enable the group of five Central Asian States (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to work out their common position with regard to the comments of the nuclear-weapon States on the Samarkand text of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty

Location

Tashkent

Duration

4 days (September 2004)

Number of participants

10 (2 experts from each State in the group of five Central Asian States)

Cost estimates

<i>(United States dollars)</i>	
Travel of participants	15 000
Travel of staff (including travel of servicing staff)	55 000
Operating expenses (including supplementary conference servicing staff)	34 000
Total	104 000

Project III**Title of the project**

United Nations regional seminar on small arms and light weapons in the South Pacific

Purpose

To promote the implementation of the Programme of Action among the countries of the South Pacific region, in preparation for the Second Biennial Meeting of States

Location

Nadi, Fiji

Duration

3 days (18-20 August 2004)

Number of participants

Approximately 60 participants from within the Asia-Pacific region

Cost estimates

<i>(United States dollars)</i>	
Travel of participants	121 800
Travel of staff	30 400
Operating expenses	17 500
Total	169 700

Project IV**Title of the project**

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

Purpose

Third regional disarmament conference to address security concerns in north-east Asia, including non-proliferation, missiles and weapons of mass destruction

Location

Jeju Island, the Republic of Korea

Duration

3 days (December 2004)

Number of participants

Approximately 30 participants mainly from the Asia-Pacific region

Cost estimates

<i>(United States dollars)</i>	
Travel of participants	65 000
Travel of staff	18 000
Operating expenses	17 500
Total	100 500