

**Seventieth session**

Item 100 of the provisional agenda*

Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session**Work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its sixty-third session in Geneva from 28 to 30 January 2015 and its sixty-fourth session in New York from 29 June to 1 July 2015. During those sessions, it focused on the following agenda items: the role of arms control in managing conflict; new challenges to disarmament and the increasing role of non-state actors; and the humanitarian consequences of nuclear use.

With respect to the role of arms control in managing conflict, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General commission a study by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to chart and assess the history of arms control measures in peacekeeping activities in particular, peacekeeping missions of the United Nations and such regional organizations as the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. On the basis of that assessment, the Board further recommended that UNIDIR prepare a handbook of measures implemented by such peacekeeping missions.

The Board also recommended that the Secretary-General consider including training on weapons control and disarmament when planning relevant United Nations peacekeeping missions and that weapons control and disarmament experts be included in the team of experts on peacekeeping missions. It further recommended that the Office for Disarmament Affairs provide comments and recommendations on the mandate of United Nations missions, especially in view of recommendations of the recent report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

* [A/70/150](#).



The Board engaged in a very active discussion on the second agenda item at both of its sessions, as well as during the intersessional period. Recognizing that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides the appropriate framework for creating a mindset that is conducive to peaceful coexistence both within a State and between States, the Board recommended the creation of a United Nations commission that, in accordance with principles enunciated in the Declaration, would regularly monitor and report on materials contained in officially sanctioned textbooks that seek to demonize peoples on the basis of race, religion, nationality or gender; speeches by national leaders that seek to inspire hatred against other States or against individuals within their States; and utterances made in public and in social media that seek to foster racial, ethnic, gender, cultural or religious discrimination, division or hatred.

The Board recommended that the commission exercise responsibility for keeping track of indicators of radicalization and extremism and that the Secretary-General call upon the international community and regional organizations to strengthen early warning of hate speech and organized activity designed to promote sectarian or extremist agendas. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General encourage States to conduct national assessments of risks related to extremism and radicalization and that action be taken to empower the Human Rights Council and strengthen its capacity to undertake periodic reviews of member States that are vulnerable to and/or complicit in the promotion of extremist groups and agendas.

With respect to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear use, the Board underscored the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for humanitarian and other reasons, and the cessation of nuclear testing. It noted that the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons required further study, as different scenarios of use could be envisaged. The Board therefore recommended that the Secretary-General commission such a study.

The Board also recommended that the Secretary-General urge nuclear-weapon States to increase information and transparency on security measures they implement in order to provide assurances about their efforts to limit the risks. The Board suggested that benchmarking and peer review could be useful additional measures, in view of the national security concerns associated with transparency on nuclear-weapon safety and security. Finally, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General open a discussion, in relevant forums, of how nuclear deterrence does and could take into account humanitarian concerns.

Serving as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Advisory Board approved the workplan and budget of the Institute for the period 2015-2016 and approved the submission to the General Assembly of the report of the Director of the Institute on the activities and financial status of UNIDIR.

The Board expressed its gratitude to the Director and staff of UNIDIR for successfully managing the Institute's projects and welcomed the fact that UNIDIR had increased the level of project grants even during the economic crisis. That notwithstanding, the Board noted that, owing to the current lack of institutional funds, the Institute faced the deepest crisis of its existence.

The Board endorsed the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Director. It noted that, in addition to its own past recommendations, the General Assembly, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and others had drawn

attention to the need for a larger portion of UNIDIR institutional staff costs to be covered by the subvention from the regular budget. The Board stressed in that regard that since the early 1990s, the purchasing power of the subvention had decreased substantially.

The Board stressed the need to provide UNIDIR with sufficient working capital, and in this regard welcomed the establishment of a revolving capital fund (the “Stability Fund”) in January 2015.

The Board pointed out that while UNIDIR had engaged the Secretariat in a search for some limited flexibility allowing for modified contractual modalities and/or a lower cash reserve requirement, a more sustainable solution called for full capitalization of the Stability Fund.

The Board endorsed the recommendation made in the context of an independent institutional assessment of UNIDIR conducted in January 2015 that at a minimum, the institutional structure of the Institute should include five posts the incumbents of which would be on United Nations contracts. They agreed that this number represented an irreducible core number of staff needed to cover the research effort, ensure financial and administrative compliance, manage donor contracts and reporting and take responsibility for delivery. Those core staff would also include leadership in the area of research.

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its sixty-third session in Geneva from 28 to 30 January 2015 and its sixty-fourth session in New York from 29 June to 1 July 2015. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/183 O. The report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), approved by the Board serving as its Board of Trustees, has been submitted in document [A/70/177](#).
2. István Gyarmati (Hungary) presided over both sessions in 2015.
3. The present report summarizes the deliberations of the Board during the two sessions and the specific recommendations it conveyed to the Secretary-General.

II. Substantive discussions and recommendations

A. Role of arms control in managing conflict

4. At its sixty-third and sixty-fourth sessions, the Board exchanged views on the important role of arms control in managing conflict. A “food for thought” paper on that subject was presented by the Chair.
5. Members of the Board noted that while arms control had occasionally played a part in international and national conflict management efforts, it had never been considered conceptually as an integral part of arms control but rather was an ad hoc measure applied on a case-by-case basis. It also noted that although arms control had not been part of United Nations peacekeeping mission mandates, its use had been implicit.
6. A typical example, the Board noted, was the separation of opposing forces through buffer zones in areas of conflict, a standard feature of peacekeeping efforts for many years. In many cases, the peacekeeping troops had been deployed with a single mandate: to separate the opposing forces in the conflict and to ensure that violent incidents did not occur and that incidents that did occur would be investigated in order to prevent the outbreak of new hostilities. While not a classic arms control measure, the Board observed that the separation of opposing forces could nevertheless be considered part of arrangements that could be linked to arms control regimes.
7. A second measure considered by the Board was the collection, destruction and stockpiling of weapons from the conflicting parties. While not always considered arms control, it has been a relatively successful measure in terms of weapons management. The Board noted, however, that many analysts had suggested that arms collection had been used by conflicting parties to dispose of old weapons that were then sold to finance the acquisition of new ones. In this context, the application of the Arms Trade Treaty will play an important role in preventing the spread of such weapons to conflicting parties.
8. In considering the role of arms control in managing conflict, the Board examined a number of arms control initiatives and concluded that the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement) was the most important arms control package it had seen. In this regard, the Board

noted that the Agreement contained two important measures that provided for transparency and a reduction in the number of weapons in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, in addition, limited the armaments held by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and some other States in the region. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was used as a starting point, but new and forward-looking elements, such as transparency of production sites, were also introduced. In most respects, the Board observed, the Dayton Agreement was an extension of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe to the region. The Board agreed that it would be worthwhile to undertake an analysis of how the new measures could eventually be used in a new European arms control agreement as well as worldwide in peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities of the United Nations and such regional organizations as the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

9. With regard to arms control, the Board observed that there were interesting arms control measures in the context of the mandate of the OSCE special monitoring mission in Ukraine. Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-building Measures has been extensively used for the purpose of de-escalation and transparency-building in situations of inter-State crisis. With regard to the OSCE mission in Ukraine, the Minsk arrangements mandated the mission to facilitate, monitor and verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons. The Board pointed out, however, that an assessment of those measures should not, in the first instance, be based solely on their effectiveness, as that was dependent mainly on the specific situation.

10. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General:

(a) Commission a study and assess the history of arms control measures in peacekeeping activities, in particular peacekeeping missions of the United Nations and such regional organizations as the African Union and OSCE, on the basis of which UNIDIR should prepare a handbook of measures implemented by peacekeeping missions for the United Nations and regional organizations;

(b) Include training on weapons control and disarmament when planning relevant United Nations missions, as necessary;

(c) Include weapons control and disarmament experts in the team of experts on peacekeeping missions;

(d) Request the Office for Disarmament Affairs to provide comments and recommendations on the mandate of United Nations missions, especially in view of the recommendations of the recent report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)).

B. New challenges to disarmament and the increasing role of non-state actors

11. The Board exchanged views on the critical issue of non-state actors and new challenges to disarmament. During the two sessions, “food for thought” papers on that subject were presented by Board members Eboe Hutchful and Rut Diamint, with the collaboration of Pervez Hoodbhoy and Mely Caballero Anthony.

12. The Board first attempted to identify the inherent problem involving non-state actors and disarmament. In addressing the topic, it noted that the role of non-state actors in security matters had expanded worldwide since the end of the cold war, building on both political liberalization and the demonstrated inability of the State to monopolize the means of coercion or to extend effective protection to all its citizens. This role expansion had fostered growing transparency and even a measure of accountability in institutional security matters. The Board noted, in this regard, that non-governmental organizations and civilian think tanks were now playing unprecedented roles in security analysis and in research, decision-making and oversight. At the same time, however, it noted that the security landscape in many countries and regions was being increasingly contested by a wide range of non-state actors with the capacity to use violence or exercise coercion. These included jihadist and extremist organizations and violent drug cartels lacking clear lines of accountability. What has focused the attention of the international community, the Board observed, was the proliferating role of non-state actors in propagating violence and insecurity.

13. The Board highlighted global statistics showing disturbing trends in violence perpetrated by non-state actors. For example, as many as 60 million people had been displaced across the globe by various forms of violent conflict, the highest levels since the end of the Second World War. *The Global Study on Homicide 2013*, produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, indicates that there were 437,000 crime-related deaths in 2012, the vast majority occurring in the Americas, Africa and Asia. The Institute for Economics and Peace, in its 2014 Global Terrorism Index, estimated that 17,958 terrorism-related deaths occurred in 2013, over 80 per cent of them in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and the Syrian Arab Republic. The comparable figure for 2012 was 11,133.

14. The Board emphasized that the most deadly contemporary conflicts and incidents of homicide were those involving non-state actors and that the principal tool in those events had been small arms and light weapons. In contrast to the weapons of mass destruction focus of traditional arms control and disarmament discourse, in modern conflicts and other incidents of violence, small arms and light weapons had proven to be the quintessential weapons of mass destruction.

15. The Board acknowledged the limited reach of arms control and disarmament in addressing the new challenges posed by non-state actors. In this regard, it pointed out that, in theory, the activities of non-state actors, in particular their access to arms and potentially to weapons of mass destruction, were prohibited under a number of national laws as well as international instruments, such as Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004) and article 7, paragraph 1, of the Arms Trade Treaty. In reality, these instruments have proven to be almost completely ineffective in curbing the access of non-state actors to small arms and light weapons. Some Board members believed that there were limited prospects in the foreseeable future for the recovery of the massive stocks of weapons already in circulation. The Board also noted that while non-state actors had traditionally sourced much of their weaponry through corruption, wilful diversion or capture from state arsenals (in Iraq, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic), they had also succeeded in manufacturing a range of low-technology but highly effective offensive weapons that were extraordinarily difficult to control. Non-state actors, the Board observed, had also maintained a lead, well ahead of many States, in leveraging social media and other cutting-edge cybertechnology for propaganda, recruitment and offensive purposes.

16. Regarding non-state actors, some members believed that the issue was that present-day conflicts were a political problem rather than a problem of disarmament per se. In this regard, they argued that the limited effectiveness of disarmament was rooted in the political nature of most present-day national and regional conflicts involving non-state actors. Such conflicts, they said, required political solutions rather than solutions focused on disarmament.

17. While the Board agreed that solutions to the problem of non-state actors must be aligned with regional and national specificities, it also emphasized the importance of placing the State at the centre of the analysis of the problem. It cited in this regard state weakness and an unwillingness or lack of capacity to protect that had created both a vacuum and an opportunity for non-state actors to challenge the State. The Board also underlined the role that States and their elite members had played, directly or indirectly, in enabling the activities of non-state armed groups as proxies in their own geopolitical designs by providing financing, supplying weaponry or acquiescing to their activities.

18. The Board underlined the role of authoritarian politics and social and economic marginalization, all of which had contributed directly to creating the conditions for radicalization. It acknowledged, however, that this did not explain why members of extremist groups often included young, well-educated professionals, pointing to an urgent need for a fuller understanding of the social dynamics of radicalization.

19. The Board addressed the increasing role of non-state actors in its broader political sense, transcending a state-centred analysis. In this connection, it examined the “civilizational” and “intra-civilizational” context of the most deadly contemporary conflicts. The Board noted that the battleground of non-state actors was as much cultural and religious as it was political and military. Citing Islamic extremism as an example, the Board noted that the entire political and social order was being targeted with the aim of suppressing pluralistic political and cultural life. The Board suggested that a broader, more inclusive and strategic approach to non-state actors would be required. It noted in this regard that international civil society organizations had provided exceptional leadership in a number of areas of disarmament. Board members pointed out, however, that the current struggle, which involved a clash of civilizations, was different in that ideology itself had become the weapon. Some members of the Board believed that civil society, both local and global, was best suited to developing counter-narratives to the ideological threat posed by certain non-state actors. They acknowledged, however, that such counter-narratives were insufficient to meet that threat unless they were combined with efforts to combat authoritarianism, global development problems and economic marginalization.

20. The Board acknowledged the complexity and political sensitivity of the subject matter and the fact that such matters were indeed beyond its immediate mandate. It nevertheless advanced a number of proposals for the consideration of the Secretary-General.

21. The Board, recognizing that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provided the appropriate framework for creating a mindset that is conducive to peaceful coexistence both within a State and between States, recommended the creation of a United Nations body that, in accordance with principles enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, would:

- (a) **Regularly monitor and report on:**
 - (i) **Materials contained in officially sanctioned school textbooks that seek to demonize peoples on the basis of race, religion, nationality or gender;**
 - (ii) **Speeches by national leaders that seek to inspire hatred against other States or individuals residing in their States;**
 - (iii) **Utterances made in public and in social media that seek to foster racial, ethnic, gender, cultural or religious discrimination, division or hatred;**
- (b) **Exercise responsibility for tracking indicators of radicalization and extremism.**

In addition, the Board requested the Secretary-General to call upon the international community and regional organizations to strengthen early warning of hate speech and organized activity designed to promote sectarian or extremist agendas, to encourage States to conduct national assessments of risks related to extremism and radicalization and to empower the Human Rights Council and strengthen its capacity to undertake periodic reviews of member States that are vulnerable to and/or complicit in the promotion of extremist groups and agendas.

C. Humanitarian consequences of nuclear use

22. During the two sessions, the Board exchanged views on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear use. “Food for thought” papers on the subject were presented by Board members Mely Caballero-Anthony, Camille Grand, Togzhan Kassenova and Vladimir Orlov.

23. The Board acknowledged that the debate over the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons had gained traction in international forums and had become a prominent issue in the global discussion on nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. There was renewed discussion of the serious to catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons in a context in which nuclear weapons have not been used since 1945. The Board noted that the debate had shifted from being purely an initiative of like-minded States (taken up at the 2013 Oslo, 2014 Nayarit and 2014 Vienna conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons) to being the focus of broad interest in the discussions of, inter alia, the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

24. The Board first discussed the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. It agreed that there was an almost unanimous view that a major nuclear war or any significant exchange of nuclear weapons in a densely populated area would have major consequences in terms of fatalities and casualties and would lead to long-term damage to health and the environment and possibly the disruption of the economy and trade. It was noted that nuclear use or a nuclear accident could have a disproportionately negative impact on vulnerable populations in developing countries in terms of climate, food supply chains and the like.

25. Some Board members noted in this regard that nuclear-weapon States themselves had not contested this point and that they had emphasized that it was precisely the devastating nature of a nuclear war that was at the foundation of nuclear deterrence. The Board also noted that this had led to a strong taboo against the use of nuclear weapons and the development of policies that emphasized the non-use of nuclear weapons (except under extreme circumstances). Some Board members noted the argument of nuclear deterrence proponents that nuclear weapons have, since 1945, played a role in preventing large-scale conventional wars among major Powers that would have had devastating consequences.

26. Members of the Board discussed the draft final document of the 2015 Review Conference and noted the deep concern of the Conference at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. They debated the use of word “any”, noting that if any use of a nuclear weapon would have substantial political consequences, the humanitarian consequences of “any” use had to be further studied, as different scenarios of use could be envisaged.

27. The Board emphasized that nuclear testing, especially atmospheric testing, had had very significant humanitarian consequences. It cited as an example the multiple cases of people displaced by all nuclear-weapon States. The health impact on local populations has been serious and in some cases is ongoing. The environmental consequences of nuclear testing were massive and in many cases irreversible, as the well-documented case of the former Soviet nuclear testing site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan had demonstrated.

28. The end of atmospheric testing and the prohibition of nuclear testing under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (despite the fact that it had not entered into force) had considerably reduced the potential humanitarian impact of testing, with only a single country still testing in the twenty-first century. In this regard, the Board underscored the importance of the early entry into force of the Treaty for humanitarian and other reasons.

29. The Board discussed the way forward and examined the key debates on the humanitarian aspect and the important questions arising from them. Some members of the Board argued that the humanitarian campaign may have reached its limit and would not be able to achieve much more under the current circumstances. Other Board members noted that an overwhelming majority of countries, 159 in total, had expressed support for the “humanitarian initiative”, which demonstrated the strong determination and will of many countries to further the debate. The Board examined how the debate could unfold in the future and the key points to be addressed.

30. Members of the Board examined questions relating to the applicability of the humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament, discussing the precedents of the Ottawa and Oslo processes, in which like-minded States, adopting the humanitarian approach, worked together to ban landmines and cluster munitions. Some Board members expressed serious doubt that the same results could be replicated in the nuclear realm without the engagement of all (or several) nuclear-armed States. In the absence of endorsement by nuclear-weapon States, the Board believed that efforts to negotiate an international instrument outside of the established multilateral frameworks involving those States were unlikely to succeed in the foreseeable future. The Board also noted the unresolved division among the proponents of the humanitarian approach between those who were seeking the elimination of nuclear weapons through a new path and those who had chosen a more focused humanitarian

approach that involved mitigating the risks and consequences of nuclear events by establishing a set of norms and principles.

31. The Board examined the question as to whether the humanitarian approach could push the States with nuclear weapons to improve the safety and security of their existing stockpiles. In this regard, it deliberated on the risks associated with an accidental detonation resulting from the mismanagement of a device. It was noted that the overwhelming majority of recorded events had occurred during the cold war and in the early decades of the nuclear age. The Board agreed, however, that given the past incidents involving nuclear weapons, there were legitimate concerns about the safety and security of nuclear weapons. The Board also agreed that it should be possible for nuclear-weapon States to increase transparency regarding the security measures they implement and that they should do so in order to provide assurance about their efforts to limit the risks. Members of the Board suggested that benchmarking and peer review could be useful additional measures. They acknowledged, however, the national security concerns associated with transparency regarding the safety and security of nuclear weapons.

32. The Board addressed the legality and legitimacy of the use of nuclear weapons as one of the key features of the humanitarian campaign and was to reopen the debate on this issue. Members of the Board noted in this connection the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in which it had concluded that “the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law”. They also noted that the Court could not however, “conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defence, in which the very survival of a State would be at stake”.

33. The International Court of Justice opinion therefore raised important issues related to international law, international humanitarian law and the laws of war in the event of nuclear war. The Board was of the opinion that the debate regarding the legality and legitimacy of nuclear-weapon use needed to be better informed from both the legal and scientific standpoints, in view of its conflict with the legitimacy of deterrence.

34. The Board deliberated on a more fundamental question in the humanitarian consequences debate: nuclear weapons or nuclear deterrence? Many had seen the objective of the humanitarian approach as an attempt to undermine the long-term legitimacy of nuclear deterrence. Some Board members noted that this perception, however, raised a serious issue (at least for nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States that rely on nuclear deterrence for their security), as it could lead to a world with more nuclear weapons and no nuclear deterrence, in other words, a less safe world. This, the Board surmised, was a fundamental element of the debate that seemed to be lacking. The Board believed that opening a discussion on nuclear deterrence that would take into account humanitarian concerns could be an important addition to a very divisive debate.

35. **The Board made the following observations and recommendations:**

(a) **The Board underscored the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for humanitarian and other reasons, and the cessation of nuclear testing;**

(b) Noting that the humanitarian consequences of “any” use of nuclear weapons would have to be further studied, as different scenarios of use could be envisaged, the Board recommended that such a study be undertaken;

(c) The Board recommended that nuclear-weapon States increase information and transparency on any security measures they implemented in order to provide assurances about their efforts to limit the risks. Benchmarking and peer review could be useful additional measures, taking into account the national security concerns associated with transparency regarding the safety and security of nuclear weapons;

(d) The Board recommended opening a discussion in relevant forums of how nuclear deterrence does and could take into account humanitarian concerns.

III. Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

36. At its sixty-fourth session, the Advisory Board, meeting as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, adopted the annual work programme and proposed annual budget estimates as presented by the Director of the Institute (see [A/70/177](#)).

37. After considering the Institute report, the Board of Trustees expressed its gratitude and thanks to the Director and staff of UNIDIR for their very successful management of the Institute’s projects and welcomed the fact that UNIDIR managed to increase the level of project grants even during the economic crisis. That notwithstanding, the Board noted that, owing to the lack of institutional funds from the regular budget and non-earmarked grants, UNIDIR faced the deepest crisis of its existence. As a result, by the end of the year, it would no longer be possible for UNIDIR to continue to exist unless its financial situation was rectified. The Board strongly recommended that the subvention from the United Nations regular budget to the Institute be increased for the biennium 2016-2017. In this regard, the Board recalled its earlier recommendations to that effect, the most recent of which was contained in document [A/68/206](#), paragraph 59.

38. The Board of Trustees endorsed the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Director ([A/70/177](#)), in particular those in paragraphs 23 to 30 regarding the next steps for Member States to ensure the Institute’s sustainability. The Board noted that, in addition to its own past recommendations, the General Assembly, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and others had drawn attention to the need for a larger portion of UNIDIR institutional staff costs to be covered by the subvention from the regular budget.

39. The Board stressed that since the early 1990s, the purchasing power of the subvention had decreased substantially and that it no longer supported even the costs of the Director, thus falling short of its original purpose as set out in the UNIDIR statute, adopted by the General Assembly. It now amounted to substantially less than the maximum amount established in the statute. The Board recommended that to better reflect the intent of the Assembly and to ensure the Institute’s operational sustainability and independence, the subvention should cover the cost of all of the Institute’s institutional staff.

40. In addition to restoring the subvention to the level needed to ensure the Institute's sustainable future, the Board of Trustees stressed the need to provide UNIDIR with sufficient working capital. In this regard, the Board welcomed the establishment of a revolving capital fund (the "Stability Fund") in January 2015 in order to address the high liquidity requirements related to Umoja and encouraged UNIDIR to continue to actively seek contributions from Member States for the Fund. The Board expressed its appreciation to the Governments of Australia and Switzerland for their contributions, and called upon other Member States to consider making contributions to the Fund.

41. Members of the Board of Trustees noted that the Fund served as a reserve that the Institute could use to advance funds while awaiting the receipt of a pledged contribution or payment or when contributors were unable to pay until after the completion of an activity, and that it is therefore not spent, only advanced, and is repaid by the Institute itself. The Board also noted that the Fund could help address the liquidity and cash-flow issues that UNIDIR has faced since its establishment, serving as a liquidity reserve.

42. The Board underscored the potential of the Fund in enabling the Institute to comply with Umoja and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. This was of particular importance in view of the need to regularize key institutional staff, for which the Institute is required to have in place a cash reserve commensurate with the ensuing contractual liabilities. The Board of Trustees stressed that while UNIDIR had engaged the Secretariat in a search for some limited flexibility allowing for modified contractual modalities and/or a lower cash reserve requirement, a more sustainable solution called for full capitalization of the Stability Fund. The Board expressed the view that if more voluntary contributions were not forthcoming from Member States, a one-time capital injection from the regular budget would be required.

43. The Board of Trustees recalled that in August 2013 a proposal had been submitted by the Director of UNIDIR, at the request of the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General, and following an audit recommendation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, outlining a sustainable funding structure, comprising regular budget and extrabudgetary funding needed to achieve the Institute's mandate and objectives. The Board regretted that to date, no response to the proposal had been submitted to the Institute by the Secretariat.

44. Members of the Board of Trustees endorsed the recommendation of the independent institutional assessment of UNIDIR conducted in January 2015 that the minimum institutional structure of the Institute should consist of five posts, the incumbents of which would need to be on United Nations contracts. The Board agreed that this number represented an irreducible core, which had two components: one was the essential institutional element, which enabled and directed the research effort, ensured financial and administrative compliance, managed donor contracts and reporting and was responsible for delivery; the other was the element of leadership in the area of research, under which the research programmes and related projects were created and their integrity and appropriate design ensured. The Board recommended that the former component consist of four posts, at the D-2, P-5, P-3 and G-5 levels, and that the latter component consist of a Chief of Research at the P-5 level. The Board noted that three of the incumbents (which would be reduced to 2 in 2016), were already on regular United Nations contracts, and that the remainder needed to be

regularized. In this connection, the Board called upon UNIDIR to continue to work with the Secretariat to ensure that the contracts will be regularized to ensure the Institute's continued seamless operations and transition to Umoja. In the Board's view, meeting the liabilities and contingencies that would arise as a result of regularizing UNIDIR posts was the key question in the regularization process.

IV. Future work

45. The members of the Board exchanged views on a number of topics proposed for discussion at its 2016 sessions. Possible areas of future work included looking into disarmament and sustainable development goals, the non-proliferation treaty review cycle, the process to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes.

V. Conclusion

46. During its two sessions in 2015, the Board concluded deliberations on the three items on its agenda: the role of arms control in managing conflict; new challenges to disarmament and the increasing role of non-state actors; and the humanitarian consequences of nuclear use. It provided a set of recommendations to the Secretary-General on each of those items. Serving as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Board reviewed the research activities of the Institute, focusing on serious ongoing administrative and funding challenges.

Annex

Members of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

István Gyarmati (Chair)
Ambassador, Professor
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Wael al-Assad
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Fred Tanner
Ambassador, Senior Adviser to the Secretary-General of the Organization for
Security and Cooperation in Europe/Liaison, Swiss chairmanship of the
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 2014
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Wu Haitao^a
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Disarmament Affairs and Deputy
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^a Participated in the sixty-third session of the Board.