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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The Programme continues to publish print and electronic versions of the two-part *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, which are available on its website (www.un.org/disarmament), which is the main means of disseminating information. It is an important repository of information where Member States, conference participants, non-governmental organizations and the general public can access daily updates of documents and statements, including video messages. The Office continues to facilitate the participation of civil society in disarmament-related meetings and conferences and collaborate closely with non-governmental organizations. The present report also provides details on the many contributions made by the Department of Global Communications in support of the Organization's work on disarmament.

* [A/77/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 75/80, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-seventh session a report covering the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The Programme is administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with the Department of Global Communications, in particular on information campaigns focused on disarmament-related events and conferences.

2. The objectives of the Programme reflect the orientation of the Office, guided by the priorities of Member States, as set out in the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

3. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs has prioritized the advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society, including through the recognition of the vital contributions of media, think tanks and civil society organizations in frequent and in-depth interactions with them.

4. For the reporting period, in the area of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, priority was accorded to commemorating the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August) and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September), and the twelfth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held virtually on 23 and 24 September 2021.

5. As the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continued, the Office adapted its working methods and substantive activities to continue operations to fulfil its mandates and advance the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament.¹

6. During these challenging circumstances, the Office remained committed to providing unbiased, up-to-date and relevant information on multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control through its website and social media channels. The Office also continued its work on upcoming publications, including the forty-fifth annual edition of the *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*.

7. The Office, under its #Youth4Disarmament initiative, continued efforts to engage, educate and empower young people through online resources, including e-newsletters and the development and launch of a dedicated website for young people.

8. The pandemic continued to affect milestone disarmament events and meetings scheduled during the reporting period, some of which were cancelled or postponed. These include the postponement of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

9. In the area of conventional weapons, the seventh Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which

¹ See United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, "The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to actively pursue its mission – a 2021 update on the work of disarmament during the pandemic", message from the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, 12 April 2021. Available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/unoda-continues-its-mission-on-covid-19/>.

was originally scheduled for June 2020, was held from 26 to 30 July 2021 at United Nations Headquarters. Owing to the pandemic, the second Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions was held in two parts. The first part took place from 25 to 27 November 2021 in virtual format, while the second part was conducted in hybrid format on 20 and 21 September 2021 in Geneva. The Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Meetings of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction were held in virtual format from 16 to 20 November 2020 and from 15 to 19 November 2021, respectively.

10. The Office stands ready to support States Parties in implementing suspended meetings and events and resuming the corresponding relevant activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme.

11. Funding for the Programme continues to be derived from the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, in particular the voluntary trust fund for the Programme. The status of the trust fund as at 31 December 2021 is contained in the annex to the present report. The trust fund continued to benefit from the generosity of Member States and private donors. The Office is grateful for the generous donations and support it has received.

II. Information resources

A. Publication programme

12. The *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, the flagship publication of the Office, was offered in English to all United Nations delegations in two parts. To make its key findings widely available and readily accessible, the Office launched an easy-to-use dedicated website (yearbook.unoda.org).² This new digital platform allows diplomats, technical experts, journalists and other readers to effortlessly navigate through a comprehensive overview of key developments and trends from the past year with respect to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The forty-fourth edition of the Yearbook and its website included, for the first time, a collection of explanatory graphics and charts as well as a full chapter on gender issues in disarmament.

13. The Occasional Papers series provides expert input from individuals, panels and seminars sponsored by the Office. The following were disseminated free of charge on the website of the Office:

- Occasional Paper 36, August 2020, entitled *Conventional Ammunition Management: Developments and Challenges from COVID-19*,³ offers a preliminary analysis of the effects of COVID-19 on the ammunition management sector in the spring of 2020. The paper argues that shifts in national priorities and reduced resources may affect overall international disarmament efforts by undermining the management of conventional ammunition and potentially enhance the risks of accidental explosions and diversion.
- Occasional Paper 37, December 2020, entitled *United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament at 40*⁴ provides first-hand accounts by former Disarmament Fellows. The Programme has successfully trained over 1,000

² See United Nations, “Dedicated ‘United Nations Disarmament Yearbook’ website, now live, spotlights core peace, security challenges as global Organization turns 75”, press release, 5 October 2020. Available at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/dc3832.doc.htm>.

³ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.IX.6.

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.IX.8

Disarmament Fellows from 170 States, many of whom now hold national or international positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament. In this publication, Disarmament Fellows representing several generations share their thoughts and feelings about how this programme shaped their professional development, as well as insights about how the disarmament field has changed over time.

- Occasional Paper 38, May 2021, entitled *Advancing the Process to Negotiate a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty: The Role of States in the African, Asia-Pacific and Latin American and Caribbean Regions*⁵ offers a review of the outcome of the process, as well as perspectives shared by participants in the workshops and expert meetings to promote participation in the treaty, which were held between June 2018 and December 2019. For additional context, a brief introduction to the purpose and history of the proposed treaty is included in the Occasional Paper.

14. The Office continued to produce UNODA Update (see <https://www.un.org/disarmament/update/>), an e-publication highlighting recent activities as well as related online materials from the Office and elsewhere.

15. The Office publishes the *Civil Society and Disarmament* series within the context of the General Assembly resolutions on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme and the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education. The series provides a forum for the views of civil society to inform debate on topical issues of disarmament, arms limitation and security. The following was issued during the reporting period:

- *Navigating Disarmament Education: The Peace Boat Model*,⁶ explores the methodology for disarmament education of the non-governmental organization Peace Boat. The methodology stems directly from lessons learned through the implementation of various disarmament education programmes. It also discusses how disarmament education should be implemented in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and how digital technologies can be leveraged to provide a fruitful experience for participants.

16. The 2019/20 and 2020/21 editions of *Programmes Financed from Voluntary Contributions* were issued in October 2020 and December 2021, respectively. The widely disseminated annual report illustrates how the Office has achieved specific results through donor partnerships.

17. In September 2020, the Office launched three new modules as part of the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium,⁷ in which good practices are shared to help authorities around the world to improve their small-arms-control measures. The modules on small arms control in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform were developed with the support of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Section and the Security Sector Reform Unit of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, respectively.

18. In October 2020, the Office published the *Final Report of the UNODA Project to Identify Lessons Learned from the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism*.⁸ It examines the challenges and successes of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism established by the Security Council in its resolution 2235 (2015). It contains recommendations to help

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.21.IX.2.

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. 20.IX.9.

⁷ Available at www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/mosaic/.

⁸ Available at <https://front.un-arm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/jimll-rpt-web.pdf>.

the international community confront the threat to international peace and security posed by the use of chemical weapons and to make progress on restoring respect for the global norm against chemical weapons use.

19. In October 2020, the Office published the second edition of *Aide-Memoire: Options for reflecting weapons and ammunition management in decisions of the Security Council*,⁹ in which past Security Council action regarding weapons and ammunition management is reviewed and further options are suggested. It seeks to assist Member States, in particular those serving on the Security Council, to accurately and comprehensively reflect state-of-the-art practices related to weapons and ammunition management in relevant drafts of the Council's decisions.

20. In November 2020, the report of the Secretary-General on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts (A/75/221) was published as an enhanced web publication.¹⁰ Prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 74/35, the report provides an overview of recent scientific and technological developments relevant to the means and methods of warfare and examines their broader impacts on security and disarmament. The Office prepared this enhanced version of the report as part of its efforts to implement action 24 of the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, on raising awareness on the implications of new weapon technologies.

21. In October 2021, the Office published a report entitled *Gender-sensitive Ammunition Management Processes: Considerations for National Authorities*,¹¹ which highlights practical suggestions for applying gender analysis to ammunition management, consistent with the Final Report of Group of Governmental Experts on Problems Arising from the Accumulation of Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles in Surplus.

22. In February 2021, the Office began publishing a bi-annual newsletter for nominated experts and analytical laboratories for the Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.¹² It is intended to provide the experts and laboratories with information on the Mechanism, to update them on recent or planned activities and to provide an informal forum for sharing experiences and knowledge related to the Mechanism.

23. In November 2021, the Office released an updated version of *The Biological Weapons Convention: An Introduction*.¹³ First published in 2017, the updated publication provides its readers with a comprehensive overview of the Biological Weapons Convention, covering the history of the negotiations and the current state of implementation of the Convention.

24. The Office continued to disseminate the bi-annual information bulletin *Saving Lives*.¹⁴ Available in English, French and Spanish, the bulletin is a resource for national authorities on good practices in arms control.

25. The Office offers a series of concise, two-page fact sheets on the various topics it addresses. Every year the Fact Sheets on Disarmament Issues¹⁵ are updated.

⁹ Available at <https://front.un-arm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/aide-memoire-2ed-1.pdf>.

¹⁰ Available at <https://front.un-arm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/stu-science-tech-sg-rpt-2020-rev1.pdf>.

¹¹ Available at <https://front.un-arm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/gender-and-ammo-2021.pdf>.

¹² Available at <https://front.un-arm.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SGM-Website-Newsletter-Feb22.pdf>.

¹³ Available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/the-biological-weapons-convention/>.

¹⁴ Available at www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/.

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/factsheets/>.

B. Website

26. The number of website visitors remained high throughout the reporting period, with over 2 million page views from approximately 1.25 million visitors. Over 75 per cent of the total visits arrive at the website via search engines. Users directly accessing the website URL accounted for the second largest number of visitors, at approximately 17 per cent. The remaining visitors came from referrals, social media, email and other sources. The website remains popular with visitors in the 18–34 age group, which accounted for about 60 per cent of the traffic during the reporting period.

C. Podcasts

27. In December 2020, in celebration and commemoration of a range of milestones that have both advanced the role of young people in disarmament and opened opportunities for youth to make meaningful contributions within the field, five youth leaders shared the steps that they were taking to contribute to disarmament around the globe and offered tips, suggestions and resources for interested listeners to get involved themselves.

28. In November 2021, the Disarmament Today podcast series featured an interview with Jok Abraham Thon and Gail Prensky, who shared their stories of making an impact in the world by changing minds from bullets to books.¹⁶

III. Information activities

A. Conferences, panel discussions and other information activities

29. In cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Office organized the nineteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, which was held virtually from 2 to 4 December 2020. The Conference addressed the impact and prospects of new technologies on the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In a first for the Conference, youth representatives from diverse groups presented their contributions to disarmament and non-proliferation processes as well as their perspectives regarding the impact of new technologies on peace and security.

30. The twentieth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues was held in Seoul on 11 and 12 November 2021. The theme of the Conference was “Twenty years of achievements and future aspirations”. Approximately 30 representatives discussed how the disarmament and non-proliferation landscape had changed over the past two decades and examined the current state of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as well as priority issues in the years ahead.

31. A large number of side events were organized separately and jointly by permanent missions to the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Office in the margins of the meetings of the First Committee during the seventy-fifth and seventy-sixth sessions of the General Assembly; ahead of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and in the margins of the seventh Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the

¹⁶ Available at <https://education.unoda.org/podcasts.html>.

Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Additional information on many of these events is available on the website of the Office.

B. Events

32. As part of its outreach efforts, the Office continued to organize and host a range of meetings, seminars and events. Highlights are described in the paragraphs below. Throughout 2020, the Office, together with the African Union Commission, supported various national events and activities in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Kenya in the context of Africa Amnesty Month 2020, including the launch of a youth contest, in which young people were invited to develop creative and captivating slogans to highlight the dangers of owning illicit weapons and to encourage people to hand them in during the Amnesty Month. In 2021, the Office supported activities in Madagascar, Niger and Uganda.

33. On 26 July, the Office, together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, held a high-level virtual event to mark 20 years of action to combat illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in commemoration of the double anniversary of the adoption of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

34. On 13 and 14 November, the Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan hosted a regional meeting for Middle Eastern States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In addition, throughout the reporting period, the Office co-organized a series of virtual events on the challenges and opportunities of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, together with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UNIDIR and prominent civil society organizations and think tanks.

35. More information on those and many other events held during the period under review is available as part of the Office's Update series.¹⁷

C. Exhibitions

36. Exhibitions continued to be an important means for carrying out advocacy and delivering disarmament-related information at conferences and other events.

37. In December 2021, the Office supported to creation of an exhibition by the Japanese organization Nihon Hidankyo at United Nations Headquarters, in cooperation with the Department of Global Communications. Entitled "Three quarters of a century After Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the hibakusha – brave survivors working for a nuclear-free world", it vividly brought to life the devastation and havoc wreaked by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki through photos and testimonies from survivors who have dedicated themselves to reaching a world free of nuclear weapons.

¹⁷ Available at www.un.org/disarmament/update.

D. Media

38. During the reporting period, the High Representative and senior staff of the Office participated in interviews with a range of international media outlets. The High Representative spoke, inter alia, about the state of affairs of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, notably with regard to nuclear weapons, artificial intelligence and its impact on weapons technology, and women in disarmament and gender and arms policies with international television, radio and print outlets.

39. The High Representative took part in a number of media briefings: on 11 August 2020 and on 11 August 2021 in Tokyo during official visits to commemorate the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; during International Cyber Week 2020 with the Minister for Communications and Information of Singapore to announce the development of a cybernorms implementation checklist; and on 26 October 2020 to mark the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which triggered its entry into force.

40. Other officials of the Office for Disarmament Affairs participated in a briefing about disarmament-related matters for young international media representatives and journalists participating in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalism Fellowship.

41. The High Representative continued her column in the *Mainichi Shougakusei Shimbun*, a Japanese newspaper for elementary schoolchildren, published as part of a major broadsheet. The High Representative also prepared a quarterly Sunday column for the Kumamoto newspaper.

42. During the reporting period, the Office issued 11 press releases to communicate key issues and activities, which are available on the website of the Office at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/pressreleases/>.

E. Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament

43. The Secretary-General launched *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament* in May 2018.

44. On the third anniversary of the launch of the Agenda, the Office released a video entitled “Disarmament in the twenty-first century”, introducing the Agenda and its four key pillars, as part of its #Intro2Disarmament series. The series consists of five short videos that explain how disarmament contributes to a safer, more peaceful and sustainable world in an easy-to-understand way.¹⁸

45. On the fourth anniversary of the Agenda, the Office launched the Pitching Peace Youth Music Challenge, inviting young people to compose and record original musical pieces to express their passion for peace, reflecting on one of the four pillars of the Agenda.

F. Social media and opinion articles

46. During the reporting period, the High Representative published seven opinion articles in influential newspapers and policy blogs, highlighting actions that Member States and the public could take in a manner consistent with the Organization’s disarmament goals.

47. In September 2020, in an opinion piece entitled “Africa Amnesty Month: UN-AU joint call for the surrender of illicit weapons”, the High Representative,

¹⁸ The videos are available in English, with subtitled versions available in French, Korean and Spanish.

together with the African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns, Ramtane Lamamra, issued a joint call to action encouraging people across Africa to hand in their illicit small arms and light weapons in the context of Africa Amnesty Month.

48. In November 2020, in an opinion piece commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the landmark Security Council resolution on the pivotal role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations and peacebuilding (resolution 1325 (2000)), the High Representative and the then Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, demonstrated how fundamental gender inequalities and the wide availability of weapons are obstacles to achieving both gender justice and peace. The opinion piece was published in 19 outlets around the world and in various languages, including Arabic, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

49. To mark the Global Days of Action on Military Spending in May 2021, the High Representative and the then Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, issued an opinion piece entitled “Put people before runaway military spending”, in which they urged countries to consider redirecting excessive military spending to strengthen women’s social and economic security and promote more inclusive and resilient societies.¹⁹

50. In December 2021, the High Representative, together with the Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and Director for the Crisis Bureau, Asako Okai, advocated for a comprehensive approach to long-term security and development in tackling the flows of illicit small arms and light weapons across the globe.

51. The High Representative produced additional opinion pieces and articles in various media outlets to advocate for the following:

- Modern, multilateral approaches to tackle rapidly evolving missile threats²⁰
- The meaningful inclusion of youth in tackling the world’s most pressing disarmament concerns²¹
- International cooperation to ensure digital peace²²

52. The Office published a feature article on the UN News website about the worldwide efforts to eradicate cluster munitions, in connection with the second Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

53. To inform and engage the general audience and the disarmament community alike about relevant developments and events, the Office launched and participated in multiple social media campaigns, engaging the wider United Nations system and civil society organizations to amplify key messages.

54. On 1 July 2020, the Office launched the #Youth4Disarmament Instagram account, which provides updates on the initiative and the activities of other

¹⁹ Available at demilitarize.org.uk/for-a-safer-and-more-resilient-world-put-people-before-runaway-military-spending/.

²⁰ “Preventing the spread and emergence of destabilizing missile threats is a vital, unfinished task for the international community”, *The Diplomat*, 11 September 2020.

²¹ “Young people have a major role to play in ridding the world of nuclear weapons”, UN News, 10 August 2020.

²² In September 2021, the High Representative contributed to a special issue of *Foreign Policy*, in collaboration with Microsoft, about international security in cyberspace. The article was entitled “Evolving conflict in the fifth domain: international cooperation, private sector participation is essential to disarm cyberspace”, available at <https://securingourdigitalfuture.com/2021/09/19/evolving-conflict-in-the-fifth-domain/>.

organizations in the field of disarmament and spotlights the contributions of youth in the area of international peace and security.

55. The Office also produced and disseminated videos on disarmament-related topics through its website and social media channels. For example, to mark Disarmament Week, the Office prepared a video to promote awareness and better understanding of disarmament issues and their cross-cutting importance.

G. Youth engagement

56. During the reporting period, the Office promoted and advanced its youth engagement activities substantially.

57. On 25 June 2020, the Office announced the selection of 10 Youth Champions for Disarmament,²³ from 6,515 applicants. The Youth Champions received two years of training in the general principles of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation through online courses and dialogues with experts from think tanks and civil society organizations and diplomats. In March 2022, the young leaders participated in a 10-day in-person study tour to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, where they met with officials from organizations that support multilateral treaties, promote scientific and technical cooperation and verify adherence to international norms in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

58. On International Youth Day in August 2020, the Office launched the #75Words4Disarmament Youth Challenge in commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The challenge invited young people aged 13–29 to express what disarmament means to them and their communities in 75 words.

59. In December 2020, the Office held a Youth Special Session event before the nineteenth annual Republic of Korea–United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, co-organized with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

60. In December 2020, the #Youth4Disarmament initiative was recognized as the best coalition building project of 2020 by One Billion Acts of Peace, an initiative of the PeaceJam Foundation, for its activities to engage, educate and empower youth in the field of disarmament.

61. On 23 March 2021, the #Youth4Disarmament initiative partnered with the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth to conduct a workshop with young leaders on the linkages between disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, and development. The workshop marked the one-year anniversary of the Secretary-General’s appeal for a global ceasefire.

62. On 15 April 2021, the Office launched the “What If – Speterra” Youth Video Challenge to stimulate young people’s interest in the way disarmament contributes to creating a safer and more sustainable world for all. By creating their own multimedia productions, young people shared their visions for a world where more resources are spent on efforts to advance peace and less on arms.

63. In June 2021, the #Youth4Disarmament initiative and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea co-organized the Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation for 25 participants, which concluded with the adoption of the Seoul Youth Declaration for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The Declaration contained recommendations to advance the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament.

²³ See <https://www.un.org/disarmament/youth-champions-for-disarmament>.

64. On International Youth Day in August 2021, four Youth Champions for Disarmament delivered remarks to the formal plenary of the Conference on Disarmament during a dedicated session on youth and disarmament, which was held in an effort to facilitate inclusive and meaningful participation of youth in intergovernmental processes.

65. On 21 September 2021, the #Youth4Disarmament initiative held a virtual workshop with entrants in the “What If – Speterra” Youth Video Challenge to mark the International Day of Peace. Joined by filmmakers Kasha Sequoia Slavner and Robert Frye, the participants engaged in an intergenerational dialogue to discuss how filmmaking can engage youth on issues related to peace and security.

66. To mark the second anniversary of General Assembly resolution 74/64, the Office launched the #YouthInAction for Disarmament Campaign with the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Reverse the Trend, Youth Fusion and the International Action Network on Small Arms. The Campaign, which ran from September to December 2021, aimed to educate young people about the resolution and its focus on providing opportunities for youth to meaningfully participate in the disarmament field.

67. On 13 November 2021, the Office and its United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, in cooperation with the World Federation of United Nations Associations and Hanyang University School of International Studies, conducted a hybrid webinar for approximately 100 students and educators on responsible innovation and the linkages between disarmament and the Sustainable Development Goals.

68. Throughout 2022, 25 young leaders participated in the #Leaders4Tomorrow workshop series, which explored the relationship between disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, and relevant cross-cutting topics, including gender, the Sustainable Development Goals, new and emerging technologies, the environment and education.

H. Activities of the Messenger of Peace on disarmament

69. In close cooperation with the Office, the Department of Global Communications is the lead office for supporting the activities of the Messenger of Peace, Michael Douglas, whose special area of focus is disarmament. During the reporting period, Mr. Douglas undertook a number of activities aimed at mobilizing public support for disarmament efforts.

70. During the reporting period, Mr. Douglas promoted the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the International Day against Nuclear Tests through a video on his social media platform, generating over 33,400 views. Mr. Douglas also promoted the United Nations disarmament objectives more broadly, as well as the International Day of Peace and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

71. On 15 April 2021, Mr. Douglas joined the High Representative and the 10 Youth Champions for Disarmament in a promotional video inviting young artists to take part in the “What If – Speterra” Youth Video Challenge.

72. On 14 October 2021, Mr. Douglas congratulated the four winners of the “What If – Speterra” Youth Video Challenge by video message at a virtual congratulatory event. In his message, Mr. Douglas highlighted the power of young people to effect change and contribute to establishing a safer and more secure world for current and future generations.

IV. Cooperation with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations

73. The Office continues to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations (accreditation and registration) at various disarmament-related conferences and to coordinate their side events and exhibits, as well as their presentations, in various disarmament meetings.

74. To coordinate participation in major conferences, the Office continues to maintain close contact with two major coalitions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs): Reaching Critical Will, which works in the field of weapons of mass destruction and emerging technologies; and the International Action Network on Small Arms, in connection with small arms and light weapons. These coalitions are instrumental in facilitating the participation of civil society speakers in intergovernmental meetings.

75. Owing to restrictions on physical access at United Nations facilities resulting from the pandemic, in-person attendance at intergovernmental disarmament meetings remained largely off limits to civil society representatives for much of the reporting period. In that context, Member States adopted modalities by which relevant non-governmental actors could participate remotely in key processes, either by delivering remarks by video or submitting comments in writing. For example, the First Committee of the General Assembly held two interactive virtual dialogues with representatives of civil society, during the seventy-fifth and seventy-sixth sessions, respectively. In July 2021, 129 representatives of 70 organizations participated remotely in the seventh Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In May 2022, 46 representatives of 39 NGOs attended the first substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new global framework that will address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management.

V. Activities of the Department of Global Communications

76. The Department of Global Communications continued to build greater public awareness, understanding and support for the work of the United Nations in the areas of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related fields by promoting and covering the Organization's conferences, meetings, events and observances, including to local audiences in local languages through the work of the global network of United Nations information centres.

A. Multimedia

77. The Department produced a wealth of news and feature products on issues related to disarmament, which were disseminated across its multilingual digital media platforms for global audiences, as well as to broadcasters and other media partners around the world. This included 60 complete video packages for broadcasters.

78. The Video Section produced feature videos and engaged in video coverage on an array of disarmament-related activities, including the following:

- “Nuclear disarmament tops UN agenda” (2020). This video covered the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

- “Costa Rica’s path to peace and putting an end to nuclear explosions” (2021). In 1996, Costa Rica and 138 other countries met at the United Nations to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Twenty-five years later, Costa Rica continues to be a leader in the global effort to monitor nuclear explosions.
- “Mine Action in Lebanon” (2022). This video features Zeina Saleh, a Quality Assurance Officer with the Mine Action Service, which supports engineering units of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon in carrying out demining in Lebanon. A longer feature is in production for release later in the year.

79. The Video Section also produced multiple videos covering statements delivered to the Security Council by the Secretary-General, the High Representative and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

80. During the reporting period, UN News produced some 230 multimedia stories and features on disarmament-related issues in the six official languages of the United Nations, as well as Hindi, Kiswahili and Portuguese. It covered major speeches and statements from top United Nations officials, international days and observances and the work of intergovernmental bodies and colleagues in the field and produced materials highlighting thematic issues under the overall rubric of disarmament.

81. Among others, features were produced in 2021 on the Conference on Disarmament’s thematic discussion on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as on the theme of cybersecurity. UN News published an article marking the 2021 entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.²⁴ Other coverage during the year included the special meeting of the Security Council to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and an interview with Robert Floyd, shortly after his election as Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

82. During the reporting period, UN News covered the seventy-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including with the production of feature stories, and conducted an interview with the non-governmental organization that produced an exhibition at United Nations Headquarters, entitled “Three quarters of a century after Hiroshima and Nagasaki: the hibakusha – brave survivors working for a nuclear-free world”. The related story produced by the Spanish Unit received more than 60,000 page views. UN News also featured the newly appointed Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, in stories about the start of the nuclear age.

83. In 2021, UN News covered the special meeting of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament to mark International Youth Day.

84. The Organization’s ongoing work to curb the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons was another area of focus during the reporting period. In 2021, in the context of its Resident Coordinator blog series, UN News produced a feature with the outgoing Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Edward Kallon, who noted that the proliferation of such arms threatened the country’s national security. In 2020, UN News covered the initiative launched by the Office of Counter-Terrorism to raise awareness of the nexus between terrorism, organized crime and illicit small arms trafficking.

85. UN News also covered the Organization’s ongoing work in mine action, including through an interview in 2021 with a member of an all-female demining team in Bamyán Province, Afghanistan. In the same year, the Department’s news teams covered the Secretary-General’s remarks at a ministerial-level debate of the

²⁴ Available at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/01/1082702>.

Security Council on mine action. UN News continued to track civil-society-led efforts to help address the impact of landmines and tackle cluster munitions, covering the annual reports of the Cluster Munition Monitor and the Landmine Monitor.

86. Other UN News features and coverage included the Secretary-General's activities at the Munich Security Conference and his welcoming of the 2022 joint statement issued by the nuclear-weapon States on the prevention of nuclear war and avoidance of arms races.

87. UN News also adapted into Chinese a podcast interview of the Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications with the Director General of IAEA.

B. Website, press coverage, television and webcast

88. The Department created and maintained the multilingual website on disarmament under the popular global issues section of the United Nations website (www.un.org/en/global-issues/disarmament).

89. The Department also created and maintained the fully multilingual, branded and fully accessible website of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In addition, the Department maintained and updated the website of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the website of the Military Staff Committee.

90. Moreover, the Department updated and maintained on the United Nations website the fully multilingual and fully accessible websites of the following international days mandated by the General Assembly:

- International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (4 April)
- International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August)
- International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September)
- Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare (30 November)

91. The Department's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit provided advice to organizing offices on the media coverage of events on disarmament held at United Nations Headquarters in the light of COVID-19 restrictions. The Media Documents Centre distributed reports, statements and media advisories related to disarmament to members of the press.

92. Open intergovernmental meetings were covered by UN Photo. In parallel, UN Webcast continued to provide live and on-demand multilingual streaming coverage of meetings and events related to disarmament. Webcast coverage was made available to global audiences through the UN Web TV website (webtv.un.org), the official channel of the United Nations on YouTube and social media platforms. During the reporting period, more than 210 videos related to disarmament were made available on demand on the UN Web TV website.

93. The Meetings Coverage Section contributed to the Department's activities to disseminate information on disarmament and non-proliferation by publishing press releases from the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The Section also produced accurate and comprehensive same-day coverage and press releases, in English and French, of intergovernmental proceedings. These included coverage of the meetings of the First Committee and the annual plenary debate of the General Assembly on the report of IAEA. The Section produced and issued 138 detailed summaries in English and French of open intergovernmental meetings, both virtual and in person, at United Nations Headquarters, as well as 75 additional press releases on disarmament-related issues.

94. The Department widely disseminated and translated for publication opinion pieces by the Secretary-General and the High Representative. For the Secretary-General, they included the following:

- “75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: time to end the nuclear menace”, in August 2020 (57 placements, 19 countries, 10 languages)
- “Our main hope to reverse course from nuclear cataclysm is the Non-Proliferation Treaty”, in December 2021 (18 placements, 15 countries, 9 languages)

C. Campaigns

95. The Department continued to support and promote the African Union campaign entitled “Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030”. The Department also highlighted the efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the African Union Commission to raise awareness among the citizens of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Côte d’Ivoire the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Kenya about illegal gun ownership and the illicit flow of weapons. It also published a joint call for the surrender of illicit small arms and light weapons during Africa Amnesty Month by the High Representative and the African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns.

96. Moreover, the Department provided coverage for the extraordinary session of the Assembly Heads of State and Government of the African Union in December 2020 with the theme “Silencing the guns: creating conducive conditions for Africa’s development”.

D. Observances of international days

97. United Nations Information Centres and UN News regularly cover international days, and the un.org team works closely with substantive departments to ensure that the websites for the international days are updated in the six official languages and fully accessible and that they contain the proper United Nations branding.

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

98. In April 2021, the United Nations Information Centres in Beirut, Baku, Brussels and Tokyo translated the Secretary-General’s message on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action into Arabic, Azerbaijani, Italian and Japanese, and distributed the material across their respective traditional and social media outlets. The Centres also promoted the virtual exhibit for the International Day organized by the Mine Action Service.

99. The United Nations Information Centre in Bogotá hosted a radio programme featuring the Director of the Mine Action Service, the Chief of the Mine Action Service in Colombia and the Director of the Colombian Campaign against Landmines, along with diplomats from international organizations, Germany and the United States of America. Participants in the programme talked about the impact of antipersonnel mines and other explosive devices in Colombia.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

100. In August 2020 and 2021, the United Nations Information Centres in Beirut, Tehran and Tokyo promoted the Secretary-General’s message on the International Day against Nuclear Tests by translating it into Arabic, Japanese and Persian. The

Centres shared the message with local media and disseminated the message on their websites and social media platforms.

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

101. In September 2020, the United Nations Information Centres in Ankara, Beirut, Tehran and Tokyo translated the full text of the Secretary-General's message on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons into Arabic, Japanese, Persian and Turkish and disseminated it through social and traditional media.

102. In 2020, the Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo moderated an online event hosted by the Centre and the Japanese NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition. Reflecting on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the symposium focused on the theme "From imagination to creation", providing a forum for learning from the past to better understand the present and to think about the future. In addition, on 26 September 2021, the Centre organized a symposium with the same partner to mark the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Young people, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a survivor of the atomic bombing actively participated at the symposium, which was live-streamed on YouTube.

International Day of Peace

103. United Nations Information Centres, including those in Dhaka, New Delhi, Vienna and Warsaw, communicated the Secretary-General's message to their local audiences by translating it into more than 15 languages, such as Bangla, German, Hindi, Hungarian and Polish. They also shared it with media contacts and on social media platforms. Furthermore, various United Nations Information Centres around the world organized and participated in events to commemorate the Day.

E. Public affairs, civil society and non-governmental organizations

Visitors services

104. The Visitors Service of the United Nations Information Service in Vienna continued to cooperate closely with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, IAEA and other organizations headquartered at the Vienna International Centre to inform the general public about topics related to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation through lectures and guided tours.

105. During the reporting period, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna offered virtual and modified in-person visitor services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, staff of the Visitors Service provided 158 virtual tours and 311 on-site tours, in addition to targeted outreach to educators. Over 15,000 visitors attended virtual or on-site tours, which introduce participants to the destructive power of nuclear weapons and the work of the United Nations family to eliminate them. For example, virtual tours usually feature a video produced by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization on the history of nuclear tests, while on-site tour guides typically present and narrate the OmniGlobe multimedia exhibit showcasing the Organization's international monitoring system.

106. From June 2020 to May 2022, the Visitors Service in Vienna organized 10 in-person and 9 virtual lecture programmes in cooperation with IAEA and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization that reached 466 participants. University students and military and diplomatic personnel from more than 10 countries attended the lectures. During the reporting period, the entry into force of

the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the subsequent first Meeting of States Parties gave rise to additional demand for such programmes.

107. In December 2020 and December 2021, staff from the Visitors Service in Vienna joined colleagues from New York and Geneva to attend the virtual briefing programme on the destructive power of nuclear weapons, hosted by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, Japan. With funding from the City of Hiroshima, the annual programme aims to equip staff of the Visitors Service and tour guides with first-hand knowledge that will help them explain the exhibits on the subject and effectively communicate the United Nations goal of a world without nuclear weapons to visitors.

108. The programme of the Visitors Service in Geneva included information on the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as part of the guided tour. The history, achievements and workings of the Conference are described in the Council Chamber of the Palais des Nations, where the Conference holds its meetings. While the Council Chamber is closed due to extensive refurbishment of the Palais des Nations, the Conference is discussed during the alternative route of the guided tour.

F. Other activities

Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth

109. During the reporting period, the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth continued to work in close collaboration with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to ensure the meaningful participation and engagement of young people in the field of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. To mark the first anniversary of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General collaborated with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to organize a workshop on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and the Sustainable Development Goals in March 2021, which brought together 30 young peacebuilders from the United Network of Young Peacebuilders and Young Leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals. The Office for Disarmament Affairs, in partnership with the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General, also wrote an iSeek piece on the workshop to raise awareness within the United Nations system of this type of capacity-building, focusing on strengthening synergies between disarmament and development while targeting young people.

110. In addition, the Envoy of the Secretary General on Youth participated in several events hosted by the Office for Disarmament Affairs to promote youth engagement, capacity-building and empowerment in disarmament issues. These included the message of the Envoy of the Secretary-General to the "What if – Speterra" Youth Video Challenge launch event in April 2021; the address of the Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Conference on Disarmament; and the congratulatory message of the Envoy of the Secretary-General to the participants in the plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament during its session on youth and disarmament in June 2021. The Envoy of the Secretary-General also participated in the Youth Plenary organized by the Office for Disarmament Affairs in August 2021.

Exhibits

111. In April 2021, the Exhibits Unit launched an online exhibition, entitled "Perseverance, partnership, progress", in connection with the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. The exhibit highlighted stories of survivors of explosive ordnance accidents and beneficiaries and partners working in mine action. In December 2021, the Exhibits Unit facilitated the display of the exhibit entitled "75 years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki" in the Visitors Lobby at United

Nations Headquarters, which told the stories of the more than 70-year effort of the hibakusha to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The exhibit will be shown again in August 2022. In April 2022, the Exhibits Unit also facilitated the display of an exhibit entitled “Safe ground. Safe steps. Safe home.” in connection with the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. The exhibit, which could be visited both online and in person in the Visitors Lobby at United Nations Headquarters, highlighted the achievements of the mine action community and the work still to be done.

Group Programmes and Public Inquiries Unit

112. From June 2020 to May 2022, the Group Programmes and Public Inquiries Unit organized five briefings by the Office for Disarmament Affairs related to the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The briefings were primarily for undergraduate students from universities in Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States, and reached an audience of a few hundred students.

Yearbook Unit

113. Two highlights of successful multilateralism – the opening for signature in 1968 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament – were portrayed in “Building the future: stepping stones in United Nations history”, a multimedia e-publication issued by the United Nations Yearbook Unit in February 2022 and available on the website of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*.

VI. Looking forward

114. The Disarmament Information Programme will continue to support the Secretary-General and the High Representative in their efforts to make effective use of the resources available to enable the Programme to be the locus of information about arms control and disarmament and its dissemination and to educate and generate public understanding regarding the importance of multilateral action in this area in a factual, balanced and objective manner.

115. The Programme envisages carrying out diverse activities, including the continuation of serial and ad hoc publications; updating and improving its website and social media presence; continuing its “Disarmament Today” podcast series; supporting and promoting exhibits, conferences, and events, especially those in collaboration with Member States; facilitating the participation of civil society in disarmament-related meetings and conferences; enabling the meaningful participation of youth in events related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control; and reaching out to the general public, both directly and through the media.

Annex

Status of the voluntary trust fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

A. Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2021^a

	2021	2020
Revenue		
Voluntary contributions ^b	123 154	43 065
Investment revenue	589	6 389
Total revenue	123 743	49 454
Expenses		
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	–	4 240
Non-employee compensation and allowances	4 002	25 755
Grants and other transfers	–	–
Supplies and consumables	–	52
Travel	–	(196)
Other operating expenses	21 476	6 288
Other expenses	–	–
Total expenses	64 478	36 139
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	59 265	13 315

B. Statement of changes in net assets for the year ended 31 December 2021^a

	<i>Net assets</i>
Net assets opening	499 512
Change in net assets	
Surplus for the year	59 265
Net assets as at 31 December 2021	558 777

^a The statements were prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

^b Includes monetary contributions, contributions in kind, transfers and refunds to donors.