

EDITOR'S NOTE

Developing appropriate brokering controls that permit legal trade to be conducted unimpeded while effectively filtering out illicit activities is a critical challenge facing the international community and national governments today. Much attention has been focused in recent years on combating the illicit brokering of small arms. The 2007 report of the UN Group of Governmental Experts tasked with considering further steps to enhance cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons has been instrumental in this reflection.

But Member States are also attempting to come to grips with the challenges posed by illicit brokering of materials, equipment and technology that could contribute to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. This means hashing out the thorny issue of dual-use items, educating a much wider public and harmonizing national controls, and promoting cooperation and information sharing.

In UN General Assembly resolution 63/67, Member States are called upon, *inter alia*, to establish appropriate national laws and measures to prevent illicit brokering and encouraged to fully implement relevant international treaties, instruments and resolutions to prevent and combat illicit brokering activities. Building on this resolution, as well as efforts undertaken by other relevant bodies, such as the 1540 Committee of the UN Security Council, Member States have many avenues of action open to them, from national measures to regional initiatives and international cooperation. As the General Assembly will return to the issue of preventing and combating illicit brokering activities at its sixty-fifth session, this issue of *Disarmament Forum* examines recent initiatives to combat illicit brokering and asks how Member States could best address the phenomenon. This is the first output of a larger series of activities scheduled for 2010 on tackling illicit brokering, supported by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

The next issue of *Disarmament Forum* will focus on strengthening space security. For many, the Outer Space Treaty and subsequent agreements, indeed international law as a whole, are insufficient to address potential threats to space security. Building on UNIDIR's recent conference on the topic (see below), this issue of *Disarmament Forum* will explore the possible components of a strengthened space security regime and the possible ways forward for the international community.

On 15–16 June, UNIDIR held the conference “Space Security 2009: Moving Toward a Safer Space Environment”, the latest in its series of annual conferences on the issue of space security, the peaceful uses of outer space, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This year's conference focused on five topics: architectures for improving space security; ensuring space sustainability: confidence- and security-building measures; elements of treaty-based security; international law and space security; and emerging issues for space sustainability. Over 75 representatives of UN Member States, UN Observers, non-governmental organizations and civil society participated. The conference

report is available on UNIDIR's web site, and has been introduced in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as an official document.

The project on promoting discussion on an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has held three of its six planned regional seminars, in Dakar, Mexico City and Amman. The participation in these meetings has been excellent, and discussions have been lively. The project has confirmed the importance of regional approaches to global processes, and participants from all the three regions targeted so far have warmly welcomed the joint EU–UNIDIR initiative to strengthen regional discussions and awareness-raising on an ATT. The project is now working on a side event to be held on the margins of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, as well as the last three regional seminars.

As the CD explores eventual discussions on a fissile material treaty, on 7 August 2009 UNIDIR hosted a timely seminar for CD diplomats and the wider disarmament community focused on what can be learned from the last substantive negotiation within that forum—the CTBT. “From CTBT to FMCT: Unfinished Business with Lessons for the Conference on Disarmament” saw presentations by Dr Rebecca Johnson, author of *Unfinished Business: The Negotiation of the CTBT and the End of Nuclear Testing* (UNIDIR, 2009) on relevant lessons from the CTBT negotiations, and Mr Tim Caughley, Resident Senior Fellow at UNIDIR and former Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, addressed ways ahead on the issue of fissile materials. The presentations were followed by animated discussions. You can listen to the presentations on our web site.

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