

EDITOR'S NOTE

The space environment—and space technologies—have evolved enormously since the adoption of the Outer Space Treaty in 1967, and this rate of development shows no sign of slowing. As technologies continue to advance, our dependence on space assets will only increase. This reliance generates vulnerabilities and there is growing awareness that space security is a critical issue for all states—not just the established space powers. For many, the Outer Space Treaty and subsequent agreements, indeed international law as a whole, are no longer sufficient to address the potential threats to space security of today and tomorrow.

This issue of *Disarmament Forum* explores the possible components of a strengthened space security regime and potential ways forward for the international community. Contributors discuss a range of options, from efforts already being undertaken within the private sector to ensure safe satellite manoeuvres to the new draft European Code of Conduct on Outer Space Activities. There are suggestions on approaches states could be taking to establish a more secure space environment and on possible steps toward a treaty on space security.

The first issue of *Disarmament Forum* in 2010 will look ahead to the implementation phase of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which opened for signature in December 2008. Over 100 states have already signed this humanitarian disarmament treaty, and it could enter into force as early as next year.

The new convention comprehensively bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions. In addition, the treaty obliges its member states to assist victims of cluster munitions, clear cluster munition affected areas, destroy their stockpiles of the weapon, and cooperate and assist each other toward these ends. Nevertheless, these are formidable tasks. How can states party to the convention, in partnership with international organizations and civil society, ensure the treaty's practical goals are achieved? Issue 1, 2010 will examine what will be required to implement some of these humanitarian and development commitments.

Information Security. Cyber warfare. Cyber terrorism. Cyber Security. The lack of a clear, commonly shared vocabulary—let alone agreement on the nature of the threat—will be one of the challenges faced by the Group of Governmental Experts established via General Assembly resolution 63/37, and which started its work in November. In order to promote awareness of this issue, UNIDIR has produced a short bibliography of relevant articles, from national doctrines to analysis by independent experts. Download the bibliography from www.unidir.ch/pdf/activites/pdf3-act483.pdf.

UNIDIR held two events on the margins of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly this year. On 20 October, "Promoting Discussion on an Arms Trade Treaty" provided an update on the project that UNIDIR is implementing for the European Union. Over 120 representatives of government, international organizations, industry and civil society listened to presentations on the

key messages resulting from the regional seminars organized by the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) project so far, and on specific thematic concerns for a future ATT. Just over a week later, the First Committee approved a draft resolution to establish a United Nations conference to negotiate an Arms Trade Treaty in 2012.

The following day, UNIDIR and the Secure World Foundation held a conference entitled “Latest Developments on Space Security and Disarmament”. Speakers considered proposed approaches to space security from legal and technical perspectives. The presentations are available on our web site.

In partnership with the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, on 2 September 2009 UNIDIR held a conference on “The CTBT: The Nexus between Politics and Science”. Speakers discussed how scientific and technical aspects regarding the verification system could affect entry into force. Summaries of the presentations from these meetings—with audio files from the CTBT conference—can be found on UNIDIR’s web site.

Did you know that UNIDIR is on Facebook? Join the group and keep posted on UNIDIR activities, as well as find news and views about disarmament and security. In addition to becoming a group member, we hope that you will actively participate by posting comments and topics for discussion, thereby helping us to create a space for dynamic disarmament dialogue.

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