FIRST COMMITTEE

Thematic Discussions on Disarmament and International Security
Agenda Items 99 (d), (e), (f) and (h)
Regional Disarmament and Security

UNLIREC presentation to the First Committee (70th General Assembly)
24 October 2016 - 10:00-13:00 — Conference Room 4
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Since we last met in October 2015, UNLIREC has undertaken close to 50 activities in 13 different countries reaching more than 1700 youth and adults. This assistance was delivered through specialized training, technical assistance, as well as legal and policy support covering the entire gamut of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. In keeping with requests, the Centre supported Member States in their implementation of various international instruments, most notably the 2001 PoA on Small Arms; the International Tracing Instrument; the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as UNSCR 1540; and the GA resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In this regard, I would like to share with you a few highlights of the Centre’s work and assistance over the past year:

**Human Security and prevention of armed violence**

UNLIREC – in recognition of the essential link between sustainable development and security – continued to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development as part of a UN multi-year multi-agency project being implemented in northern Peru. UNLIREC’s contribution in 2016 focused on the promotion of youth dialogues and on the benefits of performing arts as a successful vehicle to raise awareness about the use of small arms and their impact on society and the community. Further preventive actions were carried out through public small arms and explosive risk awareness campaigns reaching close to one thousand youth and community members. This community-based approach complemented the efforts by the local and national law enforcement community resulting in the destruction of more than 10,000 weapons. Close to 2,000 of which were seized directly from these communities and permanently removed from circulation.

A newly updated regional study on the impact of stray bullets was released earlier this year as part of UNLIREC’s public security outreach efforts. In follow-up, a first comprehensive report on the use of less lethal weapons in the region will be disseminated by year end.
With a view to helping States mitigate the diversion of small arms, parts and components, as well as ammunition, UNLIREC developed a first-of-its-kind training tool to facilitate the interdiction of illicit trafficking through postal shipments. This x-ray identification guide gives postal and customs agents the tools they need on the ground to instantaneously detect and identify illicit weapons. It is envisioned that this unique guide will help to counter this new trafficking modality, which to date has been virtually uncontrolled. The guide and accompanying training course are due to be piloted in Costa Rica during the first trimester of 2017.

**Strengthening oversight of the private security sector**

In 2015, UNLIREC joined forces with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) to launch a new project in response to the growth of private security companies offering armed protection services in the region. To date, numerous joint activities have been carried out in both Central and South America.

Through the integration of international small arms control standards and the professionalization of the sector in general, the risk of diversion into illicit markets and into the hands of illegal actors can be substantially reduced. Activities in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru concentrated on training 60 PSCs on improving the use and management of weapons and ammunition stockpiles and undertaking the secondary marking of close to 1,500 weapons. In fact, later this week, UNLIREC and DCAF will be presenting the main findings of a baseline study of the PSS in the region conducted earlier in the year. All of you are welcome to join us during this side-event.

**Improving firearms ballistics tracing capacities and evidence management**

300 persons were reached throughout the Caribbean - thanks to the collaborative efforts of both UNLIREC and its regional partners - in bolstering State capacity to gather, trace and share information drawn from forensic ballistics evidence or, in other words, firearms evidence. The main aim of these efforts is to reduce impunity in cases of illicit firearms use and illicit trafficking.

In 2016, UNLIREC’s support focused on the provision of basic laboratory materials and equipment, training and incorporation of 17 newly developed standard operating procedures into national systems, as well as on the implementation of national competency testing frameworks for firearms examiners reaching close to 300 beneficiaries. Through the standardization of national practices, the project is designed to leverage the important work undertaken by CARICOM at the regional level and strengthen information sharing networks.

**1540: Strategic trade controls and legal reform**
Support to UNSCR 1540 implementation continues to be a top priority of the Centre. Since October of last year, UNLIREC helped States to improve their strategic trade controls and modernize their legislative and policy frameworks. The Centre also supported the elaboration of voluntary 1540 national action plans and their subsequent implementation. These plans represent a key tool through which governments establish priorities in implementing the obligations of the resolution.

Of particular note was the rollout of UNLIREC’s new counter-proliferation financing guide. This tool while originally tailored for use by Trinidad and Tobago, is now available for adaptation to all States of the region in supporting their efforts to counter the threat of proliferation financing.

A subsequent 1540 tool was launched during this reporting period in the form of a new Caribbean Control List and guidelines. The CCL is a new assistance tool to provide Caribbean States with a two-track solution for safeguarding against illicit proliferation. The original full list enables States to establish strategic trade controls in the area of nuclear, chemical, biological, related materials and their means of delivery, as well as to integrate these controlled items into their national legislative frameworks. While the Caribbean-focused ‘complementary’ list serves as a practical guide based specifically on the patterns of the most frequently traded WMD dual-use items in this sub-region. This tailor-made list currently contains 37 items, complete with an identification guide and description of each element, aimed at facilitating the work of customs and control authorities.

We are also pleased to announce that this project recently expanded to South American States, including Guyana, Peru and Suriname.

**ATT national control authorities**

[Spanish]

Durante el año 2016, los Estados continuaron solicitando el apoyo de UNLIREC en sus esfuerzos de implementación del Tratado sobre el Comercio de Armas (TCA). Este año, la asistencia se enfocó en establecer autoridades nacionales de control y en compartir la evaluación del riesgo desarrollada por UNLIREC y las herramientas de documentación de usuario final con el fin de estandarizar medidas de control y documentos necesarios para transferencias internacionales, de conformidad con las obligaciones del TCA. El apoyo en la reforma legislativa y la integración de listas nacionales de control también formaron parte de la oferta técnica de asistencia de UNLIREC para los Estados centroamericanos y sudamericanos.

Además del apoyo personalizado dirigido a autoridades nacionales, UNLIREC continuó impartiendo su Curso de Implementación del TCA que ha logrado capacitar a más de 150 oficiales en Centroamérica y Sudamérica.
Conclusions

Para concluir, me gustaría destacar el firme apoyo de UNLIREC al espíritu de la Resolución 65/69 de la Asamblea General de la ONU sobre mujeres, desarme, no proliferación y control de armas, principalmente, a través de la promoción activa que busca involucrar a mujeres en sus iniciativas sobre desarme, control de armas y no proliferación. Estos esfuerzos resultaron en la inclusión de 650 mujeres participantes en las actividades de campo de UNLIREC, lo cual representó un incremento con respecto al reporte del periodo anterior.

[English]

I wish to thank our donors (Canada, Germany, Guyana, Mexico, Peru, Spain, the United States of America, as well as the UN Trust Fund for Human Security) for their generous support without which none of the activities mentioned today would have been possible and appeal to States – in particular those of the Latin American and Caribbean region – to continue supporting the Centre.

[Spanish]

Reitero el compromiso de UNLIREC para continuar con el desarrollo e implementación de herramientas innovadoras orientadas a contrarrestar la proliferación de armas ilícitas y lograr, así, una región más segura. Espero seguir construyendo sobre los resultados logrados durante los últimos 30 años, en particular en la última década, y contribuyendo más allá de los 4,000 oficiales de seguridad y justicia entrenados; mejoras en más de 160 almacenes; y más de 75,000 armas y 70 toneladas de municiones destruidas.

Thank you,