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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean from July 2019 to June 2020.

During that period, the Centre undertook over 60 technical, legal and policy-related activities to support Latin American and Caribbean States, at their request, with the implementation of international instruments relating to conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction.

With a view to supporting 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, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty, the Centre provided technical training and assistance to some 1,100 national officials (376 women) of Member States. This support was focused mainly on the interdiction of weapons at entry/exit points, small arms tracing, crime scene investigative procedures, ammunition controls and conventional arms transfers and on addressing escalating incidences of small arms use and possession in school settings. In addition, the Centre supported Caribbean States in the drafting and adoption of a Caribbean firearms road map to aid in preventing and combating the illicit trafficking in small arms and ammunition in the subregion.

In line with General Assembly resolution [65/69](#) on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, more than 110 personnel of national authorities from across the region benefited from the Centre's expertise to incorporate gender-responsive public policies and programming into small arms control initiatives.

* [A/75/50](#).



During the reporting period, legislative and capacity-building support was delivered to 135 officials (55 women) to enhance their implementation of Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors.

The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to the Member States, in particular the host country, Peru, and other partners that supported the Centre's operation and programmes with financial and in-kind contributions and calls upon those in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Centre in order to sustain and further develop its activities in response to the increasing requests for assistance and cooperation by Member States in the region.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [74/72](#), the General Assembly reiterated its strong support for the role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in the promotion of peace, disarmament and development among its Member States and encouraged the Centre to further develop activities in all States of the region in the important areas of peace, disarmament and development, and to provide, upon request and in accordance with its mandate, support to Member States' initiatives in those areas at the regional and subregional levels.

2. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution at its seventy-fifth session. In the present report, submitted pursuant to that request, the main activities carried out by the Centre from July 2019 to June 2020 are highlighted. A financial statement on the status of the trust fund for the Centre in 2019 is contained in the annex to the report.

II. Functioning and mandate

3. The Centre, located in Lima, was established in 1987, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [41/60 J](#). It is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for the initiatives and other activities of the Member States in the region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament and for the promotion of economic and social development.

III. Main areas of activity

4. During the reporting period, the Centre undertook more than 60 technical and legal assistance and training activities to support States in the region in their efforts to implement disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments and adhere to international standards and norms in those fields. The following paragraphs provide an overview of the Centre's main areas of activity. Further details are provided in subsequent sections.

5. The Regional Centre assisted States in the adoption of holistic approaches and policies to address the scourge of illicit trafficking in small arms and ammunition. The integration of gender perspectives and the empowerment of women and youth are key to bolstering effective responses in the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

6. The Centre continued its efforts to promote the participation of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control initiatives, in line with General Assembly resolution [65/69](#) on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. This entailed delivering a women and peace and security regional project targeting over 110 national practitioners. Overall, the activities undertaken by the Centre during the reporting period reached a total of more than 430 women (approximately 35 per cent of total participation).

7. The Centre continued to support States in their implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty by delivering training to mitigate diversion and reduce the impact of undue harm caused, as well as technical assistance to bolster the implementation of article 7.4 to over 30 officials (16 women).

8. With a view to contributing to current literature and evidence-based dialogue on the growing phenomenon of firearms possession and use in schools, the Centre

published its findings on regional and international best practices on public policies and initiatives to deal with this mounting scourge.

9. The Centre bolstered the capacity of some 140 law enforcement frontline responders (54 women) to mitigate the diversion of weapons through specialized X-ray identification training in four States. In addition, the Centre delivered training to more than 50 security sector and justice officials (14 women) from four States to promote international standards in the investigation and prosecution of small arms-related cases. This targeted training was complemented by enhanced State capacity to meet marking and record-keeping responsibilities under the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (International Tracing Instrument).

10. In further efforts to reduce the risk of small arms and ammunition being diverted for illicit use, the Centre worked with more than 120 private security personnel (16 women) in three States to enhance their capacity to apply relevant international physical security standards in managing stockpile facilities.

11. To support the implementation of Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), the Centre assisted 135 national officials (55 women) in setting in place the legal and policy structures necessary to effectively implement the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

A. Conventional arms control programme

1. Women and security

12. Armed violence in a domestic setting was already a global emergency prior to the onset of coronavirus disease (COVID-19); however, it was exacerbated during the pandemic. Lockdowns and prolonged restrictions in movement were important contributing factors. In efforts to assume a proactive role in mitigating this dilemma, the Centre promoted gender-sensitive approaches to armed violence reduction measures in the form of legal reviews. These extensive reviews included cross-references on small arms laws with domestic violence provisions in 22 Latin American and Caribbean States and culminated with recommendations for restricting the ability of convicted domestic violence perpetrators to acquire or renew firearms licences. The studies also provided a basis for future discussions on enhancing gender accountability in policies and laws to control small arms and were closely aligned with the United Nations women and peace and security agenda.

13. During the pandemic, the Centre also conducted media-monitoring research to identify extraordinary national small arms control measures adopted in the region during the lockdown that could have an impact on preventing and combating gender-based violence against women. The findings of this open-source research – along with other activities undertaken by the Centre as part of its women and disarmament project – will be used as a basis for the development of online courses on the prevention of (armed) violence against women. The research will also feed into presentations to be delivered by the Centre during a webinar organized by the new German-based Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control, to be held in June 2020.

14. To further respond to the pressing need to incorporate key gender perspectives into arms control policies and practices beyond the confines of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre launched a course on the gendered aspects of small arms and

ammunition evidence management. This specialized training also covers the link between armed violence and violence against women. The course, delivered in the Dominican Republic in July 2019, for some 15 security and justice sector representatives (4 women), was the first of its kind in the country. The Centre convened two additional evidence management courses at the national level, engaging some 60 national security and justice sector representatives (24 women) in Costa Rica in October 2019 and El Salvador in December 2019. These three courses contributed to building State capacity to adequately process crime scenes and evidence in cases involving small arms and ammunition, as well as to the creation by the Centre of a new four-day specialized course on firearms investigations and gender perspectives, which will be available for firearms investigative units as both virtual and traditional classroom instruction.

15. In further efforts to introduce arms control as a fundamental pillar of the public policy response to gender-based violence, the Centre organized a subregional seminar in Trinidad and Tobago in November 2019. The seminar was targeted at some 60 representatives (37 women), from nine Caribbean countries, directly involved in arms control and preventing violence against women and girls. There was a fruitful exchange of ideas, and discussions on strategies and possibilities for joint initiatives to address armed violence against women. To ensure a diverse collation of strategies, 3 regional organizations and 12 civil society organizations were invited to participate and share their expertise. Subregional events such as these contribute substantially to the creation of inter-State partnerships and to putting women's issues on States' security agendas.

16. To contribute to global trends to integrate gender into small arms-related work, the Centre shared its regionally based experience at an international conference organized by the Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control in February 2020. Participants engaged in in-depth discussions on the linkage between gender-responsive programming in small arms control and the women and peace and security agenda. By reaching out to the members of the international Network, made up of civil society representatives, government officials and representatives from regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system, the Centre was able to expand its partner portfolio in an exponential manner and contribute to global awareness of the negative interrelation between gender and armed violence from a regional perspective.

17. Links between the Centre and civil society were further strengthened at an academic encounter on good practices to address armed violence against women in Mexico organized by the country's Autonomous National University and the National Women's Institute in November 2019. The Centre was invited to share its expertise on concrete actions that can be undertaken by both civil society and competent national authorities in dealing with armed violence. The Centre used this platform to disseminate its subregional legal reviews to cross-reference small arms laws with domestic violence provisions throughout nine States in Central America, including Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. The studies were well received and identified as a good practice to prevent and contain this phenomenon both in Mexico and beyond.

2. Arms Trade Treaty

18. Arms transfer controls, as called for under the Arms Trade Treaty, were the focus of a tabletop exercise delivered by the Centre in the Dominican Republic, in February 2020, to over 30 national authorities (16 women). The aim of this exercise was to showcase the obligations under the Treaty and provide practical insights into the Treaty's risk assessment methodology, with a special focus on transfer evaluation and gender-based criteria. To inform discussions, the Centre presented its Treaty risk assessment tool, designed to evaluate whether there is a substantial risk that an

international arms transfer would likely give rise to or facilitate acts of gender-based violence under article 7.4 of the Treaty.

19. With a view to strengthening the country's legal framework and institutional architecture vis-à-vis conventional arms transfers, the Centre supported the State in addressing the relevant provisions included in the country's firearms, ammunition and related materials act. It also considered a series of provisions set out in the bill regulations, currently under development, to bring them into closer alignment with relevant Treaty provisions. Participants applauded the work being undertaken by the Centre in assisting States across the region to enhance the effectiveness of arms transfer controls at the national level, thus boosting implementation at the regional level.

3. Empowering women and youth to engage in disarmament issues

20. Throughout the reporting period, the Centre worked with States to incorporate gender perspectives into security and arms control policies. In similar and complementary steps, the Centre has been sensitizing decision makers on how armed violence affects women, men, boys and girls differently, as well as engaging with youth to allow their voice to be heard in small arms dialogue and debates. At the same time, the youth were empowered to participate in ensuring that their educational and recreational spaces remain safe havens, protected from the scourge of small arms violence.

21. Through media-monitoring research, the Centre tracked incidents involving small arms in schools across the region: acts of violence committed with firearms or simply their illegal presence on school grounds. The growing phenomenon of small arms-related violence in schools across the region was examined by the Centre, along with existing national public policy and legislative responses. This research was focused on international and regional best practices on public policies and initiatives addressing the presence of small arms in schools, the impact of this and associated challenges. The result was a comprehensive study published by the Centre on the approaches to, challenges facing and responses by Latin American and Caribbean States to the phenomenon of small arms in schools. The study was successful in contributing to effective and informed programmatic responses to strengthening the institutional capacity of States to address the challenge and in generating momentum for social transformation. In October 2019, the Centre shared the most significant findings of the study with 90 national and international stakeholders (47 women) at a subregional seminar organized by the Centre in Lima to promote regional dialogue and the exchange of experiences on the challenges posed by the presence and use of small arms in schools. Participants included government representatives from the education and public security sectors, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and experts from the region.

22. This subregional event covered a diverse range of related topics, including protocols and guidelines for intervention and prevention; tools for data collection and management; safe storage practices; reporting mechanism; awareness and education campaigns; and other initiatives dedicated to reinforcing schools as safe, violence-free spaces. Real-life scenarios were shared, of which the most salient involved students carrying small arms in school settings, armed students threatening and intimidating their classmates and teachers and accidental and intentional shootings within schools. During the final session, calls were made for early-warning systems to be put in place and to address the subjective dimension and the social and cultural acceptance that comes with the possession of small arms, paying close attention to dominant patterns and cultural stereotypes built around masculinity.

23. Given the success of this event, Peru invited the Centre to replicate this work at the local level, in December 2019, targeting municipal education boards and teachers

and a Lima-based network of youth group leaders, concerning the link between firearms and schools. For many of the participants, it was the first time that they had participated in such an event, which brought together the education sector with the arms control sector and civil society at the local level. The participants went on to share the knowledge that they acquired at the event with other relevant actors in the country with a view to strengthening responses to the issue, which jeopardizes and weakens one of the most important spaces for ensuring the proper development of the region's children and youth. The Centre will continue to take a leadership role to facilitate international, national and local dialogue on the issue.

4. Supporting weapons interdictions through X-ray technology

24. One of the main contributing factors to keeping communities safe is ensuring that international borders and ports of entry remain secure, to prevent the illicit flow of arms and ammunition. The Centre is doing its part in this regard by working with frontline responders to mitigate the trafficking of weapons, through training initiatives and the provision of practical tools.

25. During the reporting period, over 100 screening officials (42 women) from Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Paraguay were trained to better detect and identify weapons and ammunition being illicitly shipped through different entry and exit points (ports, airports, courier services and penitentiary services). The course's main training tool is an X-ray identification guide containing descriptions and technical specifications of weapons, including parts and components and ammunition, highlighting innovative concealment methods often used by traffickers. The images in the guide populate an image library being used by national agents and customs officials across the region to improve visual threat detection at points of entry and exit.

26. The theoretical segment of the course is complemented by on-site simulations of package interdictions, whereby participants have to identify parts and components of disassembled small arms and ammunition using X-ray images. Participants also learn the procedures for handling suspicious or illicit goods.

27. To reach a greater number of beneficiaries, the course was piloted in English for the first time in October 2019, with the training of more than 30 X-ray screening operators and support personnel (12 women) with responsibilities in control and inspection at security check points in Barbados. The course had the result of improving State capacity – through the Royal Barbados Police Force, Customs Office, Barbados Port, Postal Service and Prison Service. The course is now being requested in numerous other Caribbean States.

28. The direct impact of these courses was witnessed in an increased number of seizures by officials trained by the Centre during the reporting period. In the Dominican Republic, for example, a customs official trained by the Centre detected a disassembled small arm (9mm Glock pistol) being shipped to the country via the postal service. In Costa Rica, a private security official seized ammunition in the hand luggage of a passenger travelling on a domestic flight from San José. While in Paraguay, a customs official on duty at the airport participated in a seizure of more than 200 rifle ammunition cartridges found in hand luggage on an international flight.

5. Promoting small arms control measures among private security companies

29. In efforts to strengthen the capacities of the Governments of Member States to control small arms under the ownership of private security companies and promote good governance among this sector, the Centre provided technical assistance to the Dominican Republic, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. This assistance forms part of a project aimed at enhancing small arms control in the private security sector in the

region through support for the application of the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium and the SaferGuard International Ammunition Technical Guidelines with the ultimate goal of reducing diversion and proliferation of weapons and ammunition.

30. In follow-up assistance to the country, the Centre returned to the Dominican Republic to conduct voluntary assessments of armouries and storage facilities in four private security companies in October 2019. These assessments provided insight into their status, highlighting the challenges in small arms management and control, and completed with a presentation of recommendations on measures that could be taken to comply with the Compendium and the Guidelines.

31. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Centre launched its assistance to private security companies in October 2019 by hosting an executive seminar to raise awareness of private security regulations and small arms control, as well as a technical workshop on international standards vis-à-vis physical security and stockpile management targeting over 60 officials of national authorities and operational personnel from private security companies (10 women). Both events led to improved dialogue between the authorities and the private security companies present, as well as to the identification of opportunities to work together towards good governance of the sector with the ultimate goal of minimizing the risks and threats posed by inadequate management and control of small arms and ammunition.

32. In September 2019, 60 personnel (6 women) from private security regulatory entities and armouries in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador with responsibilities in international transfer controls increased their awareness of provisions found in international instruments related to arms import controls, in particular, those that apply to cases in which the private security companies are the arms importers and intended end users. During two national exercises, the Centre shared its risk assessment methodology, which can be used for analysing and authorizing the imports of arms and ammunition, to aid the States in avoiding straw purchases and diversion and preventing illicit arms transfers.

33. In March 2020, the National Regulatory Entity for Security Services, Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives for Civil Use of Peru requested the Centre for technical support with regard to small arms marking for 30 representatives (9 women) from various divisions within the Entity. The Centre highlighted the marking of small arms and ammunition as a key control measure to combat illicit trafficking and presented marking obligations under international instruments, technical guidelines, standards and regional best practices, including the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. The theoretical segment was complemented by a practical session involving a marking exercise, in which the Centre demonstrated the practical use of its laser marking machine. The information imparted during the workshop is expected to support the development of regulations corresponding to the national act on the control of arms and ammunition (N° 30299) on the marking of small arms to foster standardization of practices at the national level.

6. Ammunition management and controls

34. The Centre conducted two case studies on profiling ammunition in Peru and the Dominican Republic. The two main data sources originated from the reported seizures of ammunition at ports and airports and ammunition recovered at crime scenes. The main findings of the Peruvian study were presented to 40 government officials (9 women) during a workshop on ammunition management and controls in Lima, in December 2019. The workshop showcased how ammunition collected at crime scenes and ballistic data can serve as valuable information to establish armed violence

patterns and identify “hotspots”. The Centre also shared insight into the recommended methodology for conducting evidence-based research to identify tendencies or patterns related to illicit trafficking, diversion and armed violence. These recommendations derived from a regional expert meeting on methodological practices organized by the Centre in Lima, in December 2019.

35. The Centre was also invited to present the research methodology used in both studies, along with the outcomes of the regional expert meeting, at an informal expert meeting held in London in December 2019 on monitoring and diagnosing ammunition diversion, trafficking and misuse, organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

36. In conformity with General Assembly resolution [72/55](#), the Centre spearheaded a series of national workshops on ammunition control and regulation, which were held in Colombia, in November 2019, and Peru, in December 2019, and benefited 70 policymakers (14 women) on issues ranging from the different stages of the life cycle of ammunition management to the findings of the Centre’s research on national ammunition control practices in the region. Likewise, the workshops offered insights by experts from Brazil and the Dominican Republic who were invited to present their national experiences in ammunition tracing and import marking of ammunition for civilian use, respectively.

37. The conclusions of these workshops fed into the global process towards the meetings of the group of governmental experts initiated in 2020 on the problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

38. The meetings of the group of governmental experts in 2020 also benefited from the outcomes of the informal discussions held during two international outreach seminars on conventional ammunition control delivered to Latin American and Caribbean audiences. These events, reaching 100 operational-level and political-level national officials (32 women), were aimed at increasing capacities concerning the safe, secure and accountable management of conventional ammunition, as well as collating input from States on their regulatory and assistance needs in this regard. The Centre linked all technical dialogue on the subject to the existing international guidelines and cooperation frameworks, most notably the SaferGuard programme and the Technical Guidelines.

39. In June 2020, the Centre finalized its regional legislative working paper on national ammunition control measures and practices. Also in June 2020, the translation of the Technical Guidelines into Spanish was completed, and they are set to be launched imminently. The availability of the Guidelines in Spanish will bolster substantially the expansion and application of the Guidelines throughout the Latin American region, making them more accessible to all practitioners and control authorities, and thus leading to a safer region.

7. Improving firearms tracing capacity

40. Assisting States with improving their implementation of arms control instruments, including the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, was the focus of several activities within the Centre’s project portfolio.

41. With a view to enhancing tracing capabilities, the Centre continued to work with States to reinforce national forensic procedures for tracing illicit small arms and prosecuting criminals and traffickers by increasing the capacity of firearms examiners to present reliable ballistic evidence in courts of law. The backlog of firearms-related open cases is thereby reduced and ballistic information-sharing among States is improved.

42. In response to a request by the Dominican Republic for specialized training to improve its ability to carry out firearms-related criminal investigations, the Centre piloted its ballistic intelligence management course for the first time in the region in February 2020. Over 20 national officials (11 women) from State laboratories, police units and various ministries participated in a three-day training course. The course covered issues ranging from firearms and ammunition identification and classification to chain of custody and ballistic intelligence.

43. As part of its support to Barbados, the Centre implemented a three-part workshop in June and July on ballistic intelligence management, including the creation of physical open case files of ballistic material recovered from unsolved crime scenes, as well as the use of ballistic intelligence in investigations and prosecution of small arms-related crime.

44. As a follow-up to recommendations made by the Centre in 2018 on how Trinidad and Tobago could improve existing procedures related to case management and workflow processes at the Firearms Section of its Forensic Science Centre, the Centre delivered hands-on training in comparison microscopy in July 2019. This training better equipped firearms technicians to use a comparison microscope to conduct manual reviews for ballistic material to match known pairs and discover linkages between crime samples, with a view to reducing the time it takes to effectively process and report on the backlog of ballistic evidence submitted to the laboratory each year and hence lowering impunity in cases of armed violence. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre operationalized two additional training workshops on comparison microscopy for forensic ballistics and small arms identification, safety and evidence recovery in May and June 2020, targeting State armourers and laboratory technicians (15 participants) through an online training portal.

45. There is a persistent need in the field of forensic ballistics to increase the capacity and number of firearms technicians so that they may eventually become competent reporting officers, capable of signing off on forensic reports. To fulfil this need, the Centre completed the delivery of its training to six firearms technicians of the Royal Bahamas Police Force, implementing a series of online and in situ firearm examiner training sessions from January to November 2019.

46. To bolster regional cooperation and knowledge exchange, a series of webinars was conducted by the Centre from July to October 2019 for law enforcement personnel from the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago. The webinars were undertaken in collaboration in some instances with national forensic science laboratories, reaching a total of some 90 firearms examiners and ballistic laboratory technicians (19 women).

47. Officials from the Dominican Republic in July 2019, Saint Kitts and Nevis in October 2019, the Bahamas in November 2019 and Guyana in November 2019 benefited from national round tables to enhance firearms-related investigations and assess ballistic intelligence management capabilities. The round tables were focused on how to properly handle the forensic data related to recovered firearms evidence and the due process inherent in collecting it. The sessions brought together over 50 officials (14 women) from all relevant sectors (law enforcement officials, scientific experts, justice officials, etc.) in an inter-institutional manner.

8. Caribbean firearms road map

48. A road map for addressing Caribbean priority actions on the illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition across the Caribbean in a sustainable manner by 2030 (Caribbean firearms road map), was adopted by the Permanent Secretaries of National Security in the Caribbean in June 2020. The aim of the road map is to accelerate and

bolster Caribbean States' efforts to prevent and combat the illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition in the region. It will serve as a guiding and consensual document developed and owned by the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dominican Republic, and will provide a platform for commonly agreed levels of performance, as well as outline the commitments required at the strategic, policy and operational levels among the beneficiary States. The genesis of the road map is derived from the political commitments and actions adopted by CARICOM leaders at the nineteenth Special Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community on Security, convened in May 2019.

49. As a lead-up to this adoption, the Centre and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security of CARICOM, as the main implementing partners identified for the road map, conducted over 20 consultations with States between March and June 2020. The road map has the much-welcomed support of key stakeholders, including the Organization of American States, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Customs Organization, as well as the donor community, including Germany, the United States of America, Canada, the European Union, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Netherlands.

50. Following the adoption of the road map, the Centre and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security of CARICOM will assist Caribbean States in developing their own individual national action plans and help garner technical support for its domestic implementation. The plans will serve States in mapping out their priorities and timelines for implementing the goals and actions stipulated in the road map. The road map will contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, more specifically to target 16.4, the aim of which is to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flow by 2030.

B. Supporting the implementation of multilateral instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

51. In response to requests by Caribbean States for support in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Centre continued to implement its assistance programme in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The programme offers the technical tools and legal assistance to effectively implement the resolution, in particular on issues related to biosecurity and biosafety, maritime and port security and operational focus lists.

52. In follow-up to the legal assistance provided to Peru in the drafting of its bill on biological weapons and their destruction during the previous reporting period, the Centre delivered a workshop on non-proliferation instruments for 30 national officials (12 women) in November 2019. The Centre provided its expertise on biosafety and biosecurity in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. The Centre's inputs will be applied by the country in the future development of a national regulatory regime to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention. The workshop also served to emphasize the need for inter-agency coordination and communication among relevant entities to advance on finalizing and validating the bill.

53. To support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Centre delivered a commodity identification training on dual-use goods for 40 customs officials, and government and private sector representatives (17 women) in

the Dominican Republic in October 2019. The training sessions were conducted with the support of the United States Department of Energy, consultants of the Export Control and Related Border Security Program of the United States Department of State, and the World Customs Organization.

54. The Centre returned to the country in December 2019, in partnership with the Ministry of Defence of the Dominican Republic, to develop effective measures to prevent non-State actors from acquiring and using dual-use biological material for illegal purposes and improve physical protection measures of such items, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). A seminar was organized and the Centre provided technical assistance in the revision of the country's bill against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which was drafted with the legal support of the Centre during previous reporting periods. This exercise presented an opportunity for 43 national officials and experts (15 women) to discuss the need to develop relevant regulatory provisions to further strengthen and accompany the bill. Lastly, the workshop promoted a discussion on the importance of inter-agency coordination and communication among governmental institutions, the private sector, academia and industry to effectively implement resolution 1540 (2004) in the Dominican Republic.

55. Given the pivotal role of customs officials in strategic trade controls and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Centre invited 16 customs officials (6 women) from 10 Caribbean States to a regional seminar in Belize in November 2019. The event introduced practical tools to assist States in preventing the proliferation of dual-use items and to implement national licensing frameworks to regulate strategic trade flows.

IV. Staffing, financing and administration

A. Finances

56. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/60 J, the Centre was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions made by Member States and interested organizations for its core and programme activities. In 2019, voluntary contributions to the Centre's trust fund were received in the amount of \$440,635. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation to the Government of Peru for the support that it has provided in its capacity as host country to the Centre. The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to the Centre's donors, the Governments of Germany, Guyana, Panama and Sweden and to the Arms Trade Treaty voluntary trust fund for their ongoing financial support. The Secretary-General also expresses his thanks to the Governments of Canada and the United States for their generous and ongoing support to several multi-year programmes that were implemented throughout the reporting period. Those contributions, along with contributions from the European Union and Switzerland enabled the Centre to continue to assist Member States in the region, at their request, throughout the reporting period.

57. The Secretary-General also expresses his appreciation to Mexico and Panama for their financial contributions. He continues to encourage financial and in-kind contributions from Latin American and Caribbean States as a clear indication of the value that Member States place on the Centre's expertise and technical assistance.

58. The Secretary-General wishes to thank all States and partners for their generous contributions to and support for the Centre and encourages their ongoing support to ensure that the Centre can continue to provide technical and capacity-building assistance to Member States in the region, at their request, in fulfilment of its

mandate. Information on the status of the trust fund for the Centre for 2019 is contained in the annex to the present report.

B. Staffing and administration

59. The regular budget of the United Nations funds the posts of one Senior Political Affairs Officer/Director of the Centre (P-5), one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and one General Services staff member (G-7 Local level).

60. Project personnel posts are funded exclusively through voluntary contributions. The Centre recruited additional programmatic support personnel for its conventional arms and non-proliferation programmes, as well as international advisers to lead the Centre's women and security programme. Their contributions were aimed mainly at supporting the Centre's gender-focused initiatives, as well as assisting with the development of new virtual tools and guides, given the new demand for online tools in response to travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

61. In addition, six interns (5 women) and one United Nations Volunteer supported the Regional Centre with the implementation of projects and with the translation of communication and public relations material.

V. Conclusion

62. The Centre undertook more than 60 substantive activities to support States in their implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the Arms Trade Treaty, Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) and General Assembly resolution [65/69](#).

63. The Centre continued to expand its technical assistance in areas ranging from support for the marking and tracing of small arms and ammunition and combating illicit trafficking in them through improvements in the physical safety and security of government-owned and private security-owned stockpiles. The Centre also continued to support States in strengthening their national frameworks on import and export controls for conventional weapons and dual-use goods. Moreover, it supported States in their efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through the provision of legal assistance related to the Biological Weapons Convention and capacity-building workshops. Gender considerations were highlighted as an essential element for consideration in the small arms trade among national authorities pursuant to General Assembly resolution [65/69](#).

64. In line with the gender mainstreaming action plan of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Centre continued to promote the participation and role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control by ensuring a maximum number of female participants at all of its events, reaching more than 430 women. Women represented 35 per cent of all participants.

65. The Secretary-General reiterates his call to Member States and other partners in a position to do so to provide the Centre with the financial and in-kind support, including direct financial contributions from Latin American and Caribbean States, necessary for it to continue to carry out its mandate effectively and serve the needs of Member States in the region. The Secretary-General also encourages States to continue to fully utilize the Centre's expertise and experience in their joint efforts to promote peace, security and disarmament in the region.

Annex

Status of the trust fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2019

(United States dollars)

Accumulated surplus, 1 January 2019	3 405 090
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions ^a	440 635
Investment revenue	72 507
Other revenue	15 388
Total revenue	528 530
Expenses and refunds	
Operating expenses	2 105 622
Refund to donors ^b	78 515
Total expenses and refunds	2 184 137
Surplus/deficit for the year 2019	(1 655 607)
Accumulated surplus/deficit as at 31 December 2019	1 749 483

^a Consists of voluntary contributions in 2019: Germany \$78,126, Guyana \$1,022, Panama \$4,000, Peru \$40,131, Sweden \$262,467 and Arms Trade Treaty voluntary trust fund \$54,889.

^b Consists of refunds to the following donors: Germany \$55,868, Guatemala \$8,118, United States of America \$1,724, Arms Trade Treaty voluntary trust fund \$12,805.