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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 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, in line with General Assembly resolution [78/57](#).

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre carried out 78 technical, legal and policy-related activities to support Member States, at their request, in the implementation of international instruments relating to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. As part of those efforts, the Centre provided technical training and assistance to around 1,000 national officials (approximately 35 per cent of whom were women). The Regional Centre continued to provide support for the development and implementation of subregional initiatives through effective partnerships with regional and subregional stakeholders, while also strengthening its youth engagement through dedicated communication, outreach and training programmes.

The Regional Centre depends solely on voluntary financial contributions to implement its programme of activities. 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. The Secretary-General 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 continuing requests for assistance and cooperation by Member States in the region.

* [A/79/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [78/57](#), 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, recognized that the Regional Centre had an important role in the promotion and development of regional and subregional initiatives and encouraged the Centre to further develop activities in all countries of the region in support of peace, disarmament and development, and to provide, upon request and in accordance with its mandate, support to Member States.

2. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its seventy-ninth session. In the present report, submitted pursuant to that request, the main activities carried out by the Regional Centre from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 are highlighted. A financial statement on the status of the trust fund for the Centre in 2023 is contained in the annex to the present report.

II. Function and mandate

3. The Regional 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. The Regional Centre continued to support States in their efforts to implement multilateral instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#).

5. In line with regional priorities, the Regional Centre provided technical, legal and policy assistance to States in Latin America and the Caribbean focusing on national capacity-building to combat illicit firearms trafficking and strengthen the physical safety and security management of government-held stockpiles to prevent the diversion of weapons and ammunition into illicit markets. Activities that involved exploring recent developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design were of great interest across the region. The Centre also continued to support subregional road map initiatives, both in the Caribbean and in Central America.

6. In addition, the Regional Centre further strengthened and diversified its partnerships with regional and international partners and civil society to carry out its mandate, continued to empower women and young people to play an active role in the field of disarmament and reinforced its outreach and communication initiatives to promote its activities and the importance of disarmament to peace and security in the region. The Centre leveraged digital communications technologies and virtual meeting platforms to supplement in-person activities in order to deliver on its mandate within available resources.

7. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre carried out 78 technical, legal and policy-related activities to support Member States, at their request, in the implementation of international instruments relating to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. As part of those efforts, the Centre provided technical training and assistance to around 1,000 national officials (approximately 35 per cent of whom were women). Most notably, the Centre's work has led to the finalization of a draft firearms law in Haiti, advancements in the implementation of the Road Map for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 (Caribbean Firearms Road Map) and the development of a zero draft for a future Central American firearms road map.

A. Disarmament trends in the region and emerging risks and opportunities

8. The Latin America and Caribbean region continues to rank as having the highest homicide rate in the world,¹ which is often owing to the high level of organized crime and the proliferation of firearms and ammunition. Beyond those homicides, an average of 11 femicides were committed in the region every day in 2022. Firearms are also used to commit physical, sexual and psychological violence in contexts of gender violence.² These trends negatively shape the lives and livelihoods of people and communities and lead to mounting public concerns over personal safety and security, making the control and regulation of conventional arms and the management of ammunition a central priority for States in the region.

9. The knock-on effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the region continues to compound an already difficult social and economic situation, resulting in the period 2014–2023 often being referred to as a second “lost decade”, during which previously made progress was eroded. Many countries in the region struggle with slow economic recoveries, high rates of unemployment, increased poverty and inequality, which are factors underpinning armed violence and crime. Gangs and organized criminal groups have capitalized on this economic downturn and the region has witnessed the emergence of new hotspots and unprecedented levels of insecurity and armed violence, with the impact of high levels of armed violence affecting Ecuador and Haiti in particular. While some countries in the region have responded by taking overly securitized and militarized approaches, resulting in the number of private security companies increasing steadily, effective regulation and oversight over this sector often lags.

10. Armed violence is not a localized or national phenomenon. It has spillover effects that are visible across the region, due to the transnational nature of organized crime, which encompasses arms and ammunition trafficking. In the light of the demand for and supply of weapons and ammunition in the region, effective arms control mechanisms and ammunition management at all levels and across borders are required, while new trafficking trends require novel approaches and specific capacity-building to ensure adequate national responses. Capacity-building should cover the shipping of weapon parts by courier and recent developments in weapons manufacturing, technology and design, such as 3D printed weapons, which are being increasingly detected in the region.

¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “UNODC global study on homicide 2023: homicide and organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean”.

² The information is based on statistics prepared by the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean using data collected from 26 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. Member States in the region have demonstrated their leadership in discussions on these topics in global forums, as well as an interest to enhance their capacities and response mechanisms to address emerging trends and political will to address armed violence through subregional initiatives.

12. The increased awareness that arms control and ammunition management must go hand in hand with prevention efforts and sustainable development is also notable.

B. Weapons of mass destruction

13. Building on the work of previous years, the Regional Centre supported States in the adoption and enforcement of effective measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery to non-State actors, in particular for terrorist purposes.

14. The Regional Centre supported the activities of the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit for the Latin America and Caribbean region throughout the reporting period. In October 2023, the Centre participated in a regional workshop for national contact points, held in the Dominican Republic, where it presented, among other things, the findings from its study on challenges and opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the non-proliferation of biological and toxin weapons, which was published in 2022.³ During a workshop on the Biological Weapons Convention held in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in May 2024, the Centre also gave a presentation on effective legal frameworks that enable the implementation of the Convention.

15. The Regional Centre also provided support in discussions on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. In October 2023, the subregional forum on national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in Bridgetown, brought together Caribbean States parties to the Convention and encouraged broader subregional cooperation and engagement on the implementation of the Convention by sharing experiences, challenges and good practices and building networks and new working relationships.

16. In October 2023, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Germany, supported the organization of a regional industry outreach conference for Latin American States, held in Chile, as part of the Wiesbaden process. The conference brought together 26 government and industry representatives (15 of whom were women) to foster dialogue and strengthen partnerships for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), building on the outcomes and discussions of the regional industry outreach conference held in Mexico in 2017. During the meeting, representatives of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Peru, as well as representatives of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation of the United States of America and the Organization of American States (OAS) discussed the significance of enhancing collaboration between States and industry, reaffirming that the latter constitutes the first line of defence to prevent any unauthorized diversion of dual-use goods to non-State actors.

³ United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, “La no proliferación de armas biológicas: desafíos y oportunidades para la América Latina y el Caribe”, 2022. Available at <https://unlirec.org/en/publicacion/the-non-proliferation-of-biological-weapons-challenges-and-opportunities-for-latin-america-and-the-caribbean>.

17. The Regional Centre further supported non-proliferation activities in the region by taking part in a multilateral workshop for the western hemisphere on the Proliferation Security Initiative, held in Chile in March 2024. At the meeting, the Regional Centre presented an overview of proliferation risks in Latin America and the Caribbean, including vulnerabilities, and the issue of scientific and technological development, in particular concerning dual-use items, as well as programming activities relating to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) under the umbrella of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and its regional centres. The Regional Centre also contributed to the joint efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of OAS to provide multiphased support to Ecuador in strengthening the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), including through the participation in a virtual meeting during which the drafting of a national action plan for the country was discussed.

C. Conventional arms and ammunition

18. In 2023, Member States adopted the new Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and, in June 2024, the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 was held in New York. With the control and regulation of conventional arms and the management of ammunition remaining central priorities for States in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Centre continued to champion national and regional initiatives and capacity-building in 2023 and 2024, thus enabling States to advance their efforts in the implementation of global instruments.

19. In preparation for the fourth Review Conference, the Regional Centre organized two virtual regional preparatory meetings in March 2024, one of which was for Latin American States and the other for Caribbean States, with funding from the European Union. A total of 25 States from the region participated in those meetings, which also involved representatives of regional organizations.

20. Over 60 participants, around half of whom were women, discussed the importance of curbing the supply of, as well as the demand for, weapons in the fight against their trafficking and exchanged views on how to address recent developments in weapons manufacturing, technology and design in the context of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Issues such as the nexus between arms control and development, and gender, young people and inclusion, were also discussed, as were coordination and synergies with other instruments. Key themes for the region, such as the role of private security companies, as well as international cooperation and assistance, were also on the agenda.⁴

21. The regional preparatory meetings served as a forum for identifying regional priorities and common positions ahead of the Review Conference and concluded with an interactive exchange on the next steps with the President-designate of the Conference. The meetings were accompanied by a social media campaign to promote the importance of the fourth Review Conference and key areas of interest.

22. Following the adoption of the Global Framework, the Regional Centre hosted an informal regional meeting on the application of the Global Framework in Latin

⁴ For more information on the preparatory meetings, see <https://unlirec.org/en/publicacion/regional-preparatory-meeting-revcon4>.

American and the Caribbean in Peru in May 2024. The meeting served to unpack and raise awareness of the new political commitments made by States. Over the course of two days, 65 representatives of States and international and non-governmental organizations engaged in a fruitful dialogue on opportunities, challenges, gaps and needs for the regional and national implementation of the Global Framework.

23. A background paper on the Global Framework and its application in Latin America and the Caribbean, published by the Regional Centre in December 2023, was presented at the meeting and served as an input for discussions. The paper, the preparation of which was funded by Germany, serves to identify synergies between the Global Framework and other relevant international and regional instruments and provides specific recommendations for the implementation of the Global Framework in the region.⁵

1. Regional and subregional initiatives

24. Since 2021, Member States have recognized the important role of regional and subregional initiatives in combating the illicit trade in arms and their ammunition, including the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the Global Framework. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to promote and support such initiatives, in collaboration with regional and subregional partners, and promoted those efforts jointly with the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons during a side event on the margins of the fourth Review Conference in June 2024.

Caribbean Firearms Road Map

25. The Regional Centre continued to support the Caribbean Firearms Road Map, adopted in 2020 by 15 States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dominican Republic, and their efforts towards creating a safer Caribbean region by addressing the issue of the illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition. Since its adoption, the Regional Centre has acted as co-custodian of the Road Map alongside the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security and has provided support for the Road Map process and to States in support of its timely and effective implementation. During the reporting period, 34 activities were carried out by the Centre in support of the implementation of the four goals of the Road Map,⁶ with support from Canada, Germany and the United States, and the European Union.

26. On 14 and 15 November 2023, officials from States participating in the Road Map gathered in Saint Lucia for their third annual meeting of States. The meeting brought together national officials, as well as ministers of security and other high-level representatives of the Caribbean region and international community to discuss the implementation of the Road Map. During the meeting, States adopted a joint statement, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to the Road Map and to addressing illicit firearms and ammunition trafficking as a matter of urgency. In the statement, States also acknowledged the importance of evidenced-based decision-making and of monitoring and evaluation as part of the implementation of the Road Map. They also proposed a technical midterm review of the implementation of the

⁵ For more information on the informal regional meeting and the background paper, see <https://unlirec.org/en/publicacion/informal-regional-meeting-on-the-global-framework-for-through-life-conventional-ammunition-management>.

⁶ The goals are as follows: goal 1, reinforce regulatory frameworks governing firearms and ammunition; goal 2, reduce the illicit flow of firearms and ammunition into, within and beyond the region; goal 3, bolster law enforcement capacity to combat illicit firearms and ammunition trafficking and their illicit possession and misuse; and goal 4, systematically decrease the risk of diversion of firearms and ammunition from government- and non-government-owned arsenals.

Road Map in 2025 and requested that recommendations resulting from the review be presented to States at the annual meeting in June 2024 for their consideration.⁷

27. In its role as co-custodian, the Regional Centre, together with the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, supported States in developing national action plans and baseline assessments under the Road Map. For example, support was provided to Barbados for the drafting of its national action plan during a round-table meeting held in July 2023. During the third annual meeting of States, Barbados announced that a plan had been officially approved, making it the ninth State in the region to have completed this milestone. At the same meeting, the Bahamas and Dominica recommitted to advancing the development of their national action plans by hosting inter-institutional round-table meetings, which are expected to be held in September 2024.

28. Monitoring and evaluation remain key components in the implementation of the Road Map. In this regard, the Regional Centre continued to highlight their importance for tracking progress and for identifying areas where States may require further support. Improvements were made in 2023 and 2024 to the custom-built web-based reporting platform, which included the translation of the platform into Spanish and French, thus allowing the Dominican Republic and Haiti to fully adopt the reporting tool.

29. In the lead-up to the third annual meeting of States, the Regional Centre hosted three regional monitoring, evaluation and reporting webinars and two virtual training workshops to showcase the reporting platform and to support States in the submission of their national reports. In addition, bilateral monitoring and evaluation meetings were held with national focal points for the implementation of the Road Map to address their technical questions regarding the baseline assessment questionnaire in the platform and the adequate calculation of the key performance indicators.

30. The Regional Centre further consolidated the partner coordination mechanism⁸ to ensure the effective coordination and implementation of assistance under the Road Map. In October 2023 and April 2024, the Regional Centre hosted virtual partner coordination meetings, which facilitated, for example, information-sharing on activities that are being implemented under the Road Map. Partners also coordinated their efforts through the partner reporting platform, with 61 activities recorded in the platform during the reporting period. This brought the total number of activities, which included capacity-building, equipment donation and legal and technical assistance, recorded in the platform in support of the Road Map since 2021 to 160. A catalogue of assistance was also established during the reporting period, which presents the details of all the available assistance that partners can provide to States in support of the implementation of the Road Map. The catalogue now includes 53 entries, outlining potential technical and legal assistance across the four goals of the Road Map.⁹

⁷ For more information on the annual meeting and the joint statement, see <https://unirec.org/en/publicacion/3rd-annual-meeting-of-states-of-the-caribbean-firearms-roadmap/>.

⁸ The mechanism includes three components: (a) partner coordination meetings; (b) a partner reporting platform; and (c) a catalogue of assistance. Members of the partner coordination mechanism include the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (co-custodian), the Regional Centre (co-custodian), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the World Customs Organization, the Organization of American States, the Mines Advisory Group and the Small Arms Survey.

⁹ Available at <https://unirec.org/wp-content/uploads/Catalogue-of-Assistance-ALL.pdf>.

31. The Regional Centre also provided direct assistance to States on the implementation of all four goals of the Road Map, encompassing legal, technical and policy assistance, including gender-related activities, with financial support from Canada, Germany and the United States.

32. In response to the deteriorating security situation in Haiti, with gang-related violence and human rights abuses committed by armed gangs reaching unprecedented levels, the Regional Centre continued to support Haiti in line with the mandate of the Security Council and national action plan adopted by Haiti under the Caribbean Firearms Road Map. In March 2024, the country's inter-institutional task force on the implementation of the national strategy for disarmament, disengagement, reintegration and community violence reduction submitted a draft firearms law to the Ministry of Justice and Security, successfully concluding the work it had initiated in 2020 with the support of the Regional Centre, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The submission, which was accompanied by a recommendation to adopt the law, marked a milestone for Haiti towards strengthening its legal framework on firearms and ammunition.

33. Haiti also benefited from capacity-building initiatives, which resulted in 19 officials from the Haitian National Police being trained to restore obliterated firearms markings and trace seized and found firearms with a view to strengthening national firearms investigations. In December 2023, the Regional Centre also provided training on physical security and stockpile management to 33 officials from Haiti to reinforce national capacities to prevent and reduce the diversion of weapons and ammunition. A technical assessment was also conducted in December in three State-owned armouries in Haiti to identify assistance needs and opportunities to enhance physical security and stockpile management. The Regional Centre will provide capacity-building and equipment to the Haitian National Police in response to the recommendations identified during the assessment.

34. Beyond Haiti, and in support of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Road Map, the Regional Centre carried out a range of activities to assist States in the prevention of illicit trafficking and armed crimes through enhanced investigation and detection capacities. A total of 30 officials (5 of whom were women) of the Customs and Excise Division of Dominica and the Airport and Sea Ports Authority of Dominica were trained on interdicting small arms, ammunition, parts and components. A course on combating trafficking in arms and ammunition was provided in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago to over 70 officials (30 of whom were women).

35. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Regional Centre assessed the forensic ballistic capabilities of the police during a visit in October 2023 and provided an introductory course on operational forensic ballistics to build capacities among forensic officials and other staff in the use of forensic ballistics to support criminal investigations and counter the proliferation of firearms.

36. Effective tracing of operations depends on the adequate marking and record-keeping of firearms. To facilitate such operations, a firearms marking workshop was held in Jamaica in April 2024, during which 20 officials (11 of whom were women) were trained on laser marking to support the development of guidelines for the marking of firearms in Jamaica. In addition, authorities in Grenada and Saint Lucia built their capacities to restore obliterated, removed or altered markings, thus allowing those States to recover serial numbers on illicit firearms and trace them back to their last known legal owners to initiate trafficking investigations.

37. In support of goal 4 of the Road Map, to systematically decrease the risk of diversion of firearms and ammunition from government- and non-government-owned arsenals, the Regional Centre provided training and equipment to States during the reporting period. This included training workshops on physical security and stockpile

management for the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, which were focused on improving the capacity of security sector agencies and aligning their work with international standards and best practices. In Barbados, an assessment of its physical security and stockpile management practices was carried out, resulting in the recommendation of specific risk reduction measures at armouries. Equipment, which included replacement blades for hydraulic shears to facilitate weapons destruction, was donated to Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Chop saws were also donated to support weapons destruction in Barbados, while light ammunition burning tanks were received by both Barbados and Jamaica. To improve safety and physical security measures, the Regional Centre procured and delivered weapon clearing stations to Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis, as well as high security padlocks, hasps and bespoke firearm and ammunition storage racks and cabinets.

38. To enhance armoury management practices across the Caribbean region, a training course was provided to 29 individuals, including 5 women, in charge of different armouries in 13 Caribbean States. This course complemented the manufacturer-based training received by Caribbean States and equipped armourers with the knowledge, skills and abilities to strengthen small arms and ammunition control and management in their respective countries. The course also touched on the safe and efficient inspection, repair and maintenance of commonly used firearms in the Caribbean.

39. The destruction of illicit and surplus weapons and ammunition constitutes an effective method of reducing the actual number of weapons and ammunition on the illicit market. Against this backdrop, training on the destruction of firearms and ammunition was provided to Barbados and Saint Kitts and Nevis in May 2024. At the end of the destruction exercise, 334 firearms, 132 fragmentation grenades, 40 smoke grenades, 25 whistling booby traps and over 300 pounds of unstable and obsolete ammunition were destroyed. Six officers were also trained in weapons and ammunition destruction, two of whom in Saint Kitts and Nevis and four in Barbados.

40. Firearms and ammunition evidence inventory management assessments were carried out in three Caribbean States. In Jamaica, priority was given to the Ballistics Section at the Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine; in Saint Kitts and Nevis, an assessment was conducted at the exhibit storage facilities of the police; and in Barbados, two assessments were requested, one of which at the Firearm Examiners Office and the other at the police service exhibit management facility. All assessments were intended to review firearm and ammunition evidence storage practices at each facility and served to identify priority areas for further technical assistance that might be required.

Central American firearms road map

41. With funding from the European Union, the Regional Centre continued to support the development of a Central American firearms road map to prevent the illicit proliferation and trafficking of firearms and ammunition, in collaboration with OAS and the Central American Integration System. During the reporting period, support for the development of the road map was provided in four phases.

42. Phase one in 2023 encompassed sensitizing States to the mandate provided by the General Assembly of OAS; mapping the relevant national institutions with responsibilities in arms control and armed violence prevention; and the designation of national focal points by all participating States, namely Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama.

43. During phase two, those focal points participated in a subregional dialogue to develop specific priorities, objectives, actions and the format of the road map. This

culminated in a regional meeting, held in Panama, which brought together all focal points, as well as technical staff from OAS, the Regional Centre and the Central American Integration System. At the meeting, four thematic pillars for the road map were established: (a) strengthening of norms and institutional coordination; (b) prevention of armed violence and the misuse of firearms; (c) management of the life cycle of weapons, ammunition and accessories; and (d) investigation and criminal prosecution of illicit trafficking, possession and use of arms and ammunition.

44. Phase three, which took place in early 2024, included the development of the zero draft of what could become the road map. The draft document is based on the discussions held during phase one and phase two at the national and subregional levels and was shared with States for their review.

45. Phase four, which constituted a broad consultative process on the zero draft, was initiated in April 2024. This process included a series of in-person national round-table meetings with authorities from participating States, the international community, including the United Nations country teams, as well as civil society organizations that provide relevant assistance to Central American countries. Meetings were held in Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama between April and June 2024. Further meetings are planned with the remaining countries.

2. National initiatives

46. The Regional Centre continued to support the implementation of initiatives under the Saving Lives Entity fund as part of a comprehensive approach by United Nations entities with regard to sustainable security and development. It also continued to offer its flagship courses that were developed in response to the priorities of the region.

Saving Lives Entity fund projects

47. In Honduras, a Saving Lives Entity fund initiative was designed and launched during the reporting period. The initiative is designed to support activities aimed at tackling the presence and use of firearms in schools, and enhance the control and management of arms and ammunition held as evidence in judicial depots, strengthen legal frameworks and facilitate training for security and justice sector personnel to integrate a gender perspective into firearms-related criminal investigations.

48. Panama has been identified as a new beneficiary country of the Saving Lives Entity fund. In November 2023, the Regional Centre participated in a scoping mission, which included consultations with national authorities and partners, resulting in the recommendation to develop a proposal focused on gun-free schools for peace and sustainable development in the Colón Province. The Regional Centre will support the United Nations country team in Panama in implementing the proposal, once approved.

Flagship courses

49. Faced with the constantly evolving challenges of arms and ammunition trafficking in the region, the Regional Centre supported efforts to combat and prevent the illicit trafficking of firearms, their parts, components and ammunition and explosives through the provision of specialized training courses. In the Caribbean, the flagship courses were delivered in support of the implementation of the Caribbean Firearms Road Map.

50. The Regional Centre delivered its flagship course on combating trafficking in arms and ammunition to 120 participants (44 of whom were women) from the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago to strengthen their

capacities to implement effective strategies for preventing and combating the illicit trafficking of firearms and ammunition, in line with international arms control instruments. The courses in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago brought together arms control practitioners from different authorities, while the Regional Centre responded to requests from specific institutions in the Dominican Republic and Peru, where the course was provided to the Prosecutor's Office and border forces, respectively. The interest in such training has been notable, with Guatemala reporting that since receiving training in 2023, the course has been replicated, with the materials that were provided being used to benefit additional institutions in the country. The course has also generated interest in capacity-building that is focused on combating the illicit manufacture of firearms and ammunition.

51. The Regional Centre responded to expressions of interest and provided capacity-building through dedicated workshops, during which the focus on 3D printed weapons was of particular interest to States. In 2023 and 2024, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru benefited from those workshops, during which the political commitments under international instruments were conveyed, as well as technical guidelines for addressing the illicit manufacture of firearms and ammunition. In total, 147 participants (35 of whom were women) discussed cases in the region, illustrating the common practices used by criminals, including the manufacture of firearms using 3D printing technology, computer numerical control machines or reverse engineering processes. In August 2023, the Regional Centre provided training for officials of the Prosecutor's Office of Guatemala working on organized crime cases, as well as for officials of the Division for Highly Complex Investigations of Peru in April 2024.

52. The course on interdicting small arms, ammunition, parts and components provides specialized training for X-ray operators who perform control and inspection functions at entry, exit and transit points. The course strengthened the capacity of 149 operators (106 men and 43 women) in Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica and Guatemala in 2023 and 2024 to better identify threats such as small arms, their ammunition, parts and components and explosives trafficked through postal shipments, parcels, household goods and luggage. Over the course of three weeks, participants were taught during theoretical sessions and through practical exercises, including hands-on training on an X-ray simulation platform developed by the Centre for Adaptive Security Research and Applications. The training yielded tangible results; for example, Chile and Colombia reported that weapon parts shipped by courier services had been detected.

53. To integrate a gender perspective into policymaking and operational programming, the Regional Centre developed a generalist training course on gender mainstreaming in arms control, to provide knowledge and build the capacities of State agencies to incorporate a gender perspective in the analysis of the impacts of armed violence and in the design of firearms control and regulation initiatives. The course was piloted in November 2023 in Colombia, bringing together 27 participants (13 of whom were women) to discuss how to achieve greater inter-institutional cooperation between sectors with responsibilities in arms control and gender equality. The course covered key concepts on gender and firearms, policy frameworks and converging agendas, data collection and gender analysis, as well as the gender perspective in small arms control initiatives. The course material has been finalized based on the feedback received during the pilot course and will now be rolled out in the region, complementing existing specialized courses on firearms investigations from a gender perspective.

D. Strengthening partnerships for disarmament

54. The Regional Centre continued to strengthen and diversify its partnerships to ensure the full and effective participation of stakeholders in the implementation of its mandate. To that end, the Centre continued and furthered its collaboration with national, subregional and regional organizations, United Nations entities, funds and programmes, as well as civil society organizations, think tanks, academia and youth networks in the region.

55. The main partners during the year were, once again, regional and subregional organizations, namely the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security for the Caribbean Firearms Road Map and OAS for the Central American firearms road map. The Regional Centre also supported the work of those organizations and participated, among other things, in the eleventh Caribbean-United States Security Cooperation Dialogue, organized by the United States and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, as well as in forums hosted by OAS, including consultations on the regional guidelines for preventing gender-based violence with the use of firearms, the Committee on Hemispheric Security and a workshop on promoting military confidence-building measures.

56. The Regional Centre strengthened its partnerships with United Nations entities, funds and programmes across the region, with a view to integrating disarmament and arms control considerations into the work of the respective United Nations country teams. In Haiti, the Regional Centre deepened its cooperation to increase the impact and sustainability of its assistance and to anchor it firmly within the broader United Nations strategy, which promotes security, stability and good governance in the country. To that end, the Regional Centre participated regularly in coordination meetings on weapons and ammunition management, organized by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti for the United Nations system, and worked in close coordination with the country to prepare the draft firearms law and conduct the stockpile assessment. Beyond Haiti, the Regional Centre worked with United Nations entities in Honduras and Panama under the framework of the Saving Lives Entity fund. The respective United Nations country teams were also briefed on the Central American firearms road map to lay a strong foundation for future collaborations. The Regional Centre also worked with the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, by providing insights into arms trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

57. With respect to gender- and arms control-specific activities, the Regional Centre partnered with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to co-host a webinar in May 2024 that promoted gender-responsive arms control in the context of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the Arms Trade Treaty. In collaboration with the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Regional Centre hosted a side event on the margins of the fourth Review Conference held in June 2024, which highlighted how gender mainstreaming can take place in small arms control operations.

58. The Regional Centre has collaborated with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in capacity-building activities, in particular the course on combating trafficking in arms and ammunition, by inviting its technical experts to deliver presentations on their areas of expertise, which enriched the content and promoted the use of additional tools that would benefit the participants in the conduct of their functions.

59. Civil society organizations, think tanks and academia remained vital partners in promoting disarmament and arms control and the work of the Regional Centre. The

Regional Centre participated in various activities, including an event organized by the Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control and Small Arms Survey, among others, held in Chile in October 2023, by providing a presentation on human rights, the impact of weapons and the legislative situation in Latin America and the Caribbean with a view to strengthening parliamentary action. The Regional Centre also gave a presentation on the importance of youth engagement in arms control prevention policies during a youth session organized by Esfuerzos de Mujeres Bolivianas. Civil society organizations were largely engaged in the Saving Lives Entity fund projects, as well as processes relating to the Caribbean Firearms Road Map and Central American firearms road map.

60. The Regional Centre also ensured the engagement of a broader audience through social media campaigns. Such campaigns included the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign in 2023, which promoted arms control in support of eliminating violence against women, and a campaign, in commemoration of International Women's Day on 8 March, in which the Regional Centre joined the global campaign of UNDP to highlight the importance of investing in women's participation in disarmament and increasing their participation in decision-making processes on peace and security. Those initiatives are essential to raise awareness among the broader public of the relevance of disarmament and arms control and how they are linked to issues such as gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.

61. To enhance youth engagement and to ensure sustainable engagement with young people in the region, the Regional Centre mobilized resources to support initiatives in line with General Assembly resolution 74/64 on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth and peace and security.

62. The Regional Centre supported Youth for Disarmament, which is a youth outreach initiative that was established by the Office for Disarmament Affairs¹⁰ and is funded by Germany. Under this umbrella strategy, support was provided to a cohort of five young people (four of whom were women) from the Americas. Three specific workshops were organized for the cohort: a presentation on the Regional Centre and its work on preventing firearms in schools; a networking session with participants in the Youth for Disarmament initiative from Latin America and the Caribbean; and a peer-to-peer mentoring session during which the Youth Champions for Disarmament were invited to exchange on their respective disarmament projects. Support and tailored mentoring were provided for the development of personal disarmament projects, including the facilitation of contact with local entities and communities. The Regional Centre also supported the participation of a Youth Champion for Disarmament in the One Young World forum held in Nagasaki, Japan, in 2024, while another attended the informal regional meeting on the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and the fourth Review Conference.

63. In April 2024, the Regional Centre launched the first edition of the GenerAcción Paz programme¹¹ with funding from the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation. It is the first programme for Spanish speakers that is aimed at empowering Latin American and Caribbean young people to work together with the United Nations towards a region free of armed violence. Through the programme, which was widely promoted through social media and traditional media

¹⁰ For more information on the Youth for Disarmament initiative, see <https://youth4disarmament.org>.

¹¹ For more information on the GenerAcción Paz programme, see <https://unlirec.org/en/publicacion/generaccion-paz-building-dreams-disarming-violence/>.

and distribution channels, 10 youth leaders will be selected to embark on a nine-month-long programme from July 2024 onward.

64. Beyond its dedicated support to youth programmes, the Regional Centre is making continuous efforts to mainstream youth engagement across its activities. It developed a communications strategy that is aimed at engaging a young audience, with the launch, for instance, of a series of publications on the occasion of International Youth Day in August 2023. The Regional Centre also provided a dedicated briefing on the importance of youth mainstreaming in armed violence prevention policies during the regional preparatory meetings for the fourth Review Conference.

65. Finally, recognizing that schools are a fundamental pillar in ensuring the right to education and development of children, adolescents and young people, the Regional Centre continued to promote the results of its publication *Firearms in Latin American and Caribbean Schools: Approaches, Challenges and Responses*, while engaging with national and local authorities to promote safer schools.

E. Future activities

66. Between July and December 2024, the Regional Centre will sustain the aforementioned workstreams to support Member States in implementing international instruments relating to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. As a follow-up to the recent adoption of the Global Framework, the Regional Centre will also conduct research on good practices in the region and host further workshops to sensitize States to the commitments contained in the Global Framework, while also discussing ways forward for their implementation ahead of the preparatory meeting of States, which will be held in New York in 2025.

67. Importance will continue to be given to the road map processes. In the Caribbean, the focus will be on monitoring and evaluation ahead of the annual meeting of States in November, as well as on technical capacity-building to further support States in the implementation of the Caribbean Firearms Road Map and the convening of drafting meetings for national action plans with the Bahamas and Dominica in September 2024. In Central America, the Regional Centre will work with participating States and OAS to support the final phase of development of the road map, including the revision and consolidation of the draft document to build consensus towards the adoption of the road map. As part of the process, the introduction of a monitoring and evaluation component is also expected, as well as the establishment of a coordination mechanism to accompany the implementation of the road map, once adopted.

68. In Haiti, the Regional Centre will continue to support the implementation of a national action plan. With funding from Canada and the United States, the Regional Centre will support Haiti by providing legal and policy advice to strengthen national efforts for the control and regulation of firearms and ammunition; further enhance the capacity of the police with regard to physical security and stockpile management; and strengthen the country's capacities to intercept illicit firearms and ammunition at borders and prevent and reduce violence, including armed violence, against women and children. To support Ecuador in response to the deteriorating security situation, the Regional Centre will explore the possibility of extending its comprehensive assistance to authorities, upon request, including subregional initiatives and mechanisms to address the illicit trafficking of weapons and ammunition to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of assistance.

69. Under the Saving Lives Entity fund initiative, the Regional Centre will work with national authorities and UNDP in Honduras to tackle the presence and use of firearms in schools, while supporting national authorities to minimize diversion risks

by enhancing the control and management of arms and ammunition held as evidence in judicial depots, regulating the new legal framework on firearms and bolstering the capacities of security and justice sector personnel to integrate gender perspectives into firearms-related criminal investigations. Under the second phase of the Saving Lives Entity fund initiative in Jamaica, the Regional Centre intends to support the development of a national protocol to address and prevent cases of firearms in schools, as well as an inclusive consultative process to inform the development and later use of the protocol in 2024.

70. Given that firearms incidents in schools are a persistent problem in several countries across the region, the Regional Centre will maintain the momentum generated by its firearms in schools initiative and raise awareness of this important topic among more stakeholders and additional States in the region in 2024 and 2025.

71. With respect to gender, the Regional Centre intends to prominently promote women's participation and leadership in disarmament in the region on 8 December 2024, which marks the anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution [65/69](#) on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It also plans to provide specialized courses on integrating gender perspectives into firearms investigations and prosecutions, as well as other activities on gender and disarmament in the coming months. It further plans to develop a dedicated training course on disarmament and arms control to engage more prominently the women and peace and security community of practitioners.

72. As for youth engagement, the Regional Centre will provide regionally tailored training for young people on, for example, project development and facilitate speaking and mentorship opportunities for the participants of the Youth for Disarmament initiative. Through the GenerAcción Paz initiative, 10 Spanish-speaking youth leaders from Latin American and Caribbean countries will complete a programme under which a region free of armed violence is envisioned. The programme will offer them online courses, mentoring from experts and the possibility to launch their own initiatives and projects.

73. Along with these long-standing priorities, the Regional Centre will begin to explore new programmatic pillars of its work in areas of interest at the international level, such as emerging technologies, military applications of artificial intelligence, outer space and cybersecurity.

IV. Staffing, financing and administration

A. Financing

74. In accordance with General Assembly resolution [41/60 J](#), the Regional 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 2023, the Centre's trust fund received voluntary contributions in the amount of \$1,305,445. Information on the status of the trust fund for the Regional Centre for 2023 is contained in the annex to the present report.

75. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation to the Government of Peru for the long-standing financial support it has provided in its capacity as host country for the Regional Centre. The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to the Centre's donors, in particular the Governments of Canada, Germany and the United States, for their contributions received in 2023, which enabled the Centre to implement activities during the reporting period. Contributions from the European Union, provided through the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, enabled the

Centre to continue to assist Member States in the region and to support the development of the Central American firearms road map throughout the reporting period.

76. The Secretary-General also expresses his appreciation to Guyana, Panama and Peru 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 expertise and technical assistance of the Regional Centre.

77. Through the Saving Lives Entity fund, a joint initiative of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and UNDP, the Centre also received funds for activities in Jamaica.

78. 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.

B. Staffing and administration

79. 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 Service staff member (G-7). Project personnel are funded through voluntary contributions. The Secretary-General also encourages Member States to support the Regional Centre by providing it with gratis staff.

V. Conclusion

80. In line with its mandate, the Regional Centre will continue to provide substantive support for the implementation of regional, subregional and national initiatives for peace and disarmament and for the promotion of economic and social development, including the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Agenda for Peace and the outcomes of the Summit of the Future. To this end, the Centre will continue to provide technical, legal and policy assistance, including capacity-building, and provide platforms for regional dialogue and initiatives in support of the implementation of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments.

81. Between July 2023 and June 2024, the Regional Centre conducted 78 substantive activities to support States in implementing various disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments and associated General Assembly resolutions. Around 45 per cent of the activities of the Centre were focused on supporting the implementation of the Caribbean Firearms Road Map. Taking into account the priorities of Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Centre will maintain its focus on conventional arms control and ammunition management in the delivery of its mandate, while striving for a greater geographic balance and a strong network of partnerships to that end.

82. The Secretary-General reiterates his call to Member States and other partners in a position to do so to provide the Regional 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 and security and the New Agenda for Peace and implement the 2030 Agenda 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 2023

(United States dollars)

Accumulated surplus, 1 January 2023	3 768 392
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions ^a	1 305 445
Other transfers and allocations	—
Other revenue	2 661
Investment revenue	131 190
Total revenue	1 439 296
Less: Expenses and refunds	
Operating expenses	1 599 001
Refunds ^b	20 319
Total expenses and refunds	1 619 320
Surplus/deficit for the year	(180 024)
Fair value gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments recognized directly in net assets	20 890
Accumulated surplus/deficit as at 31 December 2023	3 609 258

^a Includes voluntary monetary contributions from Guyana (\$1,022), Panama (\$4,000), Peru (\$30,379) and the United States of America (\$1,227,352) and an adjustment in line with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) (\$42,692).

^b Consists of a refund to Germany (\$20,319).