

Disarmament Orientation Course, August 2020: Backgrounder: UNODA

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Preceded by a small Disarmament Affairs Division, then transformed in 1976 into Center for Disarmament in Geneva, the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs was originally established in 1982, in New York. After name changes in 1992, 1998 and 2007 it became the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). UNODA's current mandate derives chiefly from the priorities established in relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions in the field of disarmament, including the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (UNSSOD I), the first special session devoted to disarmament ([resolution S-10/2](#)).

UNODA provides substantive and organizational support for norm-setting in the area of disarmament through the work of the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Disarmament Commission (UNDC), the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and other bodies. It also provides objective, impartial and up-to-date information on multilateral disarmament issues to Member States, States Parties to multilateral agreements, intergovernmental organizations and institutions, departments and agencies of the United Nations system, research and educational institutions, civil society, especially non-governmental organizations, the media and the general public.

Disarmament and non-proliferation remain indispensable tools to help create a security environment favourable to ensuring human development, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) is a major venue for international diplomacy in this field. It is home to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — the Director-General of UN Geneva Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, is the Secretary-General of the CD as well as the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the CD. UN Geneva provides, through the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, substantive and organisational support to the CD and a wide range of multilateral disarmament agreements and forums listed on the UN Geneva Disarmament [webpage](#). Many of today's international disarmament treaties were negotiated in the CD.

When treaty negotiations are concluded and they enter into force, implementation begins. Different Implementation Support Units (ISUs), with similar missions, support the universalization and implementation of the Geneva-based disarmament treaties, with different levels of support from and engagement with the United Nations or UNODA. For the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), their ISUs are established within UNODA, providing secretariat services to meetings, supporting national implementation, facilitating communication and information sharing among various stakeholders, and contributing to raising awareness of the Conventions. For the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APLC), their ISUs are hosted outside of UNODA. The UNODA Geneva Branch collaborates with these ISUs and participates in the preparation of and support to the official APLC and CCM meetings.

While UNODA is primarily funded by the Regular Budget of the United Nations, the funding for a number of multilateral agreements comes from the States that are party to them. For the BWC, the CCM, the CCW and the APLC, the costs of organizing the meetings of each Convention, and the costs of their Implementation Support Units, are covered by contributions from States Parties and other participating States, on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessments. In an effort to better inform States about the financial situation of these Conventions, the UNODA Geneva Branch has created [a restricted area for States Parties and other participating States](#).

UNODA publishes a range of information about arms control and disarmament issues, some of which are listed in the accompanying Annex along with several that provide further information on UNODA's role. In addition, UN Geneva provides useful [Meeting Summaries](#), e.g., of the CD and of meetings of States Parties including Review Conferences held in Geneva.

UNODA [staff](#) are available to discuss and support diplomats on disarmament and arms control issues under their purview. The Geneva Branch's address is 1st floor, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

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ANNEX

UNODA New York

Introduction to Disarmament: machinery, processes and the Role of the United Nations—eLearning Module, 2019

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/update/the-office-for-disarmament-affairs-launches-its-first-elearning-module-providing-an-introduction-to-disarmament/>

Disarmament: A Basic Guide, UNODA, 2017

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/basic-guide/disarmament-a-basic-guide-fourth-edition-2017/>

Disarmament Study Series, UNODA: 36 studies of disarmament undertaken by groups of government experts (GGEs)

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/studyseries/>

UNODA Occasional Papers: 35 volumes that have been developed to help disseminate the results of expert panels and seminars

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/occasionalpapers/>

UNODA Update

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/update/>

UNODA Fact Sheets (Note that many of the topics covered UNIDIR/UNODA Orientation programme are the subject of UNODA Fact sheets)

<https://www.un.org/en/collection/29/7829>

UNODA Geneva

<https://www.unog.ch/en/topics/disarmament>

See also:

[https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/disarmament.nsf/\(httpPages\)/8E8D0195B35B7500C12572BF003B720D?OpenDocument&unid=6A03113D1857348E80256F04006755F6](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/disarmament.nsf/(httpPages)/8E8D0195B35B7500C12572BF003B720D?OpenDocument&unid=6A03113D1857348E80256F04006755F6)

For Disarmament Education, see

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/disarmament-education-website/>

and

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/education/publications.html>

UNODA Vienna

Note details of the annual Peace and Security training programme:

<https://www.disarmamenteducation.org/index.php?go=education&do=osce>

UNODA Regional Centres, Nepal, Peru and Togo

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/disarmsec/regional-centers/>