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Statement by Mr. Sergio Duarte
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

REGIONAL DISARMAMENT: MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON THE GROUND

Check against delivery
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

UN efforts to strengthen international peace and security—its primary mission—have stressed the importance of progress in disarmament and non-proliferation, including at the regional level.

Disarmament initiatives at the global and regional levels are mutually reinforcing. Indeed, to be effective, global norms and instruments must be implemented at regional, sub-regional and national levels. At the same time, efforts at the sub-regional and regional levels can build momentum for disarmament initiatives at the global level. ODA continued to provide expertise and active programmatic support to regions’ efforts in this field.

Insufficient regional and national regulatory and enforcing capacities are commonly associated with the structural causes of armed violence and conflict, as well as the lack of adequate action. ODA continued to provide expertise and active programmatic support to regions’ efforts in this field, contributing to building capacity at the regional, sub-regional and national levels, which can help produce adequate responses to pressing arms control and disarmament problems.

In addition, UNODA’s three Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, have continued their important work in outreach and advocacy, promoting dialogue and confidence-building, providing assistance and training to Member States upon request, and promoting the universalization and implementation of global norms and treaties in the areas of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

Member States and other entities wishing to promote international action on disarmament and non-proliferation at the ground level can do so by making use of the existing UN regional disarmament infrastructure in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, and by supporting programmes requested by Member States.

In this regard, I continue to attach great importance to strengthening partnerships and cooperation with regional and other inter-governmental organizations, and I note with satisfaction the increased synergies essential to furthering progress and dialogue on disarmament and non-proliferation matters.

The Regional Disarmament Branch in New York steers the work of the UN Standing Advisory Committee for Security Questions in Central Africa, a significant tool in confidence-building, dialogue, reconstruction, conflict prevention and arms limitation in the sub-region.

Finally, in carrying out its respective mandates, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, including the three regional centres, places at the centre of its activities gender considerations (promoting the role of women in peace and security, and promoting the
respect of international standards in human rights, as well as the overall reduction of armed violence).

I should now like to hand the floor to Ms. Marcaillou, Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch, and her colleagues from the three Regional Centres who have travelled to New York especially to be here with you today to present to you the highlights of their important work.