

# DISARMAMENT ORIENTATION COURSE 2024

## Programme



### About

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) are pleased to host the fifth edition of the Disarmament Orientation Course.

The course is open to diplomats or officials with responsibilities for disarmament and arms control matters who recently arrived in Geneva or are to be posted to Geneva within the next six to twelve months. Its main objectives are to:

- Provide practitioners with a basic introduction to the matters that Geneva-based disarmament and arms control bodies address and seek to advance;
- Outline current challenges facing these bodies and processes in today's security context; and
- Draw attention to practical and educational resources available for practitioners.

### Structure

The course is structured in five thematic modules, each encompassing in-person discussion sessions, accompanying course material and recommended readings. Cross-cutting issues, including diversity, gender, civil society, youth perspectives, development and human-centered disarmament will be discussed throughout all sessions.

- Module 1:** Scene-setting: context, main mechanisms, current trends and developments, institutional support & cross-cutting topics;
- Module 2:** UN disarmament machinery and weapons of mass destruction;
- Module 3:** Space and missiles;
- Module 4:** Conventional weapons;
- Module 5:** AI, LAWS & Cyber.



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## **Syllabus 2024**

### **Module 1: Scene-setting: context, main mechanisms, current trends and developments**

*Monday, 16 September, 8:00-10:00 CET, Villa le Bocage, Palais des Nations*

#### **Key learning objectives**

- Understand the relationship and interactions between the global political and security environment, disarmament diplomacy and efforts of the Geneva based disarmament community.
- Introduce the key components of the multilateral disarmament machinery including Geneva based structure/bodies, roles, dynamics, procedures, as well as the substantive and organizational support provided by the Secretariat.

#### **Topics**

- The global security context and negotiations towards the Pact for the Future: an overview of current and recent developments and their implications for arms control and disarmament.
- The role of the disarmament community and machinery in Geneva, including the Conference on Disarmament; other mechanisms within and outside the UN.
- Institutional, substantive and organizational support provided by the Secretariat.
- The catalyst role of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the linkages between disarmament and development.
- Cross-cutting topics: youth perspectives and human-centered disarmament.

### **Module 2: UN disarmament machinery and weapons of mass destruction**

*Tuesday, 17 September, 8 :00-10 :00 CET, Villa le Bocage, Palais des Nations*

#### **Key learning objectives**

- Introduce the key elements of the disarmament machinery.
- Understand the key agreements and issues in disarmament and non-proliferation, and acquire an overview of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), verification, and consequences of nuclear weapons use.
- Understand the key issues and treaties related to biological weapons and acquire an overview of the challenges and opportunities related to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).
- Acquire knowledge about gender perspectives on WMD.



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- Take stock of recent developments, ongoing preparatory processes and provide reflections for moving forward in multilateral negotiations (CD subsidiary bodies, BWC Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention, BWC Meeting of States Parties, NPT PrepCom, TPNW Meeting of States Parties)

### Topics

- The role, history, evolution and current status of the disarmament machinery.
- NPT review cycle, NPT related issues and opportunities.
- TPNW Meeting of States Parties.
- Biological Weapons Convention and the Working Group process.
- Gender perspectives.
- Further cross-cutting topics: civil society, youth perspectives, human-centered disarmament and the New Agenda for Peace.

### Module 3: Space and missiles

*Thursday, 19 September, 8:00-10:00 CET, Villa le Bocage, Palais des Nations*

### Key learning objectives

- Understand the key issues and emerging challenges for multilateral governance of space, missiles, and related technologies.
- Acquire an overview of current multilateral processes on outer space security and missile technologies.
- Take stock of recent developments, ongoing preparatory processes and provide reflections for moving forward in multilateral negotiations.

### Topics

- Prevention of an arms race in outer space: the two upcoming Open-Ended Working Groups, differing approaches to space security (behaviours versus capabilities; legally binding or politically binding instruments), advances in dual-use space technologies.
- Missiles: Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Hague Code of Conduct, long-range conventional strike weapons, self-detonating drones, hypersonic weapons.
- Cross-cutting topics: gender, civil society, youth perspectives, human-centered disarmament and the New Agenda for Peace.



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#### Module 4: Conventional weapons

*Tuesday, 24 September, 8:00-10:00 CET, Villa le Bocage, Palais des Nations*

##### Key learning objectives

- Understand the key issues and current developments relating to international conventions that prohibit or restrict the use of certain types of conventional weapons.
- Understand the key issues and current developments relating to international treaties and processes that regulate the transfer and use of conventional weapons and ammunition.
- Taking stock and preparing ongoing multilateral negotiations (ATT CSP10, EWIPA, CCW, APMBC, CCM, UNPoA RevCon)

##### Topics

- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)
- Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)
- Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)
- The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and other processes that regulate the transfer and use of conventional weapons and ammunition
- Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)
- Weapons and Ammunition Management
- Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management
- Cross-cutting topics: gender, civil society, youth perspectives, human-centered disarmament and the New Agenda for Peace

#### Module 5: AI, LAWS and cyber

*Thursday, 26 September, 8:00-10:00 CET, Villa le Bocage, Palais des Nations*

##### Key learning objectives

- Introduce the different processes and concepts; participants will be familiarized with the main concepts surrounding these topics, milestones and significant upcoming events.
- Take stock of recent developments, ongoing preparatory processes and provide reflections for moving forward in multilateral negotiations.

##### Topics

- CCW Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), the main concepts relating to LAWS, an overview of proposals made to date on LAWS governance and information on upcoming processes at the CCW and General Assembly.



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- The status of current multilateral negotiations in the cyber domain, including a brief historical recap (OEWG, past GGEs, and a quick mention of the Ad Hoc Committee on cybercrime); the main achievements of and remaining points of contention in the current OEWG;
- The integration of AI in the military domain beyond lethal autonomous weapon systems, including the nascent efforts at the national and international level to move towards responsible approaches and behaviours.
- Cross-cutting topics: gender, civil society, youth perspectives, human-centered disarmament and the New Agenda for Peace



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