

UN Disarmament Agenda: Interview Renata Dwan



Renata joined the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) after 13 years working on peace and security issues at the United Nations in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Mali and Syria. She led major UN-wide policy and reform initiatives including security sector reform, peacekeeping partnerships and crisis management capacities. Before joining the United Nations, Renata was head of SIPRI's Programme on Armed Conflict and Conflict Management and Deputy Director of the EastWest Institute's European Security Programme in Budapest. Renata holds a M.Phil and D.Phil from the University of Oxford.

UNIDIR's work covers a series of topics, ranging from space security to the spread of WMD and the illicit traffic of conventional weapons. What do you think are the most pressing non-proliferation and disarmament challenges?

UNIDIR exists to support multilateral deliberations: therefore our work reflects the agendas of the many international bodies dealing with disarmament. Our function is to also stimulate new initiatives looking, for example, at the impact of new digital technologies that are driving convergence across nuclear, cyber, space and conventional areas and require a more integrated approach to arms control. I see two interrelated challenges confronting the arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament enterprise today: a) the erosion of commitment and confidence in the rule-based order. Arms control and disarmament centre on political and legal agreements freely arrived at among states. There are complex and long-term factors for this but the consequence is that the tools with which arms control are pursued are increasingly challenged. b) the multiplicity of actors – state and non-state – challenges the bilateral underpinnings of – particularly nuclear – arms control – and calls into question arms control frameworks and processes. We need to protect and reinforce existing arrangements while incorporating new stakeholders, concepts and methods of establishing and maintaining norms.

One year ago, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the UN Disarmament Agenda, *Securing Our Common Future*, bringing disarmament back to the centre of the UN's work. How do you assess the progress made, and what role is UNIDIR playing in the implementation of the Agenda?

The Agenda asserts that disarmament is not a 'fair weather' tool but critical in preventing and managing crises in times of volatile international relations. The Agenda underscores the importance of integrating arms control perspectives and mechanisms into contemporary multilateral agendas – climate, sustainable development, gender equality and crisis preven-

tion. The Agenda has succeeded in bringing more international attention to disarmament. It is also mobilizing the UN system to work together, especially on issues related to conventional arms. Ultimately, the Agenda is a road map for Member State action and individual and collective action by governments will be the ultimate arbiter of progress. UNIDIR is leading progress on 10 out of 40 proposed actions. We are advancing the Agenda in and beyond multilateral disarmament bodies through *inter alia*, our space and cyber activities, working with humanitarian and development partners and launching a new programme that bridges gender and disarmament policies and actors. Together with supporting Member States and organizations, we are prioritizing actions where we can add value: reducing the risk of nuclear use; strengthening linkages between weapons and ammunition management and prevention; and facilitating dialogue among state, private sector and experts on the implications of new technologies.

How can the EU further contribute to this UN effort and in particular to the ongoing NPT Review Process?

The EU is a critical supporter of multilateral disarmament and has declared its intention to support four Agenda actions: championing efforts to bring the nuclear test ban treaty into force, ending the production of fissile material, restoring norms against chemical weapons and securing conventional weapons stockpiles. The EU has also committed to support UNIDIR in exploring options for the establishment of a weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East. This will be an important contribution to the NPT Review Process and beyond, including in the context of the Secretary-General's conference on the zone. The EU is also supporting the chair designate to convene much-needed regional dialogues in the run up to the NPT Review Conference. Long term, the EU is an experiment in integrating national and international norms and perspectives, as well as in forging dialogue among different state and non-state stakeholders. The EU can thus help chart a future arms control, one that is based on commitment to the rule-based order but able to adapt to new global and domestic environments and actors.

Non-Proliferation vs. Hybrid and Cyber Warfare

Deterring and fighting hybrid and cyber wars is a rapidly growing business – resources are being earmarked, offices created and strategies drafted. So far, results have been modest, while the threat continues to grow. One of the reasons could be the continuing expansion of the notions of hybrid and cyber warfare to phenomena which should rightly be classified as foreign policy.

It is worth recalling that the originally hybrid warfare, as developed by the US military, was about a combination of traditional and non-traditional military tools as well as non-military activities in support of military action. Subsequently the Russian military developed a similar concept. Cyber warfare, too, was originally much narrower than how we treat it today.

If we try to scale back the definition, some challenges may become easier to address. For example, use of cyber tools for interference in domestic politics will remain a source of conflict, but states are likely to cooperate in preventing the use of cyber tools for the disruption of nuclear installations or spreading nuclear weapons know-how.

Similarly, WMD proliferation has become too closely associated with the nature of political regimes and their behaviour. Perhaps it might make sense to delink the former from the latter as we used to do during the Cold War. Then, we enjoyed strong cooperation on key international security issues even though political conflicts remained blocked or only witnessed very slow progress. It was, however, strategic stability that helped avoid war and thus allowed eventual progress on political issues.

Finally, a narrower definition could also help determine the range of permissible actions. For example, was the Stuxnet, the computer worm used against Iran's nuclear programme, a legitimate counterproliferation tool? While attractive on the surface and in the short term, these and similar tools could have negative humanitarian and environmental consequences and could invite responses in kind leading to open conflict, perhaps even a military one.

In the end, notions of hybrid and cyber warfare have simply become too fashionable and now their vagueness prevents cooperation and progress where they are possible and desirable. Maybe it is time to revisit them in the interests of WMD non-proliferation and international security in general.

Nikolai Sokov

Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation / EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium



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Consortium Calls

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION: NEXT GENERATION WORKSHOP

The Istituto Affari Internazionali, on behalf of the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium, is organizing a “Next Generation Workshop” open to 12 young researchers and professionals working in the Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament field.

The workshop will be held in Brussels on December 12, 2019, back-to-back with the 2019 EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference held on December 13-14, 2019, giving the selected candidates the opportunity to participate in the event.

Application process:

Applicants must submit their candidacy by **July 10th, 2019** to eunpdc@iai.it

Selected candidates will be contacted by **July 31st, 2019**

More information [here](#)

Consortium News

The EUNPD Consortium participates in the NPT Preparatory Committee

Two representatives of the EUNPD Consortium contributed to a side event at the third session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The event, called ‘EU support for the NPT - marking over a half century since its adoption’, was moderated by EEAS Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-proliferation, Jacek Bylica. Dr Sibylle Bauer, from SIPRI and Chair of the EUNPD Consortium, presented on the state of play of nuclear disarmament as well as on opportunities and challenges to progress on disarmament. Benjamin Hautecouverture, from FRS, spoke about the challenges of nuclear non-proliferation, with a focus on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The other panelists included Des Brown, member of the Group of Eminent Persons in support of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); Stephan Lechner, from the European Commission’s Directorate General for Energy; and Abousahl Said, from the Euratom Coordination Unit, Joint Research Centre (JRC).

EU INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

The EU reiterates its commitment to the JCPOA at the UNSC

On 26 June 2019, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, João Vale de Almeida, delivered a statement at the United Nations Security Council in support of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He reiterated that the JCPOA is “the only tool available to provide the necessary assurances on Iran’s nuclear programme”. For this reason, “the EU will continue to work relentlessly to preserve the JCPOA as long as Iran abides by its commitments”. João Vale de Almeida expressed, however, the EU’s concern over Iran’s announcement that it will scale back compliance with certain parts of the agreement. He also urged the country “to refrain from activities that could deepen mistrust, such as ballistic missiles tests, which are inconsistent with UNSCR 2231”.

For more information: [Briefing by the EU to the UN Security Council on Non-Proliferation - JCPOA](#)

NETWORK CALLS

- **IX ODESSA INTERNATIONAL SUMMER WORKSHOP**
Topic: Arms Control and Nonproliferation **Venue:** Odessa, Ukraine
Deadline: July 15th, 2019 **Info:** odcnp.onu@gmail.com
- **SCIENCE PEACE SECURITY 2019**
Topic: WMD Non-Proliferation & Cyber Security **Venue:** Lichtenberg-Haus Darmstadt, Germany
Deadline: August 18th, 2019 **Info:** riebe@peasec.tu-darmstadt.de
- **THE 16TH PIIC BEIJING SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**
Topic: Nuclear Security **Venue:** Shenzhen, China
Deadline: July 25, 2019 **Info:** PSNSS@iapcm.ac.cn - zhouchang@ciis.org.cn

NETWORK NEWS

Eighth Consultative Meeting of the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Network

The Eighth Consultative Meeting of the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (EUNPD) Consortium was held in Brussels (Breydel building) on 11-12 June 2019. Each year, this one-and-half day meeting, offers a unique opportunity for EU Member States, EU officials and leading European experts to discuss the most salient non-proliferation and disarmament topics.

This year’s debate addressed six major challenges: missile proliferation and the tools to counter it; arms control in outer space; nuclear and ballistic missile challenges in North East Asia with a focus on the Korean peninsula; the future of strategic arms control; new technologies, including artificial intelligence and arms control; hybrid warfare and cyber risks.

The new century has witnessed an erosion of a significant part of the arms control architecture. In this context the EU faces a paradox: it has become a global actor in non-proliferation and disarmament since the adoption of the 2003 Common Strategy, but security within Europe’s borders has proved fragile and vulnerable. This calls for an enhancement and adaptation of the European collective security framework. 88 participants in the meeting coming from over 20 EU members States shared the view that arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament are still crucial tools in European security policies. As European countries still advocate multilateral solutions to address security issues, the EU has a special responsibility to promote peaceful and negotiated solutions to security challenges. To that end, the Eighth Consultative Meeting was a privileged opportunity to foster a collective rethinking of what multilateral arms control can bring to European security interests and how it can be preserved and enhanced.

Benjamin Hautecouverture, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS) /
EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium

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