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FIFTH ANNIVERSARY of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia



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FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY FOR CENTRAL ASIA

On 10 December 2012, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) will celebrate its fifth anniversary.



Official Opening of the Centre
December 10, 2007
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

From a historical perspective, five years is not a long time. However, for this new structure, created to aid in the search for joint responses to the main challenges facing such a geopolitically important region as Central Asia, these first years have constituted a very important period. In this time, experience has been acquired in institutionalizing the concept of preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention tools have been applied in practice and mechanisms of cooperation with Govern-

Background

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) is a special political mission of the United Nations Organization established at the initiative of the governments of the five Central Asian countries. The inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy took place on 10 December 2007 in Ashgabat. While initiating this proposal, the Governments took into consideration the multiple threats that face Central Asia, including international terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, management of water resources and environmental degradation.

ments, international organizations and other partners have been elaborated.

When the proposal to establish UNRCCA was made five years ago, the Governments of the region were focused on solving serious problems, including international terror-



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ism, extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, environmental degradation and issues related to the management of natural resources. UNRCCA's primary task is to assist the countries of the region in their efforts to build their capacities for conflict prevention through developing dialogue, building confidence and applying innovative international best practices. In implementing its mandate, the Centre cooperates closely with international and regional organizations active in the region, such as the CIS, the SCO, the OSCE, the EU, the CSTO and NATO, in addition to relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes.

Mission Leadership

Ambassador MIROSLAV JENČA,
Special Representative of the UN
Secretary- General, heads the
Regional Centre



The Centre operates on the basis of its Program of Action for 2012 - 2014, which was developed in the course of consultations with the Governments of Central Asia on the basis of the UNRCCA mandate, also taking into account the previous Program of Action for 2009 - 2011 and past experience. The current Program of Action focuses on addressing issues related to the management of common natural resources and environmental degradation, the impact of regional transboundary threats and the implications of national developments within the countries of Central Asia on regional stability.



**Fourth Annual Meeting of Deputy
Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central
Asian States**

October 18, 2012

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The Centre executes its mandate in close cooperation with the Governments of Central Asia. The results of the Centre's work, its future plans and developments in the region are discussed annually at meetings of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central Asian countries.



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Mission Statement

The goal of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) is to assist and support the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in building their conflict prevention capacities through enhanced dialogue, confidence building measures and establishing genuine partnership in order to respond to existing threats and emerging challenges in the Central Asian region.

One of the basic tasks of the Centre is to monitor the situation in Central Asia and provide timely information to the Secretary - General of the United Nations with a view to promptly responding to emerging tensions and preventing crisis situations. The Head of UNRCCA regularly (twice annually) briefs the UN Security Council on trends and develop-

ments in the region, major challenges to peace and security and the Centre's activities and plans.

Generally speaking, the Centre's activities are carried out in five main areas:

- Assistance in solving complex problems related to the management of natural resources in the region;

Seminar "Early Warning on Potential Trans-boundary Water Problem Situations in Central Asia"

September 26, 2011

Almaty, Kazakhstan



- Support to efforts in the fight against transboundary threats, such as terrorism, extremism, organized crime and drug trafficking;
- Analysis of the impact of developments in Afghanistan on the region of Central Asia and assistance to the implementation of the initiatives of Central Asian Governments in support of the efforts of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan aimed at stabilizing the situation in that country;
- Assistance to peacebuilding processes in postconflict situations in certain Central Asian countries that may influence regional stability (e.g., , support to peacebuilding and reconciliation in the Kyrgyz Republic); and



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Seminar: "Sustainable development: A key factor for stability and peace in Central Asia"
March 1-2, 2012
Tashkent, Uzbekistan

- Conducting training to develop preventive diplomacy skills among specialists and experts from the Central Asian countries.

Reviewing the results of the Centre's activities in the region in the past five years, it can be said that UNRCCA has proven itself to be a reliable partner to the countries of the region in their efforts to strengthen cooperation in Central Asia.



SRSB attends 2011 Open day on Women, Peace and Security "Identifying Women's Peace and Security Priorities: Building Voice and Influence (Central Asia/Ferghana Valley)"
July 21, 2011
Almaty, Kazakhstan

In one of the most important areas – the fight against terrorism – significant results have been achieved. Following a process of consultations and expert meetings, the city of Ashgabat hosted a high-level meeting on 30 November 2011, which was organized by the Regional Centre together with the Government of Turkmenistan, the CounterTerrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and the European Union (EU). The meeting was the culmination of a project on implementing the United Nations Global CounterTerrorism Strategy in Central Asia. Participants reviewed and supported the Ashgabat Final Declaration and the Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation



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Our goal is to promote peace in this part of the world. And we hope that in the future Central Asia will become a prosperous region where stability, peace and cooperation are fully ensured.

Ambassador MIROSLAV JENČA

to discuss these documents for the purpose of further cooperation with the countries of the region towards the concrete implementation of the Joint Plan of Action. The Regional Centre participates in the Istanbul Process, which is an important platform for developing regional cooperation aimed at assisting stabilization and recovery in Afghanistan. In 2012, staff of the Centre took part in expert meetings in Ankara and Abu Dhabi on confidencebuilding measures related to counterterrorism.

of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. In June 2012, the Centre organized a meeting in Almaty with regional organizations and representatives of Central Asian countries



Second Expert Meeting on implementing of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy in Central Asia

March 29-30, 2011
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

In close cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and UN specialized agencies, the Centre has undertaken serious action to mobilize the efforts of the international community to provide assistance to Afghanistan. In 2011, the Centre, together with the Government of Turkmenistan, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), organized two forums of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) in Ashgabat on issues related to supporting the processes of recovery in Afghanistan. Earlier, in 2010, UNRCCA also contributed to the organization of a SPECA forum dedicated to the promotion of dialogue and assisting regional cooperation between Afghanistan and the countries of Central Asia. Participants in that forum discussed opportunities for joint economic, investment and trade cooperation through the realization of mutually beneficial economic projects. Practical implementation of these projects was already underway in 2012. The Centre maintains working contacts with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in the course of which UNRCCA pays specific attention to processes under way in that country and aids Central Asian Governments' efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan for the purpose of strengthening overall regional security.



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The 2011 Economic Forum and the Sixth Session of the Governing Council of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) titled "20 Years of Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Central Asia: Successes, Challenges and Perspectives"

November 10-11, 2011

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan



In order to help address issues related to the management of common natural resources in Central Asia, the Centre actively cooperates with the World Bank, as well as with a unique regional structure – the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and its Executive Committee (EC). In Ashgabat in 2010, the UN and EC IFAS signed a Memorandum of Understanding, according to which cooperation has been developing that is aimed at strengthened regional interaction and improving the environmental and socio-economic situation in the Aral Sea Basin, taking into account the interests and needs of all of the States of the region. Particular attention is paid to the implementation of the conclusions that were reached at the April 2009 IFAS Summit.



Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations and the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea

March 3, 2010

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan



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UNRCCA Activities

The UNRCCA is working on the basis of its Action Plan for 2012-2014, which was developed through the consultations with the governments of Central Asian countries on the basis of UNRCCA mandate and the previous Action Plan for 2009-2011.

UNRCCA is liaising with the Governments of the region, maintaining close contacts with the United Nations Country Teams in Central Asia, and with international and regional organizations.

At present the Regional Centre concentrated its efforts on developing an early warning system to prevent problematic situations on the transboundary rivers of Central Asia. In February 2012, under the auspices of the IFAS Executive

Committee, the first prototype of early warning bulletin was published, comprising indicators agreed by the Central Asian countries themselves at a workshop organized by UNRCCA. After agreement is reached on the finalization of the bulletin's format, it will be published on a regular basis. UNRCCA organized a series of workshops and round tables to familiarize representatives of relevant national institutions with best practices and international policies related to the conclusion of mutually beneficial international agreements on the management of transboundary water resources, as well as with available international legal instruments in this area.

Together with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and EC IFAS, the Centre participates in the implementation of a project on the use of a scenario approach for strengthening regional cooperation in integrated water resources management. Such an integrated approach allows the countries to be better prepared for possible changes in the environment and to respond adequately to new and emerging challenges. In the coming years, the Centre will continue its work in this area, in parallel with the implementation of new projects, including on the impact of melting glaciers and possible implications for the water and energy sector in the region of Central Asia.

Currently, UNRCCA is engaged in discussions with the Governments of the Central Asian countries, aimed at strengthening the normative and legal framework for the management of transboundary water resources in the region in accordance with basic principles and norms of international law.

In the context of implementing its mandate, the Centre cooperates closely with the UN Country Teams in the region. As the efforts of the United Nations to prevent conflict and the Organization's "preventive component" play an increasingly important role – which Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has repeatedly highlighted – the importance of the political coordination of the work of the UN Country Teams in this area takes on greater significance.

Role of the Centre

The role of the Centre is to promote a dialogue between the governments of the Central Asian countries in finding solutions for emerging problems and eliminating potential threats; to keep regular contacts with international organizations, operating in the region, to stimulate their peace-making efforts and initiatives; to cooperate with other UN Agencies, working in the field of sustainable development and conflict prevention.



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SRS and the UN Country Team meet with the representatives of non-governmental organizations

April 2010

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The visit of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to Central Asia in April 2010 provided a greater impetus for the development of preventive diplomacy in the region. In the course of his meetings with Central Asian leaders, the Secretary-General discussed a wide array of issues related to peace and stability in the region. The Secretary-General called for the resolution of all emerging disputes through dialogue and negotiation before they became serious problems.



Visit of the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to UNRCCA

April 2, 2010

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Within the framework of its mandate, the Regional Centre provides political advice to UN Country Teams on issues relevant to conflict prevention, with a view to coordinating joint efforts to develop adequate and effective response to threats to security and stability in Central Asia. These issues are on the agenda during the regular visits of the Head of UNRCCA to the countries of the region.

In November 2011, the Regional Centre initiated a meeting in Astana with the participation of the UN Resident Coordinators of the countries of Central Asia. In addition to the five UN Resident Coordinators of all five countries of the region, the meeting was also attended by the Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, high ranking representatives from UNRCCA and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS as well as a group of experts. This was an opportunity to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation between the UN Country Teams and UNRCCA in the region of Central Asia in addressing issues with



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conflict potential and ways to improve the possibility of the UN preventing conflicts at an early stage. Participants expressed their hope for more frequent meetings of this kind in the future, to ensure that UN preventive activities are jointly planned in close cooperation with the Governments of the region.



Training on "International Legal Instruments on Trans-boundary Water Management"

December 5-7, 2011

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

The effectiveness of this sort of cooperation was demonstrated during the tragic events in the south of the Kyrgyz Republic in June 2010, when the Regional Centre actively participated in the process of political settlement and coordination of the UN System's efforts to overcome the crisis. The Head of the Centre provided "good offices" and mediation in his meetings with the authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic, political parties, civil society organizations and the representatives of national minorities. Later, the Centre played an important role in mobilizing the efforts of the UN to support the process of forming legitimate governing structures in the country through the holding of democratic elections. At present, UN agencies are implementing a number of projects in the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen peace in the framework of a Peacebuilding Strategy that has been developed jointly with the Government of Kyrgyzstan and financed through the UN Peacebuilding Fund.



Meeting with Ms. Roza Otunbayeva, President of the Kyrgyz Republic (2010-2011)

July 5, 2011

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

In implementing its mandate, the Regional Centre is developing comprehensive cooperation with regional and subregional mechanisms. This interaction was most clearly demonstrated in the course of assisting with the stabilization of the situation in the Kyrgyz Republic after the events of



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Our mission is to implement the concept of preventive diplomacy in practice through enhanced dialogue, confidence building measures and establishing genuine partnership in order to respond to existing threats and emerging challenges in Central Asia. A large part of our work is related to carrying out "good offices". The Centre is also conducting specific projects related to the water/energy nexus, counter-terrorism activities and capacity building to prevent conflicts, facilitate dialogue and catalyze support.

Ambassador MIROSLAV JENČA

April and June 2010. The UNRCCA, jointly with the OSCE and the EU, established a "Troika" mechanism that has brought together the Special Representatives for Central Asia of these three organizations for regular joint visits to Bishkek to meet

with high-ranking officials, political parties and civil society. Following these visits, the troika has made joint statements and recommendations. At the same time, the Head of the Centre has maintained close cooperation with other regional organizations, including the CIS, the SCO and the CSTO, as well as with other partners.

Another important area of the Centre's activities is the organization of trainings and seminars on preventive diplomacy and other important issues of international relations with a view to developing the skills of the region's diplomats and civil servants. These seminars have been praised



SRSJ talks to the students of the Institute of International Relations under the MFA of Turkmenistan after the Round Table "Preventive diplomacy as an instrument to deliver results in support of security and stability in the world"

October 16, 2011

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan



UNRCCA-UNITAR organized Regional Training on Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

November 3-7, 2009

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

by the Governments of the countries of the region, as they provide opportunities for newly appointed civil servants to become better aware of the tools of preventive diplomacy, exchange their experiences and improve their skills in relation to specific issues of international relations and international law.

The Regional Centre also offers a platform for representatives of institutes of strategic studies, nongovernmental organizations, academics and experts from across Central Asia and beyond to meet and discuss the prospects for the development of the situation in the region. UNRCCA organized two workshops of this kind, in 2009 and 2010, in Ashgabat. In March 2012, the Regional Centre organized a third workshop in Tashkent, the topic of which was "Sustainable development



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as the main factor of stability and peace in Central Asia". The workshop allowed for the exchange of opinions on issues related to the influence of social and economic processes on the general situation in Central Asia and the prospects for its development.

The results of UNRCCA's activities in the five years that have passed since its creation testify to significant need for mechanisms of preventive diplomacy in Central Asia. These results are a source of optimism and once again confirm that there is no alternative to the peaceful settlement of regional challenges in bilateral and multilateral formats, taking into account the interests of all stakeholders.



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