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Press Release  
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19990714

LIMA, 25 June (Department for Disarmament Affairs) -- The causes of illicit arms trafficking must be addressed and the flow of arms in Latin America and the Caribbean must be curbed. That was one of the calls made by participants in the Regional Seminar on Small Arms held by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development. The Seminar ended in Lima on Friday, 25 June, after three days of discussions.

Representatives of the region's ministries of foreign affairs, military institutions and police institutions, representatives of regional organizations and international experts in this area participated in the Seminar. It was opened by Ambassador Jorge Valdez, the Peruvian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was attended during the three days by Evgeniy Gorkovskiy, Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General and Director of the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations.

On the final day of discussions, the closing session was chaired by Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki, Chairman of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. In the final round of statements, participants pointed out that the United Nations has a key role to play in regional disarmament by ensuring a constant flow of information on the item, by offering a permanent forum for debate among all the parties involved in combating arms trafficking, and by supporting the implementation of current regional agreements on disarmament. In this connection, participants stressed that the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean will be particularly important in the future. The Centre recently resumed its work in Lima, after a suspension of its activities for three years.

The new Centre has reopened with the support of the Peruvian Government and in pursuance of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. It first began work in January 1987 and has always been based in Lima. It is directed by Pericles Gasparini, an expert in disarmament and international security, a former senior researcher at the Geneva-based United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). The re-establishment of the Centre is due to the

efforts which Secretary-General Kofi Annan has been making from the outset of his term to promote world disarmament and to get all nations to commit themselves to that goal.

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