

# **IASMUN**

## **Background Guide**



## **UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**



# **IASMUN UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL BACKGROUND GUIDE**

## **WELCOME LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS:**

**DEAR DELEGATES,**

**IT IS OUR PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL AT IASMUN'26. WE ARE HONOURED TO SERVE AS YOUR CHAIRS THIS YEAR AND ARE INCREDIBLY EXCITED TO WITNESS THE ENERGY, ENTHUSIASM, AND DEDICATION YOU WILL BRING TO THIS COMMITTEE. UNSC IS KNOWN FOR ITS INTENSITY, FAST-PACED NEGOTIATIONS, AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS, AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT EACH ONE OF YOU IS READY TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE.**

**OVER THE COURSE OF THE CONFERENCE, YOU WILL FIND YOURSELVES IMMersed IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES DIPLOMACY, CRITICAL THINKING, AND MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO ENGAGE FULLY SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE, NEGOTIATE WITH PURPOSE, AND LISTEN WITH INTENTION. EVERY DELEGATE, REGARDLESS OF EXPERIENCE, HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN SHAPING THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE, AND WE HOPE YOU SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GROW, CONNECT, AND LEAD.**

**MODEL UNITED NATIONS IS NOT JUST ABOUT RESOLUTIONS AND PROCEDURE, IT'S ABOUT UNDERSTANDING PERSPECTIVES, FORMING ALLIANCES, AND LEARNING TO NAVIGATE COMPLEX DISCUSSIONS WITH PROFESSIONALISM AND RESPECT. WHETHER THIS IS YOUR FIRST CONFERENCE OR ONE OF MANY, WE HOPE YOU CHALLENGE YOURSELVES, SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER, AND MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY MOMENT.**



# **IASMUN UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL BACKGROUND GUIDE**

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU ALL AND WITNESSING THE CREATIVITY, DIPLOMACY, AND PASSION YOU BRING TO THE ROOM. HERE'S TO PRODUCTIVE DEBATE, STRONG COLLABORATION, AND AN UNFORGETTABLE UNSC EXPERIENCE.

LET'S MAKE IASMUN'26 MEMORABLE!

WARM REGARDS,

YOUR CHAIRS,

[HEAD CHAIR], AARAV GARG



# AGENDA 1

## "CYBER WARFARE AND GLOBAL SECURITY: PREVENTING DIGITAL CONFLICTS FROM ESCALATING INTO REAL WARS"

INCREASING RELIANCE ON DIGITAL NETWORKS FOR KEY OPERATIONS IN THE ENERGY, COMMUNICATION, TRANSPORT, HEALTH, BANKING AND DEFENCE SECTORS HAS MADE CYBERWARFARE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY. OFFENSIVE CYBER OPERATIONS THAT TARGET THESE NETWORKS CAN AFFECT CIVILIAN LIFE, STATE ECONOMIES AND SECURITY SYSTEMS IN THE ABSENCE OF CONVENTIONAL MILITARY FORCE. UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS (UNODA) AND THE UN INSTITUTE FOR DISARMAMENT RESEARCH (UNIDIR) ASSESSMENTS SHOW THAT CYBER ACTIVITIES CHALLENGE ESTABLISHED CONCEPTS OF GLOBAL SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY.

SEVERAL WELL-KNOWN INCIDENTS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED DEVELOPMENTS IN CYBER OPERATIONS. THE 2007 ATTACK ON ESTONIA DEMONSTRATED HOW DIGITAL ATTACKS CAN DISABLE ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS. THE STUXNET MALWARE REVEALED HOW CYBER WEAPONS CAN DIRECTLY AFFECT INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE. SUBSEQUENT INTRUSIONS INTO ELECTIONS, PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS AND NUCLEAR RESEARCH NETWORKS DEMONSTRATED HOW CYBER ATTACKS CAN AFFECT POLITICAL PROCESSES AND STATES' RELATIONS. THESE DEVELOPMENTS PROMPTED GOVERNMENTS TO EXPAND THEIR OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE CYBER CAPABILITIES, LEADING TO CYBERSPACE BECOMING A CONTESTED STRATEGIC DOMAIN.



# AGENDA 1

CYBER OPERATIONS ATTRIBUTED TO STATE AND NON-STATE ACTORS ARE INCREASING IN FREQUENCY AND SOPHISTICATION IN TODAY'S ENVIRONMENT. THE CHALLENGE OF ATTRIBUTION CONTINUES TO EXIST, WHICH INCREASES THE RISK FOR MISPERCEPTION AND ESCALATION. ACCORDING TO THE UN GGE AND OEWG REPORTS, THERE IS A LACK OF AGREEMENT AMONG COUNTRIES ON THE INTERPRETATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN ITS APPLICATION TO CYBERSPACE, COMPLICATING COOPERATION. MOREOVER, THE ICRC HAS CAUTIONED THAT CYBER OPERATIONS DIRECTED AGAINST CRITICAL CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE MAY RUN AFOUL OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, AND RAISE GRAVE HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS.

CYBER OPERATIONS RISK ESCALATING INTO ARMED CONFLICT WHEN THEY TARGET CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, SUCH AS THE POWER, WATER OR TRANSPORT NETWORKS, OR MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS, BECAUSE ATTACKS ON THOSE AREAS MAY BE VIEWED AS A CONVENTIONAL TYPE OF ATTACK BY STATES. A LARGE-SCALE CYBER INCIDENT THAT RESULTS IN MASSIVE BLACKOUTS, DISRUPTS EMERGENCY SERVICES, OR TAKES OUT DEFENCE SYSTEMS MIGHT BE VIEWED AS "BEYOND THE RED LINE" OF AN ARMED ATTACK UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, LEADING TO A VIOLENT RESPONSE BY THE VICTIM STATE THAT QUICKLY SPILLS OVER INTO THE PHYSICAL REALM. THE RISK IS INCREASED BY MISATTRIBUTION, BECAUSE A STATE MIGHT LAUNCH A MILITARY RESPONSE AGAINST THE WRONG TARGET IN RESPONSE TO A CYBER OPERATION, GIVEN THE DIFFICULTY OF ATTRIBUTING THE OPERATION. SUCH AN ESCALATION COULD DESTABILIZE A REGION, AFFECT CIVILIAN POPULATIONS, LIMIT THE USE OF DIPLOMATIC MEANS TO RESOLVE DISPUTES, AND BLUR THE LINE BETWEEN PEACE AND CONFLICT, WITH SEVERE HUMANITARIAN AND SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM.



# AGENDA 1

CYBER WARFARE IS UNIQUE IN THE SPEED, REACH AND POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND EASE OF ATTRIBUTION. AS THE WORLD BECOMES MORE RELIANT ON DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE, CONCERNS REGARDING CYBERSPACE STABILITY AND SECURITY CONTINUE TO GROW.

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM:

1. UN GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS (GGE)- ESTABLISHED KEY NORMS FOR RESPONSIBLE STATE BEHAVIOUR IN CYBERSPACE AND CLARIFIED HOW INTERNATIONAL LAW APPLIES TO CYBER OPERATIONS.
2. OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP (OEWG)- CREATED AN INCLUSIVE PLATFORM FOR ALL MEMBER STATES TO DISCUSS CYBER THREATS, CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES, AND CAPACITY-BUILDING NEEDS.
3. ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)- INTRODUCED TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF MISINTERPRETATION OR ESCALATION DURING CYBER INCIDENTS.
4. NATO COOPERATIVE CYBER DEFENCE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE- CONDUCTED RESEARCH AND JOINT EXERCISES TO STRENGTHEN CYBER PREPAREDNESS AND IMPROVE COORDINATED RESPONSES AMONG MEMBER STATES.
5. UNDP, ITU, AND UNIDIR CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS- SUPPORTED DEVELOPING STATES IN BUILDING CYBERSECURITY LAWS, NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS, AND STRONGER DIGITAL DEFENCE SYSTEMS.
6. BUDAPEST CONVENTION ON CYBERCRIME- ENHANCED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON CYBERCRIME INVESTIGATIONS AND LEGAL HARMONISATION AMONG PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES.\
7. INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)- REAFFIRMED



# AGENDA 1

## QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ANSWER:

1. HOW CAN STATES PREVENT CYBER OPERATIONS FROM ESCALATING INTO ARMED CONFLICT UNDER THE UN CHARTER?
2. WHAT MECHANISMS CAN IMPROVE ATTRIBUTION OF CYBERATTACKS AND REDUCE THE RISK OF MISCALCULATION?
3. HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL LAW BE CLARIFIED OR REINFORCED TO GOVERN STATE BEHAVIOUR IN CYBERSPACE?
4. WHAT MEASURES CAN REDUCE THE USE OF CYBERSPACE FOR POLITICAL INTERFERENCE, ELECTION DISRUPTION, OR MANIPULATION OF PUBLIC OPINION?
5. HOW CAN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) ENHANCE COOPERATION BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED AND DEVELOPING STATES TO CLOSE CYBERSECURITY CAPABILITY GAPS?
6. HOW CAN STATES STRENGTHEN NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY LEGISLATION WHILE MAINTAINING RESPECT FOR PRIVACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS?
7. WHAT STRATEGIES CAN COUNTER THE PROLIFERATION OF SOPHISTICATED CYBER TOOLS ON THE BLACK MARKET?
8. WHAT ADDITIONAL MEASURES CAN ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY WHEN A STATE VIOLATES AGREED NORMS OF RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN CYBERSPACE?
9. WHAT LONG-TERM FRAMEWORKS CAN PROMOTE STABILITY, REDUCE TENSIONS, AND ESTABLISH PREDICTABLE BEHAVIOUR AMONG STATES IN CYBERSPACE?
10. TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD A LARGE-SCALE CYBERATTACK ON CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE BE CONSIDERED AN ACT OF WAR, AND WHAT THRESHOLDS MUST BE CLEARLY DEFINED TO PREVENT DISPROPORTIONATE RETALIATION?



# AGENDA 1

11. HOW CAN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) ADDRESS SITUATIONS WHERE A STATE DELIBERATELY EXPLOITS ATTRIBUTION UNCERTAINTY TO DENY INVOLVEMENT WHILE CONTINUING DESTABILIZING CYBER OPERATIONS?

12. WHAT ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED WHEN POWERFUL STATES VIOLATE AGREED CYBER NORMS, GIVEN THE GEOPOLITICAL IMBALANCE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM?

13. HOW SHOULD THE UN RESPOND IF A CYBER OPERATION TRIGGERS PHYSICAL CASUALTIES OR NATIONAL SHUTDOWNS, BLURRING THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN DIGITAL CONFLICT AND KINETIC WARFARE?

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## AGENDA 2

### "NON-STATE ACTORS AND PROXY CONFLICTS: REDUCING THE INFLUENCE OF MILITIAS AND PRIVATE ARMIES"

NON-STATE ARMED GROUPS (SUCH AS MILITIAS, INSURGENTS, EXTREMIST NETWORKS, AND PRIVATE MILITARY COMPANIES) ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE IMPORTANT IN THE WARS OF THE PRESENT DAY. SUCH GROUPS ARE ABLE TO FUNCTION WITHOUT THE INTERFERENCE OF THE STATE AND EVEN TO A CERTAIN DEGREE, GOVERN BEING THE MASTER OF THE TERRITORY, RESOURCES, OR THE LOCAL POPULATION. THEIR OPERATIONS MIGHT EXTEND TO RECRUITING CHILDREN, WHICH IS A PARTICULARLY HEINOUS CRIME, CONDUCTING ILLEGAL ARMS SMUGGLING, AND EVEN CAUSING HARDSHIPS IN THE FORM OF OBSTRUCTING HUMANITARIAN AID.

IN MOST CASES, OVERSEAS STATES SUPPORT NON-STATE ACTORS INDIRECTLY THROUGH PROVISION OF FUNDS, WEAPONS, OR EVEN IMPARTING SKILLS, GIVING RISE TO PROXY CONFLICTS THAT FURTHER COMPLICATE THE SITUATION OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY. THE PRESENCE OF PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY COMPANIES MAKES IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO RECOGNIZE THE BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN STATE AND NON-STATE ACTIVITIES HENCE, THE ISSUES OF ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW ARE RAISED.

UCH GROUPS MIGHT EASILY BECOME THE REASON FOR THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE STATE, OBSTACLES TO PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS, AND FURTHER AGGRAVATION OF THE ALREADY EXISTING HUMANITARIAN CRISES. THE AREAS WHERE THESE PROBLEMS ARE MOST SEVERE INCLUDE THE SAHEL, THE MIDDLE EAST, EASTERN EUROPE, AND SOME PARTS OF LATIN AMERICA WHICH ARE CHARACTERIZED BY WEAK POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND PROTRACTED CONFLICTS THAT ENABLE THE FREE MOVEMENT OF ARMED



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# AGENDA 2

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM:

1. UN SECURITY COUNCIL SANCTIONS REGIMES - IMPLEMENTED ASSET FREEZES, TRAVEL BANS, AND ARMS EMBARGOES TO RESTRICT FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND WEAPONS ACCESS FOR ARMED GROUPS.
2. DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR) PROGRAMS- SUPPORTED THE TRANSITION OF FORMER FIGHTERS BACK INTO CIVILIAN LIFE IN NUMEROUS UN MISSIONS, REDUCING RECRUITMENT POOLS FOR MILITIAS.
3. UN PEACEKEEPING AND POLITICAL MISSIONS - DEPLOYED TO STABILISE CONFLICT REGIONS, RESTORE STATE AUTHORITY, PROTECT CIVILIANS, AND ASSIST GOVERNMENTS IN DEALING WITH ARMED GROUPS.
4. UN WORKING GROUP ON THE USE OF MERCENARIES- DEVELOPED RECOMMENDATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR REGULATING PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY COMPANIES INVOLVED IN CONFLICT ZONES.
5. INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL) AND ICRC GUIDANCE - CLARIFIED LEGAL OBLIGATIONS FOR NON-STATE ACTORS AND PROHIBITED PRACTICES INCLUDING ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS AND RECRUITMENT OF CHILDREN.
6. REGIONAL MECHANISMS (AFRICAN UNION, ECOWAS, IGAD)- LAUNCHED REGIONAL OPERATIONS TO ADDRESS CROSS-BORDER MILITANT ACTIVITY AND STRENGTHEN SECURITY COOPERATION AMONG AFFECTED STATES.
7. UN PANELS OF EXPERTS INVESTIGATIONS- MONITORED CONFLICT ZONES, IDENTIFIED EXTERNAL SUPPORT NETWORKS, AND REPORTED VIOLATIONS OF ARMS EMBARGOES THAT FUEL PROXY WARFARE.



# AGENDA 2

## QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION SHOULD ANSWER:

1. HOW CAN STATES REDUCE EXTERNAL FINANCING, WEAPONS TRANSFERS, AND POLITICAL SUPPORT THAT FUEL PROXY CONFLICTS?
2. WHAT MECHANISMS CAN STRENGTHEN STATE AUTHORITY IN REGIONS WHERE MILITIAS HAVE ASSUMED CONTROL OVER GOVERNANCE OR SECURITY?
3. HOW CAN THE UNITED NATION SECURITY COUNCIL IMPROVE ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING SANCTIONS AND ARMS EMBARGOES TO LIMIT THE CAPABILITIES OF ARMED GROUPS?
4. WHAT APPROACHES CAN ADDRESS THE ROLE OF PRIVATE MILITARY COMPANIES AND ENSURE THEY COMPLY WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW?
5. WHAT STRATEGIES CAN REDUCE THE RECRUITMENT OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS BY ARMED GROUPS?
6. HOW CAN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS BE STRENGTHENED TO PROTECT CIVILIANS FROM MILITIA VIOLENCE AND ENSURE HUMANITARIAN ACCESS?
7. WHAT FRAMEWORKS CAN ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WAR CRIMES COMMITTED BY NON-STATE ACTORS DURING ONGOING CONFLICTS?
8. HOW CAN INTELLIGENCE-SHARING AND JOINT MONITORING MECHANISMS HELP TRACK ILLICIT ARMS FLOWS AND FUNDING NETWORKS?
9. WHAT STEPS CAN REDUCE RESOURCE EXPLOITATION BY MILITIAS, SUCH AS ILLEGAL MINING OR TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS?
10. TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD THE SECURITY COUNCIL INTERVENE IF A MILITIA GAINS POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND FORMS A PARALLEL GOVERNMENT WITHIN A STATE?



## AGENDA 2

11. HOW CAN THE UN ADDRESS SITUATIONS WHERE MILITIAS BECOME MORE TRUSTED OR EFFECTIVE THAN THE STATE'S OWN SECURITY FORCES BY LOCAL POPULATIONS?
12. WHAT FRAMEWORKS CAN ADDRESS THE RISE OF MILITIAS SUPPORTED BY CYBER CAPABILITIES, FOREIGN ADVISORS, OR EXTERNAL PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGNS?
13. WHAT MEASURES CAN ENSURE THAT PEACE AGREEMENTS DO NOT UNINTENTIONALLY EMPOWER MILITIAS BY GRANTING THEM POLITICAL CONCESSIONS OR RECOGNITION?

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