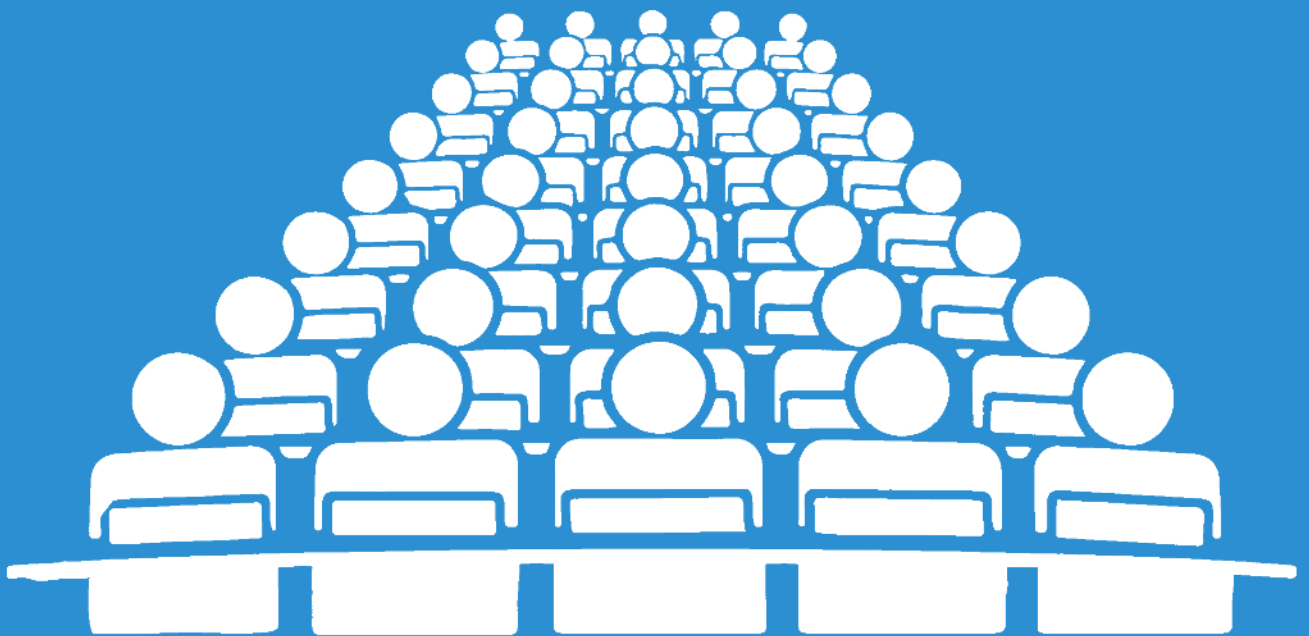


STUDY GUIDE



GENERAL ASSEMBLY



BITSMUN



United Nations Information Centre
for India and Bhutan



HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL

In 1945, the General Assembly was created with the ratification of the Charter of the United Nations. Including all 193 members of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. As such, it is a medium for multilateral deliberation on global issues specified by the UN Charter. In the General Assembly, each member state has a vote and a simple majority decides each resolution. However, votes taken on designated important issues, “such as recommendations on peace and security and the election of Security Council members, require a two-thirds majority of Member States.”

Specifically, the first committee in the General Assembly, the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was established to serve as a forum to debate issues pertaining to disarmament and the maintenance of global peace and security in an environment of equality. This committee takes measures necessary for the prevention or the reduction of international hostilities and conflict on matters that are not already being discussed by the United Nations Security Council.

While the Disarmament and International Security Committee has the authority to initiate studies and to pass resolutions to promote international political cooperation and “the development and codification of international law,” unlike the Security Council, DISEC does not have the power to impose sanctions or to authorize armed interventions. As a preliminary organ, DISEC serves as the first level of discussion for issues within the scope of disarmament and international security. This allows all member states to fully develop their positions and engage in multilateral discussion.

Instead of having binding authority, DISEC’s resolutions function as recommendations to the Secretariat or the Security Council. More specifically, these recommendations are for establishing the “general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament” and for the “peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among nations.”





Since its inception in 1945, the Disarmament and International Security Committee has played a critical role in promoting the global effort for disarmament of both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction and in facilitating international peace and security.

While the various studies initiated by DISEC have been invaluable to the Security Council for its continued operations, DISEC's main contribution to preserving and creating global security is its numerous recommendations for peacekeeping missions to the UNSC. Starting in 1948, the first peacekeeping effort in Israel and the Middle East has worked to monitor ceasefires, supervise armistice agreements, and prevent isolated incidents from escalating within the region. Since then, the Security Council has authorised over sixty peacekeeping missions, the majority of them having first been recommended by DISEC.

The Committee works in close cooperation with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament. It is the only Main Committee of the General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage.

The First Committee sessions are structured into three distinctive stages:

1. General debate
2. Thematic discussions
3. Action on drafts

It is the only Main Committee of the General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage pursuant to Rule 58 (a) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Aims/Purpose

The United Nations established the DISEC committee with the purpose of serving as a forum for all representatives of member countries of the UN so that they are able to debate on various issues related to security and disarmament in an environment where equality prevails. It has been stated in the UN Charter that the committee has to consider the general principles related to cooperation for maintaining security and peace at an international level. However, DISEC does not possess power for authorized intervention of arms or imposing sanctions, unlike the Security Council.





AGENDA 1

Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit arms trade and cash flow

Introduction

Over the last decade, the world has been afflicted by over 250 conflicts. While no two are the same, the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons, and their ammunition, is common to all.

More than 50,000 men, women and children are killed each year as a direct consequence, and the number of those displaced has reached levels not seen since the Second World War. Civilians – including children -- suffer the most. Ruthless, targeted attacks on schools, hospitals, and markets continue – against all basic principles of international law. The diversion of weaponry, including from government stockpiles, is further fuelling conflict, allowing rebels, gangs, criminal organizations, pirates, terrorist groups and insurgents to bolster their firepower.

Poor weapons management is an area of alarming concern. Many States lack thorough planning and consistent attention to safe storage, handling, transportation and disposal of their arsenals. The recent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty laid the foundations for a global framework of arms transfer controls, including for small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

Background

The issue of the proliferation of arms and light weapons was first raised in a United Nations forum in a 1995 UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution (A/RES/50/70B). Following that, two expert groups, established by the Secretary-General, issued reports on the subject (A/52/298 (1997) and A/54/258 (1999)).





What are weapons?

Broadly speaking, the term refers to any weapon that can be carried by one or two people. Examples range from military-style guns---pistols, carbines, assault rifles, and light machine guns--to grenade launchers, mortars, mobile anti-tank guns and rocket launchers, and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile launchers.

Munitions used with these weapons (such as bullets, grenades and missiles), landmines, and explosives are also encompassed by the term.

Why the focus on these weapons now?

With the end of the cold war, increased attention is being paid today to the devastation wrought by armed conflict around the world. Previously referred to by official Washington as "low intensity conflicts," these wars have resulted in the death of well over one million people this decade. The vast majority of these casualties--as many as 90 percent--are civilian victims of indiscriminate warfare.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has determined that small arms are the principal cause of death in conflicts. In fact, these arms are thought to be responsible for 90 percent of recent war casualties. Small/light arms are cheap and portable, and are used by all combatants--state militaries, militias, and insurgents. It is the prevalence--that is, the widespread proliferation--of these arms, combined with their indiscriminate use that renders them responsible for so much of the killing.

In addition, small and light arms are used in crime and terrorist acts around the world.

Who's impacted by the spread of these arms?

Civilians---

Millions of people are caught in the crossfire of warfare or become victims of armed crime. Many are women and children.





Children---

The light weight and small size of these weapons has made it possible [easy] for children to be recruited or compelled to become soldiers. Child soldiers were particularly exploited in recent wars in Liberia and the Sudan.

Political dissidents, union organizers, land rights activists, journalists, etc. ---

Small arms are the principal tool of intimidation used by repressive police and military forces. The massacre in Chiapas last December of 45 unarmed civilians, carried out by government-affiliated paramilitary forces with high-powered AK-47 assault rifles, is one of countless examples.

Foreign relief and development workers---

Armed conflict often creates the humanitarian emergencies that relief workers are called in to alleviate. In addition, aid workers are increasingly coming under fire---being killed, kidnapped, or threatened.

International peacekeeping troops---

The United Nations found that small arms and light weapons pose the principal threat to international troops seeking to establish or maintain peace among combatants.

Local and foreign businesspeople---

Wealthy businesspeople are often kidnapped or extorted with these arms. More generally, the widespread diffusion of weapons undermines economic development and often results in the total collapse of a functioning economy.

Tourists and the tourism industry---

Armed violence has a devastating impact on local tourism, which is the largest industry in the world today and the leading source of revenue for many countries. In several recent cases, such as the massacre of 66 people at Luxor, Egypt last November, tourists are particularly targeted.





How many of these weapons are out there?

Estimates range from 100 to 500 million military style weapons in circulation, in addition to hundreds of millions more designed for police or civilian use. The wide range points to the lack of available data: Small arms and light weapons are rarely reported in official statistics on the arms trade, are impossible to quantify independently, and are often manufactured and transferred covertly.

- Modern conflicts claim an estimated half a million people each year. 300,000 of these are from conflicts, and 200,000 are from homicides and suicides.
- Over 80 percent of all these casualties have been civilian
- 90 percent of civilian casualties are caused by small arms. This is far higher than the casualty count from conventional weapons of war like tanks, bomber jets or warships.
- Estimates of the black market trade in small arms range from US\$2-10 billion a year.
- Every minute, someone is killed by a gun
- At least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspect of the production of small arms and/or ammunition.
- Civilians purchase more than 80% of all the firearms that are currently manufactured worldwide each year.
- There are at least 639 million firearms in the world today, of which 59% are legally held by civilians.

Other Costs of Violence: Economic, Social and Political

Violence fuelled by small arms also represents a significant threat to the reinstatement of democratic governance essential to sustainable peace. In addition, the continued availability of weapons often can lead to the breakdown of civil order and dramatic increases in lawlessness, banditry, and illicit drug trafficking. Small arms can change the balance of power and may raise the level of violence. Even if in the short term their use is for self-defence, the long-term effect may be to limit—if not negate—other ways of addressing conflict resolution by peaceful means. In Central America, for example, the UN has





been very successful in peacekeeping, but the proliferation of light weapons presents challenges to long-term stability and reconciliation.

Criminal violence in South Africa has been defined as “the greatest threat to human rights” facing the young democracy. In Latin America, criminal violence dwarfs political violence and has a huge impact on individual security, economic development, and governance. The economic costs of violence—including the costs of policing as well as the value of lives lost—have been estimated to consume 14 percent of GDP. In Brazil, 10 percent of GDP is consumed by violence, but in Colombia, the figure rises to 25 percent. Small arms figure prominently, accounting for over 70 percent of homicides in Colombia and 88 percent of homicides in Brazil. Even in developed countries, the economic costs of violence are staggering. In Canada, the costs of small arms death and injury (including murder, Small Arms and suicide, and unintentional injuries) have been estimated at \$6.6 billion per year. In addition to the costs measured in terms of the economic value of lost life, violence in the United States diverts health, policing, and social resources from other problems.

Violence and the prevalence of weapons also create psychological stress that fuels other health problems and creates insecurity. Living in arms-infested environments often yields observable symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, such as overwhelming anxiety and a lack of motivation.

Other secondary effects include problems related to the blood supply. Not only are blood availability and transfusion key issues in developing countries, but emergency responses to large-scale violence often do not accommodate careful testing for HIV and can result in additional problems

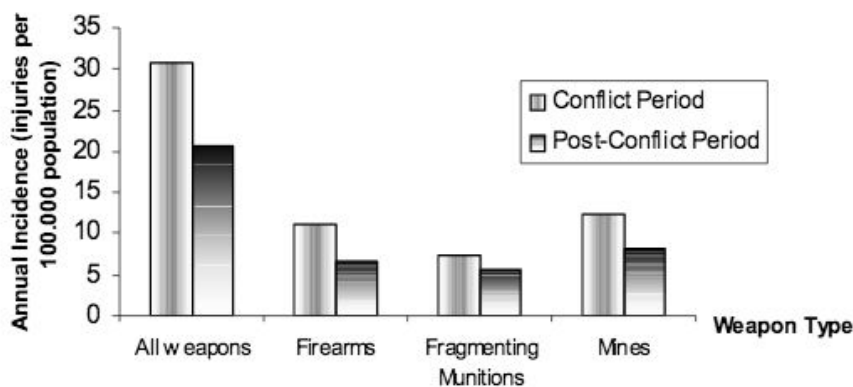
The Accessibility Thesis

Research has shown that rates of small arms death and injury are linked to small arms accessibility. In post-conflict situations, the presence of small arms in society fuels violence even after formal conflicts have ceased. A study comparing injuries during conflict and peacetime revealed that weapons injury declined only 20 to 40 percent after “peace” was established. Another study



contrasted two areas in Afghanistan—one where there was “peace” and one where there was armed conflict between factions. It revealed a high rate of non-combat injury even in the peaceful region—80 deaths per 100,000 people, half of which were related to small arms.

Figure 1: Injuries in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations



Source: ICRC, *Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Geneva, ICRC, 1999.

Many working on peacebuilding and disarmament argue that the link between violence levels and access to weapons is self-evident. When small arms are not removed following conflicts, mortality rates remain high as interpersonal violence substitutes for war. The proliferation of small arms also leads to an escalation of a domestic “arms race,” causing widespread criminality and the breakdown of legal norms. “The proliferation of these weapons has facilitated an increase in the scale and duration of conflict in many states and, in some cases, has made the outbreak of armed violence more likely.” In industrialized countries, studies have shown that accessibility is related to firearm death rates. Studies comparing homes where small arms are present to those where they are not have concluded that the risk of death increases substantially if firearms are in the home.

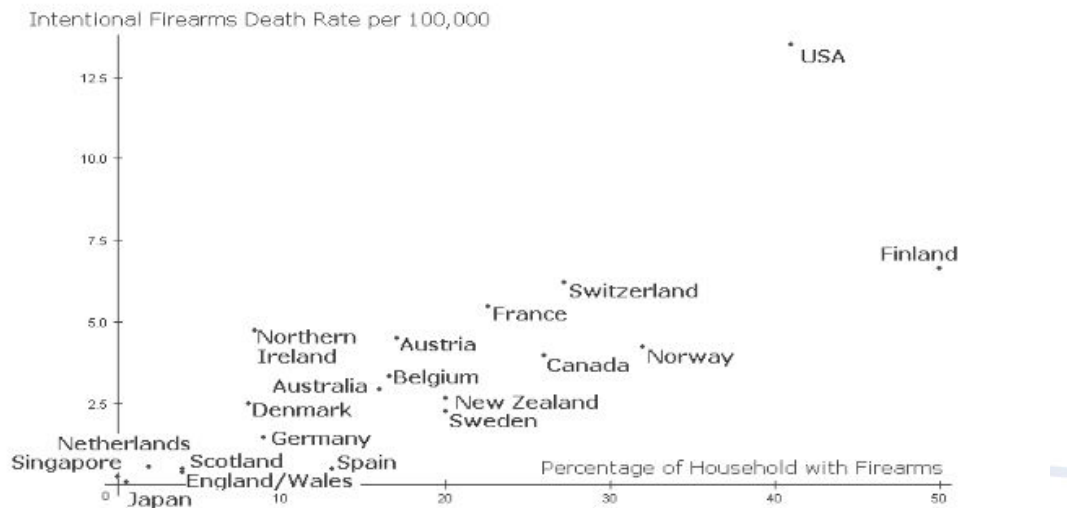
Other approaches have examined the rates of death from firearms across regions, cities, high-income countries, and respondents to victimization surveys.





While more research could illuminate the interaction between the range of factors shaping the demand for firearms, at the societal level and at the individual level (criminal activity, drug use, parental factors) there is a growing body of literature which reveals a relationship between access to firearms and the firearm death rates and crime. This underpins the notion that reducing access to firearms through regulation will reduce the lethality of assaults and suicide attempts.

Figure 2: Intentional Firearms Death Rate vs. Percentage of Households with Firearms



Source: ICRC, *Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Geneva, ICRC, 1999.

Illicit Markets

Small arms are light-weight and “person-portable” weapons, including revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, light machine-guns, sub-machine guns (the Uzi), and assault rifles (the AK-47). Some might include hand grenades, landmines, and small mortars in the definition.

Military assault weapons, which are characterized by large-capacity magazines and semi- or fully automatic fire, are particularly efficient and require little skill.





With such weapons, a single gunman can slaughter dozens of people in a short period of time. To use a public health approach to reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms, it is critical to start with a systematic analysis of

- a) The patterns of misuse including the types of weapons used,
- b) The causal factors and the links in the chain,
- c) Ways of breaking that chain, and
- d) An evaluation of the interventions.

Understanding the instrument of violence

It is very clear that the patterns vary from region to region—in some, the principal problem is conflict; in others it is crime; in other areas such as Colombia and South Africa, the distinction between conflict and crime is virtually meaningless. Similarly the patterns of small arms that are misused and the sources of supply vary significantly. In some regions, most deaths are associated with military weapons. In others, most deaths are caused by handguns or even hunting rifles. In other regions it is a mix. While empirical evidence is limited, systematic analysis is key to avoid developing interventions that do not address the problem. Moreover, from a health perspective, the constructions of “conflict” and “crime” are not particularly meaningful or useful; the focus is the protection of human life within the context of human rights and humanitarian law. In a country such as South Africa, for example, criminal violence has far outstripped overtly political violence as a threat to human rights. Despite the widespread claims made regarding the proliferation of military assault weapons in South Africa, the bulk of the weapons used are actually handguns, many of them at one time legally owned by civilians in South Africa. Military-style weapons such as assault rifles have represented a small proportion of guns used in crime.

Many states in Southern Africa have strict domestic controls on firearms and correspondingly lower crime rates; the smuggling and legal purchase of firearms from South Africa, where controls are far less strict, affect Lesotho, Botswana, and Malawi. Similarly in Brazil and Colombia, most of the weapons recovered are actually handguns, not military assault weapons. In Latin America, small arms diverted from legal markets appear to be the principal problem: 80 percent of illegal small arms in Mexico originate in the United





States, as do approximately 50 percent of illegal handguns in Canada. Proximity is not the only factor, however, as many of the small arms possessed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) originated in the United States. Guns in Japan come from the United States and China but also from South Africa. In Asia and parts of Europe, state supplies from the former Soviet Union appear to be the major problem both in ethnic conflict and in crime, but there are anecdotes concerning seizures of weapons from dealers in Austria, Finland, Estonia, Poland, the United States, and elsewhere. In India, the provisions of the Arms Act and other regulations strictly regulate all types of firearms, but illegal weapons proliferate due to porous borders and the absence of controls in neighbouring states.

Globalization has promoted trade in illegal as well as legal goods and focuses attention on the need for international strategies to counter illicit trafficking and, in particular, the need for harmonization and information-sharing. The links are transnational, with examples of small arms being recovered after being transferred through many points in distribution networks that span the world. Despite the preoccupation with small arms transfers between states, there are more small arms in the possession of civilians worldwide than in the possession of governments and police.

Furthermore, despite the attention given to military assault weapons in countries such as Brazil, South Africa, and Columbia, handguns are a major problem. Moreover, virtually every “illegal” small arm began as a legal small arm. Careful analysis of channels through which small arms are diverted from “legal” to “illegal” markets and purposes are critical. An analysis of more than 200 reported incidents of illicit trafficking suggests that misuse and diversion occur through a variety of mechanisms, but generally the evidence suggests that illegal small arms fall into three broad categories:

- Legally held small arms that are misused by their lawful owner (whether states, organizations or individuals);
- Legal small arms that are diverted—the “grey” market—sold by legal owners to unauthorized individuals, illegally sold, stolen, or diverted through other means;





- Illegally manufactured and distributed small arms (although these account for a small fraction).

Diversion takes many forms. One thing is clear, however: a comprehensive strategy must address all aspects of the problem. Some of the means of diversion which have been documented include:

- State to state transfers. The principal suppliers of military weapons worldwide include China, Russia, and the United States. Information about sales of small arms is limited, but the United States sold or transferred \$463 million worth of small arms and ammunition to 124 countries in 1998. Of these countries, about 30 were at war or experiencing persistent civil violence in 1998.
- Not only are weapons misused by states, but weapons supplied to one-time “allies” are often turned against the suppliers. This is often termed “blowback” or the “boomerang effect.” During the 1980s, for example, at least \$2 billion worth of arms and military training were transferred to Islamic rebel groups (the mujahedeen) in an effort to topple the Soviet-backed Afghanistan government. The CIA funnelled arms and money through the Pakistani Army’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The Taliban were armed with weapons left by the Soviets, weapons left over from the U.S. arms pipeline of the 1980s, and arms recently sent by Pakistan, which has leftover stores from the 1980s and acquires other items on the international black market. The CIA allocated \$65 million in the 1990s to try to purchase the Stingers back off the black market, with limited success.
- There is substantial evidence of illegal sales by legal sellers whether in military or civilian markets. More than half of the weapons submitted by local and state police to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms for tracing originated with less than one half of one percent of the United States’ 180,000 licensed dealers. Dishonest dealers have engaged in legal firearms trade while diverting some of their firearms to illicit markets. Several cases of this type have been identified by major police investigations such as Operation ABONAR in the United Kingdom.





- There are also many documented cases of military weapons, police weapons, and weapons recovered in crime re-entering the secondary market through theft or illegal sales. In Australia, military personnel falsified records to conceal the theft of firearms from national stockpiles.

Police in South Africa have reported more than 14,000 firearms lost or stolen.

- Diversion of civilian held small arms also fuels the illicit supply. In many countries, most small arms recovered in crime appear to have at one time been legally owned by states or by civilians. In countries where legally owned small arms are more readily available, civilian weapons fuel the illegal markets. In the United States alone, where there are 260 million people with an estimated 200 million firearms, it has been estimated that 500,000 firearms are stolen each year—by definition entering the illegal market. Inadequate controls over gun sales also fuel illegal markets.

- Unregulated sales. For example, gun shows have proved to be a major source of illicit guns to international illegal markets.

- The falsification of import and export documents aggravates the problem. Recently a Canadian dealer was charged with smuggling more than 40,000 mislabelled military small arms and components into the United States that were bound for the Middle East. A major consignment of parts for M-2 automatic rifles originating in Vietnam and destined for Mexico was found in a sealed container in San Diego falsely labelled as “hand tools and strap hangers.” A corrupt official in Estonia falsified paperwork for 1,310 handguns and pump action shotguns purchased from Finland. In another case, a Finnish official granted a permit to import 25,000 AK-47s and 40,000 handguns from Poland and Austria. The weapons “disappeared,” although several have been recovered in crime.

- In general, illegally manufactured firearms are a small proportion of the problem. For example, in South Africa, of the firearms seized by the South African Police Service in 1998 approximately 15 percent were home-made.





Reactivation of firearms is also a problem. For example, in Great Britain, more than 70 deactivated Mac 10 machine pistols were imported from the United States and reactivated by a dealer.

Safeguards and accountability

Measures to reduce the likelihood of diversion from legal to illegal purposes:

- Safe storage—whether of state, police, or civilian weapons—is aimed at reducing the problems of “leakage” from state-owned firearms stocks.
- There are a wide range of proposals for improving stockpile management, including improved record-keeping and registration procedures.

Measures to reduce the number of weapons in circulation or access:

- International standards have been proposed for the destruction of confiscated or surplus small arms and light weapons. Weapons collection programs in post-conflict areas are critical to the establishment of lasting peace—otherwise the risk of high levels of violence remains. Decommissioning the IRA, for example, has proved to be a huge impediment to lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Amnesties and buybacks have been legislated and enforced in support of changes to domestic laws as well. The value of voluntary weapons collection programs in other contexts, however, appears to be largely educational.
- There has been renewed emphasis on local measures, for example, strictly controlling access in public places. Some countries, such as South Africa, have legislated “gun free zones” to reduce risk.

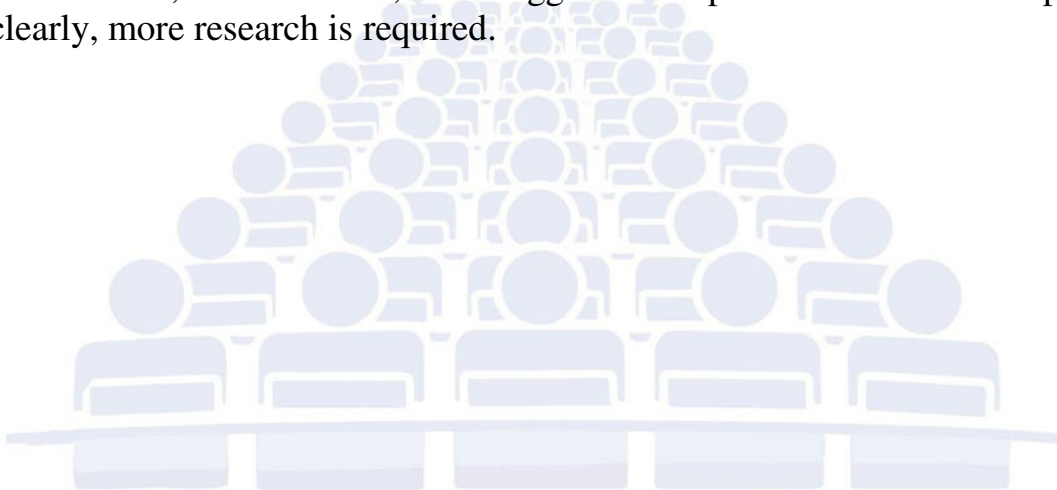
Conclusion

Given the enormity of the problem of illicit trafficking in small arms—in the context of both crime and of conflict—it is surprising that there has been so little research on its dimensions and effects. One of the major challenges in understanding the problem, quite apart from the limited availability of empirical evidence, results from the inherent complexity, diversity and political sensitivity of the issue in many contexts. This article illustrates that there is much to be learned about the problem of illicit trafficking. The dynamics of the problem,





the types of small arms, and their sources vary considerably from region to region. At the same time, there is enough empirical and anecdotal evidence to draw some broad conclusions. One critical conclusion that can be ascertained from this is that the vast majority of illegal small arms began as legal small arms, whether traded illegally by states, diverted from military stockpiles, or bought in legal civilian markets. Consequently, the interplay between licit and illicit markets coupled with the durability of firearms and uneven national regulatory standards results in very different market dynamics. This interplay also illustrates the need for multi-faceted intervention strategies. Finally, while effective crime, conflict, and injury prevention all rest on addressing root causes of violence—the demand for weapons, if you will—there are also opportunities to reduce the lethality of violence by restricting access to small arms. The research to date, while limited, does suggest some potential intervention points but clearly, more research is required.





AGENDA 2:

Strengthening the International Framework to Minimize the Risk from Weapons of Mass Destruction

Understanding Weapons of Mass Destruction

Even though no universal definition of the WMD may exist due to its ambit and the things/categories following under the same, the most appropriate way to understand the universal term of WMD may be defined as follows:

“A weapon of mass is a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological or other weapon that can kill and bring significant harm to a large number of humans or cause great damage to human-made structures, natural structures, or the biosphere.”

However, the United Nations, after realising the importance of the term, in 1948, appointed a permanent committee to deal with the issue of WMD, which came up with the following definition that has now been uniformly accepted by the diplomatic channels of negotiations, which state WMD's to be as “. . . atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above”, which has also been upheld by the Weapon of Terror report of the WMD commission published in the year 2006, and happens to be the most updated and relevant document to critique the steps adopted by the world in order to deal with the recurrent issue of the WMD growth and spread across the world.

WMD, by far, can have several interpretations, can have multiple angles attached to it, and can accordingly have multiple kinds of weapons being covered by it universally. However, for the purposes of this Session, the





General Assembly will discuss the ambit of WMD in relation with only to 3 aspects:

1. Nuclear Weapons
2. Chemical Weapons
3. Biological Weapons

Even though missiles may be governed as WMD, we will not deal with them as a threat under this session, but will focus on to have a look at the ambit & angle of each of the topics given above, along with major relevant adopted guidelines and the drawbacks such conventions face in implementation, along with the suggested changes for the same.

History and Relevant Terms of Weapons of Mass Destruction

WMD have been a regular topic at the United Nations (UN) since its creation. The first resolution adopted in the General Assembly, Establishment of a Commission to Deal With the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy (1/I), referred to “weapons capable of mass destruction,” with the term in its present form emerging in 1948. The Commission on Conventional Armaments, when asked to create a definition for WMD, determined that they are “atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above.” As per this definition, nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons are considered WMD, though some have argued that the range and capacity of modern high-calibre explosives requires their inclusion.

All three categories of WMD are regulated by treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) (A/RES/2373 (XXII)), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC), and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

The NPT prohibits the development, stockpiling, or use of nuclear weapons, though it allows five states — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States — to possess nuclear weapons. These five states developed





nuclear weapons prior to the negotiation of the NPT, and allowing their continued possession ensured their participation in the negotiations. The NPT also establishes the right of all states to pursue peaceful nuclear technology, including nuclear energy. In addition to the five official nuclear weapons states (NWS), India, and Pakistan maintain nuclear weapons arsenals, with allegations of development made against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Israel and Iran. Israel, India, and Pakistan are not states party to the NPT and are thus exempt from its prohibition of weapons development.

The DPRK was once a state party but withdrew in 2003. The CWC prohibits the production, stockpiling, or use of chemical weapons, and establishes three “schedules” to classify chemicals based on their possible use as a weapon. The scheduling system is considered critical in preventing proliferation of chemical weapons as there are many chemicals used in weapons that also have civilian applications. These dual-use items are subject to trade restrictions. Many countries maintain chemical weapons stockpiles, though their caches are slowly being disarmed. The use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Civil War in August 2013 has made concerns about chemical weapons stockpiles a highly visible international issue, with Syria's lack of participation in the CWC limiting specific knowledge of its stockpile.

There are also allegations that other countries possess undeclared stockpiles. The BWC prohibits the development or use of disease-causing organisms or toxins, such as anthrax or smallpox. However, allegations have been made that multiple states have violated the BWC, including China, Russia, and the United States.

Nuclear Weapons:

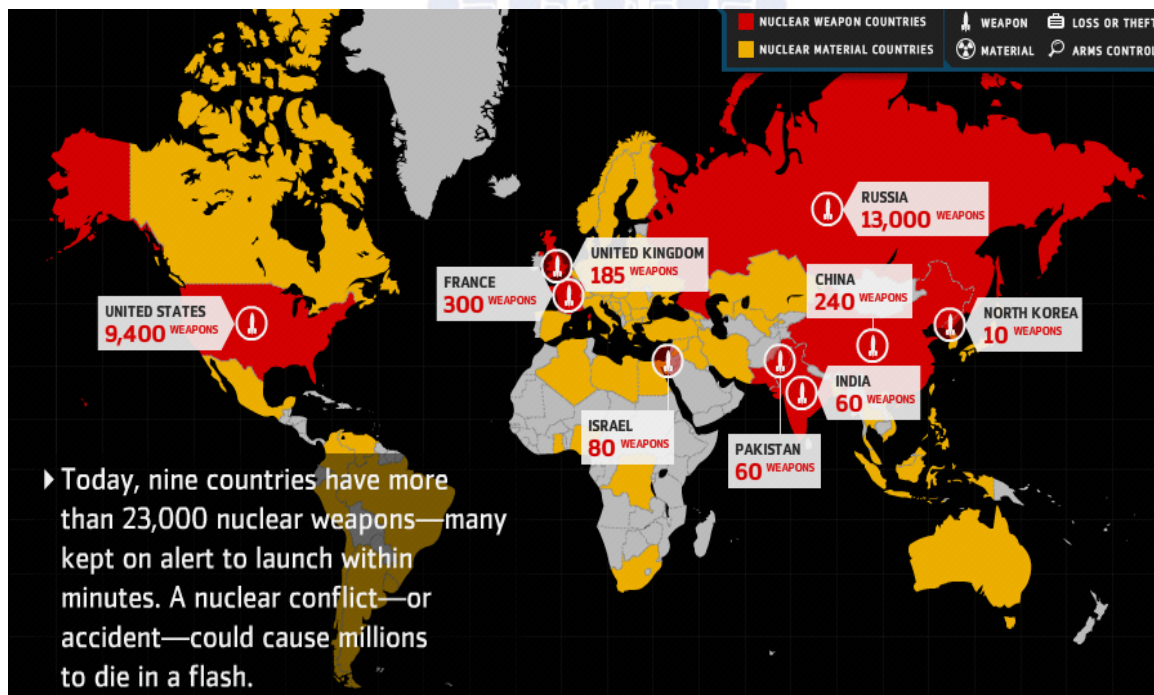
Nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons on earth. One can destroy a whole city, potentially killing millions, and jeopardizing the natural environment and lives of future generations through its long term catastrophic effects. The dangers from such weapons arise from their very existence. Although nuclear weapons have only been used twice in warfare—in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945—about 22,000 reportedly remain





in our world today and there have been over 2,000 nuclear tests conducted to date.

The only way to potentially save the world from a complete wipe out by attack & usage of Nuclear Weapon is by the means of complete Non- Usage & disarmament by the member states in the order to end this threat looming over head. A number of multilateral treaties have since been established with the aim of preventing nuclear proliferation and testing, while promoting progress in nuclear disarmament. These include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests In The Atmosphere, In Outer Space And Under Water, also known as the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was signed in 1996 but has yet to enter into force.



Treaty Controlling Nuclear Weapons:

Though a series of treaties have been signed by the world community with commitment towards complete disarmament by the member states, some of the Major treaties include:





(1) NUCLEAR NON PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT): The NPT was adopted on 12 June 1968 and put into force on 5 March 1970 with a goal to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It consists of 3 main pillars as follows – Non-proliferation – prevent the spread of nuclear weapons/ material. The Nuclear Weapon States namely United Kingdom, United States of America, Russia, China and France agree not to transfer nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce a non-nuclear weapon state (NNWS) to acquire nuclear weapons. NNWS parties to the NPT agree not to "receive," "manufacture" or "acquire" nuclear weapons or to "seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons". Disarmament – reduce the nuclear stockpile and after a period, obtain the status of a nuclear weapon free state. The NPT presents the desire of treaty signatories to ease international tension and strengthen international trust so as to create someday the conditions for a halt to the production on nuclear weapons, and treaty on general and complete disarmament that liquidates, in particular, nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles from national arsenals.

Signatories: The NPT has been signed by maximum number of nations of the world, with only India, Pakistan, Israel & South Sudan refusing to follow the same, with the DPR Korea officially withdrawing from the convention.

Criticism: The NPT, even though being the stepping stone towards the idea of a nuclear free world had established 3 principles for a safer world, the same has still not been established. With 4 members not signing the NPT & 1 leaving, NPT has often been criticised as a tool for the Nuclear Powers to go ahead and keep a check on non-nuclear powers. NPT requires nations to disintegrate all their collected stock pile of the weapons, refuse to create any more & allows member states to use enriched nuclear substance for peaceful civilian uses. The idea of only allowing 5 Nuclear States and mandating all others has been criticised. Also, under NPT, the state's only need to show their reports/declare their stock pile, but cannot be forced for internal investigation by the 3rd party inspectors, which leads to no effective mechanism to verify the claims

(2) Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: The Treaty was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 September 1996. It opened for signature in





New York on 24 September 1996, when it was signed by 71 States, including five of the eight then nuclear-capable states. As of March 2015, 164 states have ratified the CTBT and another 19 states have signed but not ratified it. The treaty will enter into force 180 days after the 44 states agreed to ratify it. Post adoption of CTBT, Member states are forbidden to conduct any kind of nuclear test completely. However, India, Pakistan & DPR Korea refused to sign the treaty, and conducted tests in 1998 & 2006 respectively.

CTBT provides for on-site inspection via a chain of 335 centres which are equipped to handle information related to nuclear explosion via any medium, and post collection and analysis, such info will be shared and inspection to be carried out.

Chemical Weapons:

A common conception of a chemical weapon comprises a toxic chemical contained in a delivery system such as a bomb or artillery shell. While technically correct, a definition based on this conception would only cover small portion of the range of things the CWC prohibits as “chemical weapons”. There are several reasons for the broad CWC definition. However, care had to be taken not to define chemical weapons in a way that unnecessarily hindered legitimate uses of chemicals and the economic and technological development to which such uses may lead. While providing for the prevention of production or stockpiling of chemical weapons, the definition could not result in restrictions of any State Party’s right to acquire and retain conventional weapons and their associated delivery systems nor the right to produce and use chemicals for peaceful purposes. The definition eventually adopted allowed for a balanced approach under which the Convention’s objectives can be met while the rights of States Parties are retained.

Treaties Regulating Chemical Weapons:

The Major conventions adopted to prevent the usage of Chemical Weapons include:

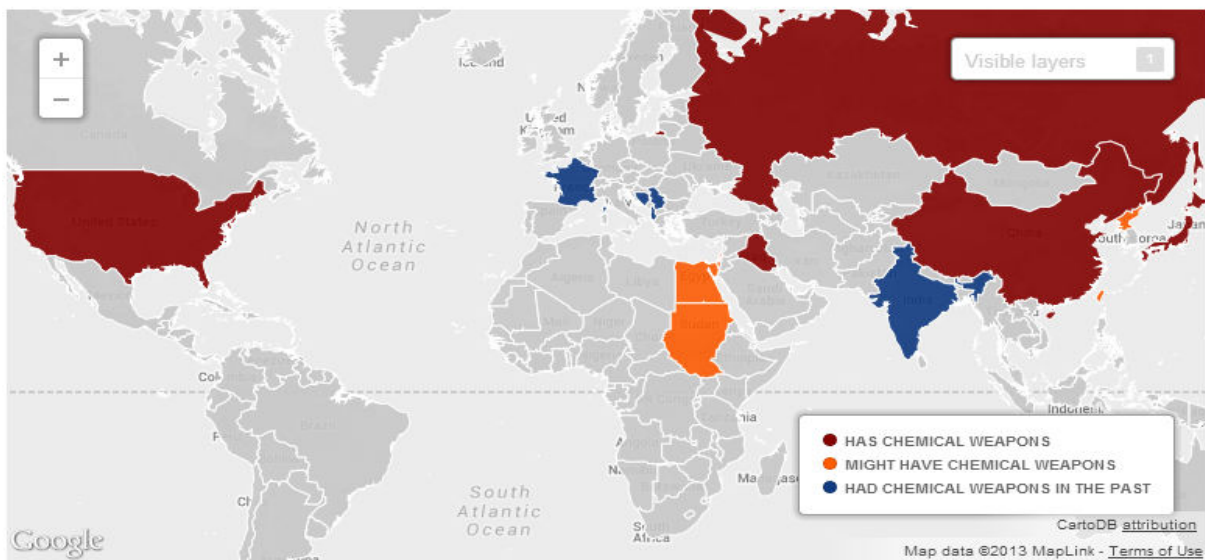
(1) Chemical Weapons Convention: The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is an arms control treaty which outlaws the production, stockpiling, and





use of chemical weapons and their precursors. The full name of the treaty is the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction and it is administered by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), body established by treaty entered into force in 1997. The convention has mandated all member nations to destroy and stop further production of Chemical Weapons within their territories and upon completion, OPCW to inspect the sites in the state before issuing clearance certificate. CWC also pitches for International Cooperation under OPCW for handling issues related to usage of such weapons by any member state. CWC provides a list of substances that nations may use for civilian uses in controlled quantities and also conversion of such chemicals to other useful substances under OPCW check in a time bound manner.

Here is a map of all the countries that have had chemical weapons in the past, might currently have them, or definitely do have them. Click on any country for more info:



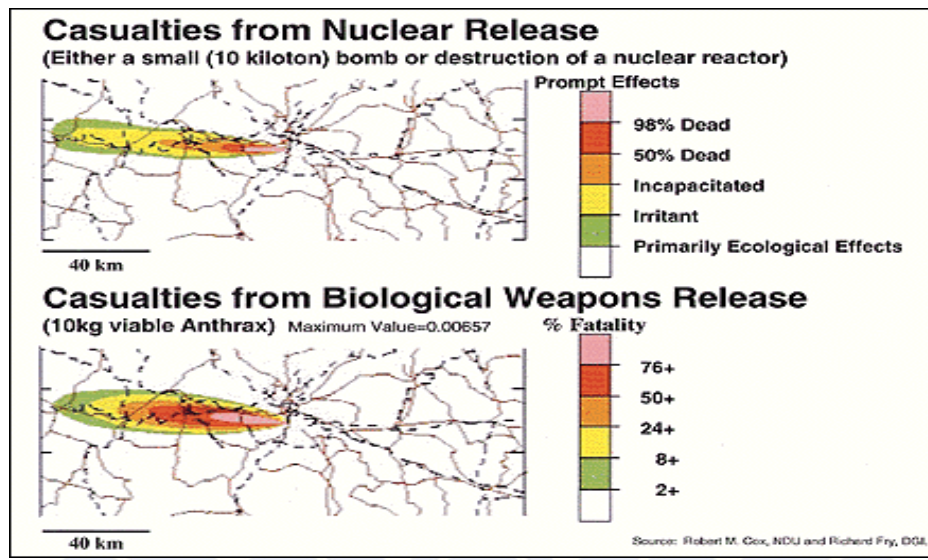
Biological Weapons:

Biological weapons are complex systems that disseminate disease causing organisms or toxins to harm or kill humans, animals or plants. They generally consist of two parts – a weaponized agent and a delivery mechanism. In addition to strategic or tactical military applications, biological weapons can be

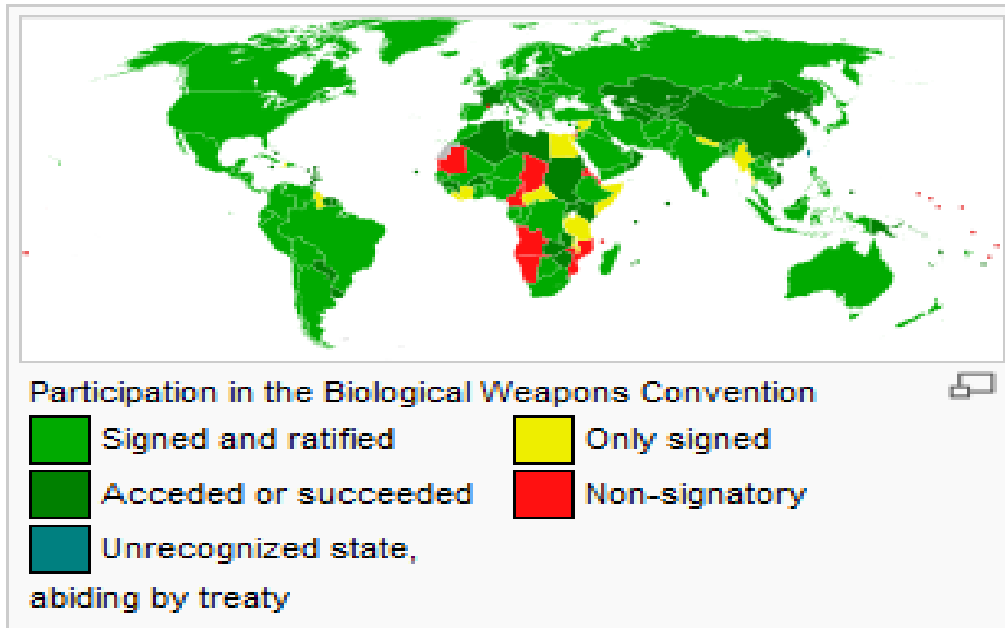




used for political assassinations, the infection of livestock or agricultural produce to cause food shortages and economic loss, the creation of environmental catastrophes, and the introduction of widespread illness, fear and mistrust among the public.



Almost any disease-causing organism (such as bacteria, viruses, fungi) or toxin can be used in biological weapons. The agents can be enhanced from their natural state to make them more suitable for mass production, storage, and dissemination as weapons. Biological weapons are the most diverse form of WMD, can be released via any source, leading to potentially damaging & causing a bigger threat to the world as compared to other agents of WMD.



(1) Biological Weapons Convention: Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning the production of an entire category of weapons. Draft of the BWC, was opened for signature on 10 April 1972 and entered into force 26 March 1975 when twenty-two governments had deposited their instruments of ratification. It commits the 173 states which are party to it as of December 2014 to prohibit the development, production, and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons. As per Article 1 of the convention, also referred to as Purpose Criterion, states the following:

“Each State Party to this Convention undertakes never in any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain:

(1) Microbial or other biological agents, or toxins whatever their origin or method of production, of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;

(2) Weapons, equipment or means of delivery designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.”





Thus, as per BWC, states are required not to use, develop, acquire & produce any weapon that can be used as biological weapon, not even produce them for peaceful civilian uses. However, in absence of any mandatory checks to see its implementation, the purpose of the convention seems failing. The only way to control here is by relying upon the status reports submitted by the countries voluntarily, and despite being adopted long ago, 9 member states have still not ratified the convention, thus making its implementation globally a problem.

Problems with Conventions:

Though all these conventions were created with a belief of doing common good for the world at large, the conventions, even though with aims to help mankind, have failed to deploy effective measures to ensure their implementation globally and ensuring a follow up check on the not complying member states. The only way to expect member states to work is on the principal of “Trust” and only on the way of getting updates and reports on the complying by the member states, with no mechanism to verify such claims. Also, as a major drawback of International law, UN cannot enforce its resolutions/orders on its members state without their consent, and in absence of any strong measure to ensure their applicability, UN can only impose sanctions against such members states, and cannot effectively evolve any mechanism to get their resolutions started completely.

As the General Assembly, the committee needs to evolve & find new implementation schemes, as well as review the existing documents that have been adopted by us, and needs to suggest change, as well as ensure that non signatory member states either sign the conventions, or ensure access to their sites by UN to ensure complete safety from such weapons by the states.

The framework exists today, but is filled with loopholes, and in order to reduce the threat of mass destruction using these weapons, the world needs to establish a new framework and mechanism to keep a check on growth, accumulation and development of any such weapons in the world.



Research Links:

- UN Biological Weapons Convention: <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/bwc>
- UN Chemical Weapons Convention: <http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/>
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt>
- International Law, Security, and Weapons of Mass Destruction by Jayantha Dhanapala
- Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/ctbt>
- <http://fas.org/irp/dni/prog072706.pdf>
- Partial Test Ban Treaties: http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/test_ban
- http://hps.org/documents/RDD_report.pdf
- <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT.shtml>
- <http://www.un.org/disarmament/HomePage/Issues/>
- <http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/wmdcomm.html>
- <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Chemical/>
- http://disarm.igc.org/index.php?view=article&catid=59%3Adt2007fall&id=50%3Adt2007fallDhanapala&tmpl=component&print=1&page=&option=com_content&Itemid=2
- <http://unrcpd.org/wmd/>
- UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, Disarmament Issues [Website], 2013.
- UN General Assembly, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (A/RES/2373 (XXII)), 1968.
- UN General Assembly, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (A/RES/2373 (XXII)), 1968.
- UN General Assembly, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (A/RES/2373 (XXII)), 1968
- https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCEQFjABahUKEwinrP_Vn4vIAhXFqaYKHYEWDkw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fndupress.ndu.edu%2FPortals%2F68%2FDocuments%2Foccasional%2Fcswwmd%2FCSWMD_OccasionalPaper-8.pdf&usg=AFQjCNGmSzG2o-5ao-czc6ntDGWTr_XB_A
- <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/>

Happy Researching!





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