



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

BACKGROUND GUIDE - Disarmament and International Security Committee

Agenda: Disarmament in the middle east

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the prestigious institution of ISME, we are honored to welcome you to the very first edition of ISME MUN at the International School of Management Excellence, Sarjapur.

As most of you are likely to be beginners, this background guide has been prepared to be as simple and easy to understand as possible. All topics can and should be researched further, and going into the depth of these issues will hold you in good stead not only for ISME MUN 2019 but wherever your future endeavors may be in the Model United Nations circuit.

Study links will not be provided for that would only limit your understanding. This background guide must not be used as your research material but as a basis for your research process.

The structure of DISEC is simple. Two days of speech making that culminates in a resolution. The resolution must be the logical conclusion to debate that passes in committee. Understanding and executing your country's foreign policy will be paramount in committee and in the resolution.

Information produced and entered into committee must be from credible sources including and preferably restricted to the UN's official websites, official government statements, documents and websites, BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, and Reuters.

Please note that quoting Wikipedia, WikiLeaks and the like in your speeches or position paper will not be entertained.

The Executive Board welcomes all delegates to approach us regarding any queries relating to the agenda or the MUN. We wish you all the very best and look forward to two days of productive and fun debate at ISME MUN 2019.

Sincerely,

The Executive Board, DISEC

Shreya Kavitha – Chairperson

Vishal Gali – Vice Chairperson

Paarth Maheshwari - Moderator

DISEC

The first committee of the United Nations General Assembly is the Disarmament and International Security Committee. It is one of the six main committees at the United Nations General Assembly.

The DISEC deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.

It considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any other organ of the United Nations; the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments.

Introduction

Five nuclear weapons free zones covering groups of countries have been recognised by the United Nations since the 1960s. These are geographical areas which have signed agreements banning the use, development or deployment of nuclear weapons on their territory. 115 countries are included in these zones, which are Latin America Caribbean, the South Pacific, the ASEAN region, Central Asia and Africa. Mongolia is also a UN-recognised nuclear free zone. Similar agreements have established Nuclear-Weapon Free Areas in the Antarctic, on the Sea-Bed and in Outer Space. Nuclear Weapons-Free Zones are highly successful forms of collective security across large parts of the world, including almost the entire southern hemisphere.

There has been discussion on establishing a nuclear weapons free Middle East since Egypt and Iran tabled a UN General Assembly resolution calling for this in 1974. In 1990, the scope was extended to cover all weapons of mass destruction due to the growing concerns about chemical and biological weapons. The 2010 nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference highlighted the need for negotiations towards a WMD-free zone. The conference's final document identified five steps necessary to achieving the goal of establishing a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, including convening a conference and appointing a facilitator.

Finland has been designated the host country for a conference, with Finnish politician Jaakko Laajava selected as facilitator. A planned conference due to be held in Helsinki in December 2012 was postponed indefinitely. Since then, Laajava has continued to host multilateral consultations to try and re-arrange the meeting, most recently in February 2014.

The European Union and the United States have repeatedly reaffirmed their support for establishing a WMD-free zone. Russia and Turkey's foreign affairs ministers have also published a joint statement, urging all countries in the Middle East to participate in the process.

There are of course significant obstacles to overcome before a similar zone can be established in the Middle East. Talks have been ongoing for decades but with no concrete results, due to deep-rooted disagreements between some countries in the region. Hostility between Israel and Palestine continues, with faltering progress on a two state solution. Israel is the only country in the region to possess nuclear weapons. Although the government does not confirm or deny this fact and has not signed the NPT, it is estimated that they have 80 intact nuclear weapons. Many Arab states do not recognise Israel, which is a major obstacle to securing a region-wide agreement. Israel has joined the ongoing discussions, even though it has repeatedly stated that establishing a WMD-free zone would need to be agreed in the context of a broader Middle East peace plan.

There are also concerns over Iran's nuclear ambitions, but recent talks on Tehran limiting aspects of its nuclear development programme in return for an easing of sanctions should provide some confidence in the possibility of a wider agreement.

The civil war in Syria has contributed to the instability of the region. Since 2011 the fighting has divided loyalties in the region, for example Iran is backing Syrian president al-Assad while Saudi Arabia became the first Arab head of state to condemn him and his government's actions. Over ten years since the invasion of Iraq, deep problems remain in a country which has been economically and physically devastated.

Another complicating factor is that Turkey hosts US nuclear weapons on its territory.

Basic Elements of the Middle East WMDFZ

A future WMDFZ would commit parties not to possess, acquire, test, manufacture or use any *nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as well as their delivery systems* as provided for in the 1995 NPT Review Conference Middle East resolution. Definitions for what constitutes these types of non-conventional weapons are contained in international treaties on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as the 1948 United Nations Commission for Conventional Armaments. A shared understanding would also be required to regulate the types of delivery systems that would become subject to the prohibitions under the zone. Discussions have included proposals for banning all ballistic missiles with ranges in excess of 150 km.

Territory: The 1989 IAEA Technical Study, which first took up the geographic delimitation of a future Middle East NWFZ, applied the concept to a region extending from Libya in the west, to Iran in the east, and from Syria in the north to Yemen in the south. A subsequent UN Study expanded the concept further by including all League of Arab states, plus Iran and Israel in the zone. The Arab League has officially endorsed the UN Study delimitation and Israel has raised no objection other than note that any country in the region should be publicly recognized and accepted as an integral part thereof. Suggestions of including Afghanistan, Pakistan as well as Turkey in the eventual zone have not gained any significant traction.

Verification: One of the principles recognized by UNGA Resolution 3472B on NWFZs in 1975 was that such a zone “should provide for effective verification of compliance with the commitments made by the parties to the Treaty.” Israel has long insisted that any future WMDFZ must also provide “for mutual verification measures” while other proposals have included calls for setting up a regional organization to ensure compliance.

Conclusion

Overcoming these significant obstacles will require a lot of diplomatic work. But the benefits to the Middle East and the rest of the world would be huge. Nuclear weapons are horrific weapons of mass destruction that threaten the lives of millions of the

world's population by stocking the arsenals of non-state actors. Steps towards ensuring this most volatile of regions is free of all weapons of mass destruction must surely be a priority for the international community.