

MLRIT MUN 2025

BACKGROUND GUIDE.



MLRIT MUN Model United Nations



DISEC.



MLRIT MUN

Model United Nations

COMMITTEE : DISEC



DISEC.

Agendas:

Agenda : Discussion on establishing a global governance mechanism for the production and deployment of hypersonic missile systems and lethal unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

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Letter From The Secretary General.

Dear Delegate,

If you're nervous, good. It means you care. Every great speaker, every confident diplomat, started right where you are: unsure, curious, and ready to learn. But at MLRITMUN, we don't wait for confidence to arrive; we build it.

This edition is more than debate and diplomacy. It is a space where ideas collide, voices rise, and leaders take shape. Here, you'll learn to think fast, speak with clarity, and solve problems that demand both logic and courage. You'll find mentors who guide you, peers who challenge you, and moments that transform you.

When the gavel strikes, remember it's not about being perfect. It's about being fearless. If you're backed against a wall, break the whole goddamn thing down. Don't wait for luck; make your own.

At MLRITMUN 2025, every delegate has a chance to rise. Speak. Challenge. Lead. Because this isn't just another conference. It's where your voice begins to matter.

And when it does, I'll be right there watching, guiding, and cheering you on.

I'll see you on the other side of the gavel.

With conviction,
Khaja Moizuddin
Secretary-General,
MLRITMUN 2025 | 7th Edition



Letter From The Executive Board.

Greetings Delegates,

At the outset, we would like to inform you that it gives us immense pleasure to welcome you all to this simulation of the **United Nations General Assembly - First Committee (DISEC)** at MLRIT MUN 2025. The Executive Board members hope that this simulation will turn out to be an experience worth cherishing for all participants, while also facilitating a commendable debate.

Throughout the conference, we will address the agenda **Global Governance for Hypersonic Missile Systems and Lethal Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)**. This simulation shall adhere to the **UNA-USA Rules of Procedure**, with a few necessary amendments required for the smooth functioning of the committee. The sole purpose of preparing this background guide is to deliver an insight into the committee as well as the agenda to the delegates. To begin with, this guide will serve as the knowledge repository and will serve as a map for you to navigate through the mass of information that you may come across in your preparation for the conference.

However, this guide is by no means the end of the research. The Executive Board will be delighted to hear from you all, bringing in solid arguments while incorporating several new realms into the agenda. Thus, as the name 'guide' may hint, it will not provide you with all the information on the agenda at hand; you will have to work a bit beyond reading these papers/files. In addition, it is necessary to understand that being in such a competitive environment, we don't look out to hear what statistics or legislations you have read while researching. Rather, we will recommend you analyze these facts and present your country's perceptions on the relevancy of these laws.

All the best!

Rishab (Chairperson)

V Jishnu (Vice-Chairperson)



Points to Remember.

Foreign Policy: Following the foreign policy of one's country is the most important aspect of a Model UN Conference. This is what essentially differentiates a Model UN from other debating formats. To violate one's foreign policy without adequate reason is one of the worst mistakes a delegate can make.

Role of the Executive Board: The Executive Board is appointed to facilitate debate. The committee shall decide the direction and flow of debate. The delegates are the ones who constitute the committee and hence must be uninhibited while presenting their opinions/stance on any issue. However, the Executive Board may put forward questions and/or ask for clarifications at all points of time to further debate and test participants.

Nature of Source/Evidence: This Background Guide is meant solely for research purposes and must not be cited as evidence to substantiate statements made during the conference. Evidence or proof for substantiating statements made during formal debate is acceptable from the following sources:

1. United Nations: Documents and findings by the United Nations or any related UN body are held as credible proof to support a claim or argument. Multilateral Organizations: Documents from international organizations like OIC, NAFTA, SAARC, BRICS, EU, ASEAN, the International Criminal Court, etc. may also be presented as credible sources of information.
2. Government Reports: These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country
3. News Sources:
 - Reuters: Any Reuters article that clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by a delegate in council.



- **State operated News Agencies:** These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, may be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are - RIA Novosti (Russian Federation), Xinhua News Agency (People's Republic of China), etc.

Please Note- Reports from NGOs working with UNESCO, UNICEF and other UN bodies will be accepted.Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc. be accepted. However, notwithstanding the criteria for acceptance of sources and evidence, delegates are still free to quote/cite from any source as they deem fit as a part of their statements.



Introduction.

The First Committee (DISEC) meets at an important moment in history for militaries as we navigate a transforming landscape created by the twin threats of Hypersonic Missile Systems (HMs) and Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), especially advanced UAVs. These two technologies present an existential threat to both established strategic stability and the rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), even though they are congruent categories of weapons. Hypersonic missiles represent the most dangerous type of missile based on their ability to combine speed (Mach 5+) and maneuverability, which condenses the decision cycle in a crisis to minutes and greatly raises the risk of unintentional escalation due to misjudgment or the lack of warning. In addition, the dual-use nature of hypersonic missiles, carrying both conventional and nuclear payloads, effectively obscures the line between strategic or conventional conflict, thereby creating a dangerous gap between existing arms control measures. Simultaneously, the emergence of LAWS questions the very idea of MHC over the use of force. Although GGE has made progress working on issues under the CCW, the ethical and legal aspect of machine autonomy in target selection remain unresolved. There has to be a push to come to an agreement to legally prohibit systems that do not assure IHL compliance, especially the principles of distinction and proportionality. It is time for more action from DISEC, not just to control proliferation, but to establish a rigorous, technology-neutral governance framework to uphold human accountability and sustain global peace in light of the rapid speed of machine decision making



Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems

Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) are described as weapon systems that can select and attack targets without further human intervention once activated. This definition creates a boundary from remotely-piloted drones and is generating significant ethical and legal debate. The transfer of life and death decisions to algorithms produces deep issues about human moral agency, the value of life, and compliance with the principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), especially the principles of Distinction (between combatants and civilians) and Proportionality.

The official international discussion on the need for a binding instrument to regulate or ban LAWS is primarily taking place in the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). While CCW members operate by consensus, this has led to a protracted timeline of discussion, and CCW members are unable to reach agreement on emerging challenges, such as a definition of "meaningful human control."

In light of the slow progress, and the lack of agreement on votes in the CCW, a larger collection of state and civil society advocates have encouraged discussions of this issue in the UN General Assembly First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) be pursued more aggressively.



Ethical Guidelines

Important Ethical, Legal, and Humanitarian Issues Meaningful Human Control (MHC):

The ethical issue at the heart of this debate is whether lethal and non-lethal decision-making can be entrusted to machines.

Advocates of regulations point to the fact that absence of MHC means the systems are in violation of the Martens Clause (which reflects the dictates of public conscience and to principles of humanity).

The consensus is that human judgement should be maintained over the key features of target selection and engagement.

1. Conformance with IHL: LAWS must be able to meet the underlying complexity of the legal requirements of IHL, namely:
 - Distinction: The ability to accurately distinguish between combatants, civilians, and hors de combat.
 - Proportionality: To evaluate whether harm to civilians is excessive in relation to the expected military advantage.
 - Accountability: If a breach of IHL does occur, it's an enormous challenge to establish whether the moral and legal culpability rests with the programmer, the commander, the manufacturer, or the machine.
 - Risk of Escalation: Allowing automated processes to make decisions could allow inadvertent rapid escalation of a crisis, possibly leading a "flash war" that is quicker than human leaders can implement a halt to it or monitor progression.



Regulation

The discussion around the future of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) is sharply divided between two mutually exclusive camps, namely those calling for a total ban on autonomous killing systems; and those arguing for regulation that is properly enforced through existing legal frameworks.

A. The Prohibition Camp:

Total Ban and Meaningful Human Control (MHC). The Prohibition Camp (e.g., Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, many G77 nations): Is a proponent of new legally binding international treaty to forbid certain classifications of fully autonomous weapons systems, especially anti-personnel weapon systems, as well as regulate all others to enforce MHC.

Advocates for this camp, such as Law of Armed Conflict 'nations' from the Global South (often referred to as G77 nations), and civil society (the international movement known as the "Campaign to Stop Killer Robots"), believe that LAWS represent an intolerable violation of ethics and morality that must be proscribed as a matter of expediency.

Moral and Ethic Justification: The argument is one of matters of human dignity. Granting the power of life or death to a machine without human empathy, moral judgment, and compassion, including remorse or regret, crosses an irreducible ethical line and must be prohibited.



The Regulation

The Regulation Camp (e.g., US, UK, Australia, South Korea) represents the position of those actors that believe the current body of international humanitarian law is adequate to regulate the development and use of lethal autonomous weapons systems. They would welcome the adoption of a non-binding political declaration or a code of conduct that would concentrate on the responsibility of the states and the exemplary practices instead of a new treaty that could halt technological progression.

One of the large military powers which are dominating the research and development of AI and high tech weapons, are the US, the UK, and Russia. Those three powers are in no doubt about their stance: they are deeply antagonized towards any move which might restrict them legally, in either their research or deployment, the advanced autonomous capabilities of weapon systems.

Confine to Humanitarian Law: The first claim made by the Regulation Camp is the sufficiency of the International Humanitarian Law framework, including the principles of Distinction and Proportionality, as the one that should be used in judging all weapons, whether new or old. As a result, there is no need for a new treaty, the states simply have to be sure their autonomous systems are formulated and practiced in accordance with these laws.

Logic and Military Necessity: The advocates of the Regulation Camp state that a machine has to be given the autonomy function only when a soldier's reaction time is almost negligible in high-speed naval defense or cyber warfare. In their opinion, one hundred percent prohibition would block the procedure of a country to be in a position to defend its territories.



Looking Beyond a Binding Agreement: is on the national policy and a non-binding Code of Conduct or declaration that would describe the best practices one would expect to be followed during development and testing. This way of proceeding accomplishes two main objectives:

First, it keeps the national sovereignty in regards of technological advancement on the issue.

Second, it does not allow the creation of solid legal norms that could be implemented internationally, and so the competitive edge of the states that are ahead in technology is maintained.

The Innovation Argument: They raise the question of a matter of fact: a pre-emptive ban in the area of research for AI would "stifle innovation" and create a research environment that is hidden and unverified, "which would make the world less safe." They select the technology responsible use as a discussion point topic instead of advocating a ban of it.



Hypersonic Missile Systems (HMs)

Hypersonic weapons are defined as any armaments that move with velocities superior to Mach 5 (5 times the speed of sound). Along with extreme speed, these weapons also offer unpredictable maneuverability, setting them apart from conventional ballistic and cruise missiles. While the former moves along definite flight paths, the latter is slower. The main varieties are:

Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs): Initially, a rocket booster carries them to a very high place and then these vehicles separate and move over the upper air to the target by gliding. (for example, the Avangard of Russia and DF-ZF of China).

Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs): They have engines that work on the air they breathe (scramjets). These engines allow these weapons to fly at a low altitude (10-30 km) and high speed for a long time.

A. Implications for Strategic Stability

Compressed Decision Time: HMs greatly limit the amount of time for warning, detection, and response— frequently reducing the decision cycle to minutes. That makes the potential for wrong decisions to go up since defensive systems nowadays can hardly track and intercept them.

Defense Instability: The design of HMs deliberately incorporates evading existing missile defense systems that were created to track ballistic paths that can be predicted. That kind of offensive superiority overcomes the vulnerabilities of strategic resources and prompts scenarios on the deployment of even further countermeasures which might be destabilizing (such as orbital-based sensor layers).

Conventional-Nuclear Ambiguity: A great number of HMs are dual-capable, thus they can be equipped with either a conventional or nuclear warhead. It is so that the speed and flight path of a missile right after its launch do not tell almost instantly what its payload is that, therefore, the enemy may think it is a nuclear attack and move towards fast but unwanted escalation.



B. DISEC's Role in Mitigation

In contrast to LAWS, a multilateral forum specifically dedicated to HMs does not exist. DISEC represents the best place where the following activities could take place:

Promote Transparency: Suggest that the powerful nations (China, Russia, the USA) take part in the voluntary sharing of the data on HMs' features and their test procedures to help build confidence among them.

Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs): Recount the possibilities of discussing such non-binding engagements as forming flight test notification windows or acquiring mutual agreements on deployment zones to prevent conflict escalation unintentionally.

Arms Control Integration: Search for opportunities to bring HMs under the umbrella of current or future strategic arms control treaties to deal explicitly with destabilizing issues resulting from dual-capability.



Future Challenges.

The LAWS and the HMs convergence challenge the novel field of their joint use:

AI and Speed: The combination of extreme speed and very short warning times connected with HMs might drive the choice to use AI/LAWS for automatic identification and interception. In such a scenario, machines can be the ones detecting and deciding on the interception of a hypersonic projectile travelling at more than 5 times the speed of sound, leaving human control in high-stakes situations even more compromised.

Proliferation: One of the risks that comes with the maturing technology of HMs and the AI capabilities in question is their spread not only to the smaller states but also to the non-state actors thus making regional security harder to deal with.

Cybersecurity: The command, control, and communication (C3) setup, which is responsible for handling these extremely technical weapons, can be susceptible to cyber attacks that push the scenario of hackings for unauthorized use or disablement in case of an emergency.



Relevant Efforts and existing frameworks

The international frameworks for the two technologies that are the subject of today's discussion have been extremely different. Whereas diplomatic efforts in the field of LAWS have been ongoing for more than a decade, those in the field of HMs had to face the problem of the absence of a dedicated multilateral negotiating body, thus making DISEC's role crucial for filling the existing regulatory void.

A. Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) - The CCW/GGE Process

Most of the talk about LAWS has been held in the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS, which operates within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The CCW, which deals with five already established protocols (Non-detectable fragments, Mines/booby-traps, Incendiary weapons, Blinding lasers, and Explosive remnants of war), offers a ready - although somewhat structurally flawed - platform.

2014 - Present: Annually, the GGE on LAWS meets to discuss the defining of the technology, the possibilities of using it, and what extent of regulation should be applied. The development of the CCW's consensus rule heavily restricts the advancement of the meeting resolutions, which practically allows every State Party, in particular the main military powers, to issue a veto that blocks the introduction of a legally binding instrument. Consequently, these meetings have been limited to considering only political, rather than legal, obligations.



The current discussions revolve around the identification of "elements" of a future instrument, most typically considered in the following groups: (1) Prohibitions (for instance, on systems targeting humans without human control) and (2) Regulations (e.g., setting requirements for the human-machine interface and accountability mechanisms).

On various occasions, the Secretary-General has advocated for a legally binding agreement banning LAWS without human control by 2026, considering them "politically unacceptable" and "morally repugnant." This intervention at a very high level is intended to prompt a new negotiating track, probably even within the General Assembly framework.

B. Hypersonic Missile Systems (HMs) - The Regulatory Vacuum

Unlike LAWS, there is not a special treaty or an exclusive forum for HMs. Regulation in this case is scattered among a number of existing, and largely unstable, arrangements. The absence of a truly autonomous body is particularly scary given the extent to which HMs facilitate the destabilization of the strategic field by sharply cutting decision and warning times.

Arms Control Treaties: HMs mostly evade coverage by major bilateral agreements such as the New START Treaty (between the US and Russia). This treaty focuses on strategic nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles (ballistic missiles, heavy bombers), but definitions do not allow non-ballistic, maneuverable hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs) to be captured easily. Moreover, their capability to switch between conventional and nuclear further muddles their incorporation as states are hesitant to proscribe the use of conventional arms needed for their security perceptions.



UNIDIR and UNODA: The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) have been working together on a number of projects and holding workshops to inform how hypersonic arms could destabilize the region by drastically reducing the warning phase and thereby increasing the possibility of error leading to war.

Voluntary Regimes: The current voluntary export control regimes, notably the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), are essentially set up for the purpose of stopping the spread of the technology to the countries that are not part of the agreement and do not restrict the development and deployment in the big military powers. As a result, they do not serve to limit the main drivers of hypersonic arms race.



Guiding questions.

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is the only forum at the United Nations where the fundamental principles governing disarmament and the international regulation of armaments can be addressed are those that the committee most frequently discusses.

The questions listed below are to be used by the delegations to produce resolutions that not only facilitate international consensus but also constitute practical steps for the advancement of global peace and security in line with the respective national interests.

A. On Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS)

- The questions assume an effort to find both normative foundations as well as an outline of further actions, given the diplomatic impasse in the CCW.
- Defining and Enforcing Meaningful Human Control (MHC):
- What are the components of Meaningful Human Control (MHC) from a practical point of view? Is MHC a technical parameter (for example system latency, target duration) or a legal and ethical benchmark at its core?
- Is human presence in the loop (human makes the final decision), on the loop (human can override an autonomous decision), or out of the loop (human is just monitoring) the correct way to measure MHC? In order to keep human moral agency and to follow the Principle of Distinction which standard is the most appropriate one?
- Legal Accountability and Responsibility:

- What measures could be adopted to ensure violators of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) can be held accountable in the case that a machine algorithm had independently made the targeting decision?
- Should the commander program the machine responsible for the manufacture of the state or the international legal framework (e.g., the Rome Statute) be the one to take the blame for autonomous breaches of the laws of war?



Reform of the Negotiating Process:

Do you think that the abandonment of the CCW GGE process in favor of a new, more inclusive negotiating process within the General Assembly would be more beneficial or should DISEC instruct a higher level of ambition in the present CCW framework?

On Hypersonic Missile Systems (HMs)

- The questions focus on the immediate strategic risks of HMs due to lack of regulation and prioritize stability and transparency.
- Mitigating Nuclear Escalation and Risk of Miscalculation:
- What kinds of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) could be immediately put into practice to effectively reduce the risk of accidental nuclear escalation considering the dual-capability (conventional and nuclear) of HMs? (for instance, mutual pre-launch notifications could be made mandatory, proposing voluntary payload declarations for flight tests, or creating dedicated deconfliction hotlines for the hypersonic activity)



Future of Arms Control:

HMs, especially Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs) that are capable of non-ballistic flight, should be integrated into existing arms control treaties (like the MTCR or a revised New START) or is it necessary to have a totally different treaty dedicated to this? What would be the definitional and political issues that would arise if we tried to change existing treaties to cover non-ballistic weapons?

The Unsupervised Arms Race:

How could DISEC come up with policies that are in line with the actual technology where it is inevitable that the speed of HMs will require the use of LAWS for defensive targeting, thereby making it impossible for the arms race to be stopped or supervised? What norms can be created to regulate the combination of these two attributes, i.e., that of extreme speed and that of autonomy?

Technology Transfer and Proliferation:

How can technology transfer controls be employed so as to prevent the spread of these advanced systems to non-state actors or to regions that are already tense? Do you think the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) should be further developed so as to explicitly cover subcomponents (e.g., specific AI processors, high-temperature ceramic materials) that are needed for both LAWS and HMs?

