

MUN 2014

Background Guide:

*General Assembly First
Committee on Disarmament
and International Security*

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Letter from the Director

Delegates,

First and foremost, welcome to MUNI's Committee on Disarmament and International Security (DISEC). I am Jeffrey Tsai, and will be serving as the research director for this committee. This will be fourth year involved in Model United Nations. I am a political science major at the University of Illinois.

This year, DISEC will tackle two important issues in the global community. The first topic has to do with the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, which continues to be a problem in our globe today. I hope delegates can focus on the need for transparency and border patrol. If possible, try not to form a new forum since there is already enough programs in the United Nations regarding this issue (and that has not solved anything yet). Delegates are encouraged to find a diplomatic solution in their country's point of view to figure out how to deal with the illicit trade. For More Economically Developed Nations, the need to help the Less Economically Developed Nations should be considered. On the other hand, Less Economically Developed Nations should try to see what they can do collectively to stop the illicit trade.

The second, a more recent issue is on drones, specifically on counter-terrorism. Drones have a negative connotation as they kill innocent lives. There are two sides of the spectrum when it comes to drones in countering terrorism. Those who are against argue the moral and ethics behind drone attacks. However, those who support drone attacks show that it is effective. Delegates should not try to push towards one side or the other, but should attempt find a diplomatic solution to the issue.

In an era when international security is a top priority of the international community, we look forward to concrete resolutions and fruitful debates that will advocate a safer world. I hope to see everyone prepared on both topics and ready to dig into these topics with insight. Finally, I hope that all delegates will be able to experience the thrill and excitement of MUNI, even with all the professionalism and the diplomatic-mature atmosphere. Feel free to email me if you have any questions and I will try to assist you to the best of my abilities. Once again, I wish you the best of luck in your research.

Best Regards,

Jeffery Y. Tsai

yjtsai2@illinois.edu

Topic: Assistance to states for curbing the illicit trades of Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects.

Overview

Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter outlines the role of arms in international security, with emphasis on Article 51, “nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of a Member of the United Nation to self-defense”. Defensive technology is something that nations feel the need to develop in order to ensure their security, which leads to nations to obtain stock of arms, military equipment, and many other forms of dual-use technology. A significant portion of these goods must be internationally transferred from suppliers to manufacturers to their destinations. In recent years the sophistication of international trade coupled with the high demand for arms and dual-use technology has allowed the expansion of black and grey markets that funnel extremely dangerous illicit transfers. Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) are the bane of peace. They cause worldwide crime and violence because most small arms and light weapons cannot be tracked and are insignificant in the context of international security. However, SALWs remain the favorite choice of weaponry for mobs, gangs, organized criminals, pirates, terrorists, rebels, drug cartels, and bandits. As their namesake, SALWs are light, cheap, and concealable, thereby, Less Economically Developed Nations (LEDC) use them as their weapon of choice for national violence, namely the African countries (Africa Union).

An estimated 875 million SALWs circulate the global community today. In most parts of the world, namely the Global South, such SALWs can be used by nearly anyone—with or without a license. Indeed, in some areas small arms or light weapons are used as currency or trade. The availability of SALW has a wide range, and thus has caused much trouble for national governments. The size and appearance that are suggested in the name “small” and “light” are misleading to their true potential. Small and light allow easy smuggling and illicit trading between non-governmental organizations, third party groups, and black markets. In some areas, while weapons embargoes and war zones have been explicitly blocked off, weapons’ trading still finds access across the lines.

History and Current Issues

In 2001, nearly 140 nations worldwide congregated to create the UN Program of Action in an attempt to stop the illicit trade. However, the program did not define “illicit” arms trades. Still, with this UN program, many nations still balked at the idea of further progress at the destruction of these arms, including China, India, Iran, Israel, Russia, and the United States. Many nations have disagreed about the measures required to counter the illicit trade and their concerns have repeatedly blocked certain developments under the UN program.

One of the biggest debates among nations is the question of exports and the items of exports, including the degrees of security and checks. Certain states have consistently opposed restrictions on transfers to those without import authorization from the importing country. The United States has long opposed such a restriction because it may interfere with the the rights of the oppressed to defend themselves against tyrannical and genocidal regimes. The United States has opposed controls on small arms ammunition or civilian arms possession as it is extremely tedious, costly, ineffective, and against some of the constitutional rights of citizens.

On May 2001, the General Assembly adopted the Firearms Protocol. The protocol entered into force in July 2005, but did not cover everything, including war conflicts. The Firearms Protocol promoted better reinforcement in stockpile management, controls on exports, weapons disposal, disarmament, and demobilization. However, this protocol was not legally binding, and did not contain more explicit transfer criteria or restrictions on transfers.

Later, in December 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted The UN Instrument on Tracing Illicit Small Arms which gave standards on marking and tracing of small arms that were contained in the UN Firearms Protocol and the program of action. It encouraged states to mark all legally produced small arms with a code containing a unique serial number and information that identifies the country of manufacture and the manufacturer, but this was not accepted by all nations due to the ambiguity.

The Programme of Action called for the General Assembly to follow certain step in an attempt to combat the illicit brokering of small arms. The General Assembly established a group of governmental experts in 2004 to investigate embargo violations. Research

by NGOs highlight the role of poorly regulated private brokers and transport firms in illicit arms transfers. Nonetheless, at the November experts meeting, some states questioned the need for an international instrument on brokering controls, while others questioned the control of arms trades outside the nations themselves.

Two more resolutions were adopted by the General Assembly in December 2006 that concerned the small arms. The first, on an arms treaty on imports, exports and transfers, called for a group of experts to construct an instrument in the trade of arms. Eventually, this was done by an NGO, with much support from certain nations. The second resolution was on the stockpiling of surplus ammunition and how the ammunition should be controlled.

All of the resolutions on the UN program, the arms trade treaty, and ammunition controls were adopted by majority voting. This prevented the United States from blocking their adoption. Surprisingly, the United States was the only nation that voted against all the resolutions and treaties, while 24 other states abstained—all of these countries had something in common—they were major traders of small arms. However, even though these countries showed signs of requiring aid, they did not block attempts to pass the resolutions. With much aid and persuasion, these states may turn a hand and start combat against illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

Possible Corrective Action

International Agreements

More agreements, such as the Programme of Action, the Nairobi Protocol, the SADC protocol, and the Organization of American States, need to be established, whether binding or not. These create standards and principles that can improve national control.

Weapons Collection and Destruction

Governments or peacekeeping missions usually authorize weapons collection. The destruction of these weapons, is essential in cutting down illegal trades of arms. These weapons can be recollected by voluntary means, by obligation, or by purchase.

Stockpile Management

Stockpiles are very important and require high security as they are essentially keeps with a lot of weapons—a great danger if not properly secured. Security forces may be unable to protect the weapons so many weapons find their way into the illicit market.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

The surrender of weapons by combatants ensures that the arms, whether through illicit or legal means, will not be used for violence. DDR is an important in the disposal and decrease in arms circulations, thus decreases the chance of illicit trade.

Legislation Reformation

More than half of the world's supply of SALWs is civilian hands. Countries may need some type of legislation to control the usage and availability of these guns. A judicial system may also keep the SALW-holders in check, making sure that all guns are registered and that their owners are trained to a minimum standard before being licensed. National parliaments may also play a critical role in enacting appropriate gun control and monitoring its enforcement.

Public Education and Awareness

In many countries, guns identify masculinity. Education or other types of persuasion can do changing this concept. NGOs may aid local governments in raising the awareness of the general population to decrease the fervor for arms.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the major threats of small arms and light weapons?
2. Will strengthening border patrol help?
3. How are nations going to be more transparent about the transfers of SALWs?

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Topic: The use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Counterterrorism.

Overview

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), or drones as they are better known to the public, are as their name-sake any vehicle or missile that can be controlled by a human via remote control or by computer programming. Different nations have begun to develop this type of technology, primarily the United States of America. As in everything, there are both good and bad consequences to drones. The major concern is the impact of such technology when it comes to civilians who are caught up in the conflict. The benefit for a country who uses drones to attack is the fact that their usage is safe for them, but often at a cost of innocent civilians at the location where the drone attacks occur because of the lack of accuracy and the fact that each attack covers a large landmass. With the current speed of the proliferation of such technology, it has been brought to the international community's attention that some regulations must be applied. However, the speed of developing drones greatly surpasses the speed of the creation of regulations, therefore there is no status quo on the acceptance of drone attacks in the international community. It is in dispute whether administering drone attacks can actually serve a legitimate purpose due to the casualties of innocent civilians. Thereby, there needs to be an agreement made within global leaders to determine whether the use of drones is beneficial and effective against terrorism, considering the negative potentials that come along with it.

Key Terms:

Unmanned Aerial System (UAS)

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) has become a more formal way to say “drones”. What this term refers to are aircrafts that are unmanned and controlled by computer programs or remote controls. It does not have to be for the purpose of drone attacks.

Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) Guidelines

The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International Guidelines (AUVSI Guidelines) was created in order to protect the rights of individuals as well as putting the safety of civilians as priority. This set of guidelines was meant to be strictly implemented and adhered to by all users of drones so that atrocities that have raised many doubts and questions of the safety of the lives of civilians may be addressed and hopefully redeemed by adhering to the AUVSI Guidelines. This association is a non-profit organization that strives to promote and support drones through education, leadership, as well as communication. The AUVSI have drawn guidelines that require the operators to be professionally trained, respecting the privacy of all individuals as well as abiding to all the state and federal laws that have already been established. This guideline has been greatly promoted and is attracting more and more support in order to the safety of all people.

Customary International Law

Customary International Law is derived from treaties, general principle laws, and the decisions made in the United Nations, International Court of Justice, and jurists that the vast majority of the world's nations abide by. CIS is also applies to all soldiers as well as drones. As drones are most commonly used abroad, there could be many violations against the Customary International Law as the drones enter the borders of various nations. Before the use of drones, it was crucial for the organization to thoroughly understand all the current CIS and be able to ensure that drones do not violate any treaties that should be respected and outlined in CIS.

History of the Issue

Countering terrorism in Pakistan (Al-Qaeda)

The purpose of drones was solely for surveillance, up until the first drone attack in Pakistan in 2004. President George W. Bush, with the assistance of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), used drones to fight Al-Qaeda as the missiles flew over the compound of Al-Qaeda's leader Osama Bin Laden. In Pakistan alone, an estimated 2000-3200 people have been killed since the initial attacks. However, not only militants have been killed due to these attacks in Pakistan, as one of the most controversial attacks was administered in March of 2011 as forty civilians were killed at a tribal meeting.

Yemen attacked by drones by United States of America

Between 646 and 928 people have died in Yemen due to a combination of drone strikes and airstrikes, and 623 to 860 of those killed were militants. Drone strikes in Yemen began recently, and both civilians and terrorist as confirmed victims of the attack. However even these terrorists are only suspects that have not been identified with enough evidence to link them as a members of terrorist groups.

Problems with the Issue

Death of numerous innocent citizens

Drones have been criticized for violating human rights as well as many other factors of traditional warfare such as proportionality, distinction, and military necessity. However, drones have proved to be useful in targeting and killing targeted enemies which is why nations such as the United States of America continues to use them. The major problem the global community has on drones is most likely the death of innocent citizens. Moreover, Drone attacks not only affect people physically, many reports have shown that there is a huge negative psychological impact imprinted on the civilians in Pakistan. This has also fueled hate towards the nation conducting such warfare. Drones do not simply kill one targeted person; they injure, kill, and affect all those within the diameter of the missile that is launched. Therefore, one successful attack that kills a suspected terrorist would lead to the injury or even the death of many more. Those people have nothing to do with terrorism, but have been hurt for something they are not responsible for. Rising fear and discontent overwhelm those who have been affected by the drone attacks. However, reports have shown that state leaders of Pakistan and Yemen seem to secretly support drone warfare, which can create interesting diplomatic talks between the United States and these two respective nations.

Possible Corrective Action

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Many organizations have tried to raise awareness to the public as to the need to regulate the use of drones. Laws, guidelines, and acts have been passed to improve the safety of civilians and to protect their individual rights. Many attacks have been made against terrorist groups located in the Middle East and Central Asia. These previous attempts and tragedies may have been more or less helpful towards the issue at hand, but more action is needed to ensure that the community has a better understanding of the issue as well as ways to effectively combat the problem. While nations including Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan have publicly announced their support and cooperation with the United States of America in the act of counterterrorism, they have also displayed their concern with the use of drones in their nations. A government should always put civilian safety before anything else, but with the powerful terrorist group, many nations have little choice in combating terrorist organizations without harming the innocents. Most importantly, the number of civilian casualty must be taken into consideration and the lives of those innocent people must be put as the top priority.

The legality and morality of drones use has sparked many discussions not only in America but also in many other countries. Education is always the key to raising awareness, with public awareness and movements that urge the government to take action in enforcing previous attempts to regulate the UAVs and to create and draft more effective resolutions to safeguard the people's rights and safety. As most people who live in cities have easy access to medias like the television, which updates everyone on current news, they are aware of the tragedy and horrors that comes with the use of drones. However, in order to raise awareness to all people, places with less access to the current news, they should be able to achieve information about the current world around them easily, whether it is to send daily newspapers over or starting seminars for education purposes. Laws and acts should be enforced and transparency implemented for an international standard use of drones, best way to promote transparency is to involve Transparency International as well as organizations that can have the power to monitor and regulate the use of drones by governmental and private agencies. Therefore, there wouldn't be such a big conflict over the use of drones if each country sticks to

an international standard that could be trustworthy to all. To ensure the safety of all and effectively combat terrorism, drones should be strictly regulated and used at only the most crucial times. For example, the organization firing the drone should have thorough and solid information on a specific terrorist group to fire a drone. Each drone should be elaborately checked in case of any technological difficulty occurs when in air. In addition, there should be a guideline of all the safety checks that all organizations related to combating terrorism should abide to before launching any drones. In elaboration to the safety check guideline that should be created and implemented, it may also be possible for the creation of a new organization that is in charge of ensuring all organizations are abiding to the guidelines and assist them in gaining easy access to these safety checks. As mentioned before, Transparency International must also be monitoring whether all the organizations are abiding to the guidelines and following through all checks before launching the aircraft. In addition to that, Transparency International should also be looking into the safety check records and those who are performing the checks, in prevention for possible bribery or attempts of shortcuts.

Questions to Consider

1. What alternatives are there besides drones?
2. Even though drones kill innocent lives, do other types of warfare not kill innocent lives?
3. What are the main countries that supports drones and/or uses drones? What countries strongly oppose?

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