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# Topic Guide

The Use of International Prohibited Weapons

**Disarmament and International Security Commission**



Disarmament and Int. Security

HTUMUN



# The Use of International Prohibited Weapons

## Topic Overview

The issue of internationally prohibited weapons is critical to global security. This topic encompasses a range of weapons deemed too harmful or unethical for use in conflict, including chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, as well as other inhumane armaments like white phosphorus. The DISEC's mandate involves addressing the proliferation, regulation, and ethical implications of these weapons, ensuring they do not pose a threat to global peace and stability.

## Topic Background

### Historical Context

The concept of regulating weapons in warfare is ancient, with examples like the prohibition of poison in Ancient Greece. The 19th century saw the first international agreements to legally regulate weapons in wars.

### Key Treaties and Agreements:

- *The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)*: Also known as the Inhumane Weapons Convention, the CCW restricts the use of weapons like non-detectable fragments, mines, incendiary weapons, blinding lasers, and explosive remnants of war. It involves 125 State Parties and four additional signatories.
- *Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)*: This treaty bans the creation, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons and has been signed by 193 state parties.
- *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*: A cornerstone treaty for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and promoting disarmament, the NPT has 191 state parties.
- *Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)*: Prohibiting the development, production, and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons, the BWC is a key element in addressing WMD proliferation, with 185 State Parties and four Signatory States.

- **White Phosphorus:** Legally used on battlefields for specific purposes, its use near civilians is prohibited. Misclassified often as an incendiary or chemical weapon, it falls under the legal definitions of neither under the LOAC.
  - **Humanitarian Concerns:** Its use in populated areas violates international humanitarian law due to the potential for civilian injuries and loss of life.
  - **Protocol III of the CCW:** This protocol outlines the regulations on the use of incendiary weapons like white phosphorus.

### **Points of Debate**

1. **Effectiveness of Current Laws:** Discussion on how effectively current treaties control the proliferation and use of prohibited weapons.
2. **Enforcement Challenges:** Issues in enforcing international treaties, with examples like the alleged use of banned weapons in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
3. **Technological Advances:** The impact of new technologies on the development, regulation, and potential circumvention of prohibitions on these weapons.
4. **Ethical and Humanitarian Considerations:** The moral implications of using weapons capable of mass destruction and long-term environmental impact.
5. **Global vs. National Security Interests:** The dilemma of balancing global disarmament goals against the national security interests of individual states.
6. **Future Directions:** The need for new initiatives or treaty revisions in response to evolving global security dynamics and technological advancements.

## References

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