



**UNGA - DISEC**

# **STUDY GUIDE**

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## NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Welcome delegates of the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) Committee! We are delighted to have you partake in fruitful and controversial debate.

I, **Saumya Mukhopadhyay**, shall serve as your **President** for the next two days of deliberation at PICT MUN 2020.

Graduated in 2017 from KIIT University considering we host one of the largest conferences in India. Currently I am working in ZS Associates, Pune as Decision Analytics Associate where my expertise is concentrated upon business consulting. My hobbies entail being a movie critic, reading military history classics and being engaged in international politics. As the president, I expect collaboration, consensus, discussion and courtesy from every member state participating in DISEC.

All the best guys!

The Executive Board

Disarmament and International Security (UNGA-1 DISEC)

PICT MUN 2020



# Background and Introduction to DISEC

The First Committee deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community, and seeks out solutions to challenges in the international security regime. It considers all disarmament and international security matters, as well as matters 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, and finally, promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments, within the scope of the Charter.

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:

- General debate
- Thematic discussions
- Action on drafts



# **AGENDA: ASSESSING THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES IN DISARMAMENT COMPLIANCE, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

## **Overview – The Middle East**

The evolution of Iran's role and power in the regional system has led Iran to seek a bigger role more in tune with its acquired stature and capabilities. The conflict between Iran and the United States has been generally attributed to either a political-ideological clash and mutual hatred, or to a simple aggregation of several distinct policy disputes including: Iran's nuclear program, Iran's state support for organizations that Washington regards as terrorist groups, human rights issues, and Iranian involvement in the new Iraq, the Levant, and Afghanistan. While accepting these explanations, we can argue that the conflict, especially since 2003, has been essentially focused on a dispute over the growth of the two sides' role in Middle Eastern politics which both regard against each other's national interests and security. The complex and interdependent nature of regional security necessitates, on the one hand, Iran's cooperation in the wake of the end of the U.S. combat role in Iraq in Summer 2010, and on the other, that the United States recognize and respect Iran's legitimate security concerns and accept the evolution of Iran's role in the region.

## **Current Action Plan**

Since May 2019, U.S.-Iran tensions have heightened significantly, and evolved into conflict after U.S. military forces killed Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force (IRGC-QF) and one of Iran's most important military commanders, in a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad on January 2, 2020. In 2018, the Trump Administration withdrew from the 2015 multilateral nuclear agreement with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA), and since mid-2019 has taken several steps in its campaign of applying "maximum pressure" on Iran. Apparently in response to the maximum pressure campaign, Iran and Iran-linked forces have attacked and seized commercial ships, caused destruction of some critical infrastructure in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, attacked facilities used by U.S. military personnel in Iraq, and downed a U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle. As part of an effort in "maximum resistance," in its leaders' terms, Iran has also reduced its compliance with the provisions of the JCPOA. The Administration has been deploying additional military assets to the region to try to deter future Iranian actions. The U.S.-Iran tensions have the potential to escalate into all-out conflict in the wake of Soleimani's killing. Iran's materiel support for armed factions throughout the region, including its provision of short-range ballistic missiles to these factions, and Iran's network of agents in Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere, give Iran the potential to expand confrontation into areas where

U.S. response options might be limited. The United States military has the capability to undertake a range of options against Iran: the first against Iran directly and the second, against its regional allies and proxies. A September 14, 2019, attack on critical energy infrastructure in Saudi Arabia demonstrated that Iran and/or its allies have the capability to cause significant damage to U.S. allies and to U.S. regional and global economic and strategic interests and raised questions about the effectiveness of U.S. defense relations with the Gulf states in preventing future such Iranian attacks.

As the Administration has pursued its policy of maximum pressure, including imposing sanction beyond those in force before JCPOA went into effect in January 2016, bilateral tensions have escalated significantly. Key developments that initially heightened tensions include the following:

- On April 8, 2019, the Administration designated the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), representing the first time that an official military force was designated as an FTO. The designation stated that "The IRGC continues to provide financial and other material support, training, technology transfer, advanced conventional weapons, guidance, or direction to a broad range of terrorist organizations, including Hizballah, Palestinian terrorist groups like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Kata'ib Hizballah in Iraq, al-Ashtar Brigades in Bahrain, and other terrorist groups in Syria and around the Gulf.... Iran continues to allow Al Qaeda (AQ) operatives to reside in Iran, where they have been able to move money and fighters to South Asia and Syria."
- As of May 2, 2019, the Administration ended a U.S. sanctions exception for any country to purchase Iranian oil, aiming to drive Iran's oil exports to "zero."
- On May 3, 2019, the Administration ended two of the seven waivers under the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act (IFCA, P.L. 112-239)—waivers that allow countries to help Iran remain within stockpile limits set by the JCPOA.
- On May 5, 2019, citing reports that Iran or its allies might be preparing to attack U.S. personnel or installations, then-National Security Adviser John Bolton announced that the United States was accelerating the previously planned deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and sending a bomber task force to the Persian Gulf region.
- On May 24, 2019, the Trump Administration notified Congress of immediate foreign military sales and proposed export licenses for direct commercial sales of defense articles—training, equipment, and weapons—with a possible value of more than \$8 billion, including sales of precision guided munitions (PGMs) to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In making the 22 emergency sale notifications, Secretary of State Pompeo invoked emergency authority codified in the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and cited the need "to deter further

Iranian adventurism in the Gulf and throughout the Middle East." Iran responded to the U.S. maximum pressure campaign in part by demonstrating its ability to harm global commerce and other U.S. interests, and to raise concerns about Iran's nuclear activities. Iran might have sought to cause international actors, including those that depend on stable oil supplies, to put pressure on the Trump Administration to reduce its sanctions reassurance on Iran.

- On May 12-13, four oil tankers—two Saudi, one Emirati, and one Norwegian ship—were damaged. Iran denied involvement, but a Defense Department (DOD) official on May 24, 2019, attributed the tanker attacks to the IRGC. A report to the United Nations based on Saudi, UAE, and Norwegian information found that a "state actor" was likely responsible, but did not name a specific perpetrator.
- On June 13, 2019, two Saudi tankers in the Gulf of Oman were attacked. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo stated, "It is the assessment of the U.S. government that Iran is responsible for the attacks that occurred in the Gulf of Oman today....based on the intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise needed to execute the operation, recent similar Iranian attacks on shipping, and the fact that no proxy group in the area has the resources and proficiency to act with such a high degree of sophistication.... "

## **Overview – The African Continent**

The rapid movement of small arms across the world is increasingly difficult to trace and has long-lasting effects on human security. Often small arms become available in a region for valid and legal reasons related to national security, peacekeeping or law enforcement. In fact, much of the trade in arms is legitimate and accounted for; it is a well-established and prosperous industry. Like other industries, it has become increasingly globalized. Most weapons are now assembled from components sourced from many countries. The result of this rapid global expansion is that weapons, their parts and ammunition are more easily diverted from their intended destination. They may end up in countries that have less control over how they will be used. Surplus or poorly guarded military weapons find markets in war-torn or post-conflict nations or are stolen and end up in the hands of non-state armed groups or terrorists. Illicit brokers are able to manipulate the inconsistencies and loopholes between national arms trade laws. Small arms can cross from state to private owners many times over.

Small arms proliferation has been particularly devastating in Africa, where machine guns, rifles, grenades, pistols and other small arms have killed and displaced many civilians across the continent. These weapons have been used in deadly conflicts in Sudan, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and other African countries. They are frequently recycled from country to country, and their ownership is transferred among fighters, security forces and war profiteers.



In central and eastern Africa, many lives have been lost due to conflict and its related effects. The irregular warfare that has been common there in recent decades is well served by these kinds of weapons, which are easily available and sometimes cost less than food items. In 1994, an intra-ethnic conflict in Rwanda left more than 800,000 people murdered, mostly with small arms, including machetes. An estimated 300,000 civilians have also lost their lives the same way in Burundi. However, the foreign supply of arms to both governments and rebel groups continues to grow in illicit, ungoverned or poorly controlled transactions. The small arms that are already in the subregion move easily across borders—the borders between Cameroon, Chad and the Central African Republic have been identified specifically as areas of high proliferation.

## **Current Patterns**

### **A Proliferation of Actors and a Diversity of Motives**

In the 1990s, the nature of armed conflict has changed dramatically. The withdrawal of superpower support has compelled armed groups and governments to become increasingly self-reliant to ensure their own survival – either by selling weapons abroad or by associating political and military efforts with commercial pursuits. For insurgent groups in particular, this ‘privatization’ of armed struggle has meant trading, often illegally, in resources under their control. Such groups already operate outside the law, illegal trade can give them a comparative advantage over other dealers – whether the product sold is diamonds, ivory, narcotics, wood products or weapons. The transactions are easier when there is little or no State control in areas of rebel influence and where transborder cooperation with friendly populations or governments in neighbouring countries is possible. When trade in local resources is not an option, insurgents often turn for support, through violence or threats of violence, to the local population and international humanitarian agencies, which are sometimes forced to turn over goods and materials intended for aid operations. In such situations the possession of arms can become a *sine qua non* for subsistence, whether one is part of an insurgent force or a local peasant. The ‘privatization’ of security has also led to a decentralization of command and control over armed forces. Since resources are not provided by an external patron or perhaps even by the leaders of insurgent movements, the chain of command essential for maintaining discipline in armed forces also tends to break down. Power, authority and well-being derive not from a central source but from the arms cache, drug route or mineral deposit one controls, on the degree of fear that can be instilled in the local population or on the amount of material that can be siphoned off from international agencies. In this context it is easy to imagine a proliferation of armed groups, the identities of which are difficult to discern. While these actors may also harbour political ambitions, their activities are frequently a strange and chaotic mix between armed struggle, illegal commerce and intimidation.

## Civilian Casualties

Concern about the widespread availability of arms is driven by the misuse of weapons. Most of those who wish to understand the issues related to weapons availability and misuse have understandably focused on the occurrence of weapon injuries among the civilian population. Over recent years a number of sources have cited figures that purport to document the proportion of civilians injured by weapons in various conflicts. Many of these sources put the proportion at 80 to 90% of all people injured. It is important to note that these estimates are almost always provided with no indication of how they have been arrived at. Most commonly, a reference is given which merely refers to an earlier report quoting the same figure. Thus, in recent years, a large number of documents by non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and even articles in the peer-reviewed medical literature have cited figures which are increasingly being used as 'evidence' by those concerned with weapons availability and misuse, but which are difficult, if not impossible, to substantiate. The figure of 80 to 90% may conceivably be correct in some circumstances. Logic alone would suggest that conflicts that are predominantly based on religious, ethnic, or cultural divisions do generate high levels of civilian casualties. However, these same conflict situations tend to be those without a sustained international presence, and estimating the number of individuals killed or wounded, let alone determining their combat status, is either not done, or relegated to educated guesswork.

## Awash in Weapons

The Cold War competition between two strategic alliances, in which arms were made available primarily for global political and strategic purposes, has largely disappeared. Major weapons transfers by the principal exporting States are now often motivated primarily by economic and employment benefits. Military, strategic and political factors have become secondary considerations in many instances and are sometimes completely ignored. The human costs of arms transfers have, until recently, been considered of little importance. A major impetus driving arms sales to developing States has been the rapidly shrinking military budgets of northern industrialized countries. The lack of coherent policies for conversion of military production capacities to serve the civilian economy has meant that military industries with high production capabilities generated by the Cold War are competing intensively to develop new markets, particularly in the developing world.

## Small and Light Weapons

- **Simplicity and durability:** Unlike major weapons systems which require regular upkeep and maintenance due to their complicated electronics, avionics and propulsion subsystems, small arms and light weapons have few moving parts, are extremely durable and require little upkeep or logistical support. With minimal maintenance some items such as assault rifles can remain operational for 20 to 40 years or more. These weapons are widely used in conflicts involving uneducated combatants and children, because they are easy to handle effectively with a minimum of training.



- **Portability and concealability:** Small arms and light weapons can be carried by individuals or light vehicles; they are easily transported or smuggled into areas of conflict; and they can be concealed in shipments of legitimate cargo.
- **Military/police and civilian uses:** Unlike major conventional weapons, which are generally procured only by national military forces, small arms and light weapons often have legitimate uses for both military and police forces. They may also be held legally, or otherwise, by individuals fearful for their own personal security.
- **Low cost and wide availability:** Because these weapons are mass manufactured for military, police and civilian use, there is an abundance of suppliers around the world. In addition, the existence of many tens of millions of such weapons, often recycled from conflict to conflict, has in many countries caused prices to drop well below the cost of manufacture. For example, a 1996 report indicated that in Mozambique and Angola an assault rifle could be purchased for less than \$15 or for a bag of maize. In Uganda the price was reported to be the same as that of a chicken.
- **Lethality:** The increasing sophistication of rapid-fire assault rifles, pistols and submachine guns, and their widespread circulation among sub-State groups and civilians, can provide such groups with firepower, which matches or exceeds that of national police or even military forces. Indeed, with weapons capable of firing up to 700 rounds a minute, a single individual or small-armed group can pose a tremendous threat to society. The development of new technologies for rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and light antitank weapons has increased the firepower that warring factions can bring to bear in a civil conflict.

## **Action Plan for the Committee**

- Member states should develop strong foundation on Laws of War and international armament regulations.
- Representatives should become fluent in articulating the framework of action for UN and its subsidiary bodies.
- Understanding of the **UN charter and situation in middle east** - its implications on the stability and peace.