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Preventive disarmament of Nuclear, Chemical and Conventional Weapons, threats of an arms race in outer space, and the role of disarmament in Sustainable Development

Report of the UA-MUNC Secretary-General

Introduction:

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and disarmament are directly interconnected. Currently, states continue to allocate approximately 1730 billion dollars on military spending every year.¹ It is imperative to recognize that states continue to allocate vast amounts of financial resources to military spending, while many continue to live in poverty without access to basic human rights.² Moreover, it must be emphasized that disarmament contributes to achieving specific SDGs outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Through disarmament activities, states contribute to the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16, which seeks “to foster the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective and accountable institutions at all levels”.³ Therefore, the purpose behind disarmament is further promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies both domestically and in the international community. By attempting to disarm, states may achieve more equal and inclusive political discourse in the international community.

However, disarmament does remain a contentious issue, and the international community has attempted to address the problem by enacting measures such as the Arms Trade Treaty, resolutions which aim to limit the possibility of an arms race in outer space, and numerous international treaties. Moreover, sustainable development relies on both actions and resources. Disarmament is a cornerstone upon which the United Nations was established. Therefore, disarmament must be discussed in order to achieve an international community based on the premise of equality, and to uphold the mandate of the United Nations by means of building peaceful and inclusive societies.

¹International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility, *Disarmament for Sustainable Development as a World Wide Goal an International Appeal for Disarmament*, Prgh 2, 2012

² INES, *Disarmament for Sustainable Development as a World Wide Goal an International Appeal for Disarmament*, 2012

³ *Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to transform our world*, Goal 16, United Nations, 2015



Background/History

Disarmament has been a key mandate of the United Nations ever since the establishment of the organization at the end of the Second World War. According to Article 11 of *The Charter of the United Nations*, the General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, a key facet of which is the principles regarding disarmament and the regulation of arms.⁴ Moreover, disarmament plays a vital role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under SDG 16, achieving an inclusive international community can lead to a world that is based on the inclusion of all Member States in international discourse. Not only does disarmament create the possibility of equality and therefore inclusion in the General Assembly, but it also encourages Member States to cooperate when confronted with global challenges.

Nuclear Weapons and an Arms Race in Outer Space

Following the Second World War and the rise of the Cold War, new technologies of the 1950s like the Sputnik Satellite of 1957 raised new concerns of a possible arms race in outer space. Thus, in 1959, the General Assembly created the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.⁵ The Committee was vital in establishing five treaties pertaining to the use of outer space, the cornerstone of which is *The Outer Space Treaty*, adopted by the General Assembly through resolution XVIII in 1967.⁶

However, while the Outer Space Treaty outlined how space should be used by Member States, it does not directly address preventative measures pertaining to an arms race in outer space.⁷ In 2005 the General Assembly addressed this issue, and adopted a resolution which included *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race* (GA/DIS/3310).⁸ The resolution passed in the General Assembly through a vote of 160 in favour and 1 against. The United States voted against the resolution, Israel abstained from the vote, and 27 Member States were absent during the voting process.⁹ After the vote, the representative of the United States denied the existence of an arms race, and claimed that further enhancing state security in order to maintain peace may include the proliferation of weapons in outer space.¹⁰ However, it should be noted that attempting to proliferate arms in such a capacity can perpetuate a race to match military strength.

⁴ *Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter IV Article 11 Subsection 1, United Nations, 1945

⁵ *Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer space*, *United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs*, United Nations, From: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/index.html>

⁶ *United Nations Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*, *United Nations Conference on The Peaceful Uses of Outer Space- Res 2261*, United Nations, 1967

⁷ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race*, *Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, prgh 1-4, United Nations, October 25 2005

⁸ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race*, *Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, Prgh 1-4, United Nations, 2005

⁹ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race*, *Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, Prgh 1-4, United Nations, 2005

¹⁰ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race*, *Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, Prgh 1-4, United Nations, 2005



Furthermore, if nuclear proliferation extends to outer space, it will directly threaten the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It must be emphasized that proliferating nuclear arms into outer space may contribute to embedding notions of inequality, contrary to SDG 16. Considering that proliferation in this capacity may contribute to the perpetuation of a global hierarchy, inclusion is threatened by the actions of nuclear powers, and the international community is deterred from cooperating to maintain peace and security. Moreover, should nuclear weapons be used in outer space, they carry the capacity to create irreversible damage to the environment. Therefore, this issue is of particular importance as, not only does it contribute to the 2030 Agenda, but also, but it also pushes the international community further to cooperate on the subject. Nuclear armament may also be perceived as an existential matter as a whole.

Conventional Weapons

The use of conventional weapons remains a significant issue and directly hinders the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Considering that conventional weapons remain easily obtainable despite Security Council arms embargoes,¹¹ human rights violations persist and are continuously enabled by the ease of access to conventional weapons. In 1983, *the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* came into force.¹² At the time, it only had 50 signatories, which made this initial treaty somewhat weak considering the political climate at the time. Today, there are 115 Member States party to the Convention.¹³ However, there are still 78 Member States that have yet to sign the Convention. The Convention itself only addresses certain types of conventional weapons and not the spread and use of conventional arms as a whole.

Conventional weapons remain a disarmament issue that the United Nations has been attempting to address since 1945. Moreover, through the arms trade, conventional weapons are still fairly easily accessible to many non-state actors and other forms of violent organizations.. Political repression, crime and terror are continually perpetuated through irresponsible arms trade.¹⁴ As a result of this ease of access in acquiring conventional weapons, 1.5 billion people still live under conflict.¹⁵ Recognizing this, in December 2014 *The Arms Trade Treaty* was passed. Focusing explicitly on regulating trade in conventional arms, spanning from basic assault weapons to battle ships,¹⁶ the Treaty contributes to solving the issue in accordance with the Charter of the UN. However, while this Treaty appears to be effective, only 130 countries have actually signed it.¹⁷ There are 193 Member States, and the missing signatories reduce the effectiveness of this Treaty in creating a regulated arms trade universally.

¹¹ Nuclear, Chemical and conventional weapons Disarmament, Accessed: 2017, United Nations, From: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/priorities/nuclear-chemical-and-conventional-weapons-disarmament/index.html>

¹² The Convention on Certain Conventional weapons, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations, Accessed: 2017, From: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/geneva/ccw/>

¹³ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, 2017

¹⁴ The Arms Trade, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, United Nations, 2017

From:<https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/armstrade/>

¹⁵ Goal 16, The Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030, United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia, 2015

¹⁶ The Arms Trade Treaty ,UNODA, 2014

¹⁷ The Arms Trade Treaty, UNODA, 2014



Canada, Russia, China, India, and Saudi Arabia,¹⁸ are examples of Member States that have yet to sign the Treaty. These missing signatories provide cause for concern, because many of them are considered very influential in the international community. As a result, many people continue to suffer under conflict and cannot develop peaceful, just, and inclusive societies in accordance with the 2030 Agenda.

Chemical Weapons

Chemical weapons have been a major concern for states ever since the end of the First World War. The League of Nations - the precursor organization to the UN - attempted to address this issue in 1925. *The Geneva Protocol* of 1925 was an initiative that states signed in order to deal with their concerns over chemical weapons.¹⁹ However, the Protocol did have its shortcomings. The prohibition of the development, production or stockpiling of chemical weapons is not present in the Protocol, and many states that ratified it, reserved the rights to use chemical weapons on states that have not yet signed the Protocol.²⁰ In addition, states which practiced imperialism, despite signing the convention, reserved the rights to use chemical weapons on their colonies. Chemical weapons were used during WWII in Asia, as well as on civilian populations in Europe.²¹

Moreover, the rise of the Cold War also brought further development of chemical and other non-conventional weapons. By the 1970s and 80s, it was reported that 25 states had either been working towards developing chemical weapons or had stockpiled unconventional arms.²² The end of the Cold War also brought with it the necessary opportunity for the General Assembly to address the issue in accordance with the UN Charter. *The Chemical Weapons Convention* of 1997 was the first multilateral framework that included the elimination of chemical weapons as a category of arms under international control.²³ However, out of 193 Member States, 189 have actively signed and ratified the Convention.²⁴ The lack of consensus represents a major issue because it leaves open, the capacity of states to sanction the development and use of chemical weapons. This in turn would constitute a failure to contribute to building a more peaceful and interconnected world, and would thus serve as a threat to the 2030 Agenda.

¹⁸ Tracking the Universality of The ATT, Armstrearty.org, Arms Trade Treaty Negotiation Mapping Database, Last Updated: March 2017, Accessed: April, 13, 2017

¹⁹ Genesis and Historical Development, Chemical Weapons Convention, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Accessed 2017, From: <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/genesis-and-historical-development/>

²⁰ Genesis and Historical Development, OPCA, 2017

²¹ Chemical Weapons, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations, Accessed: March 2017, From: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/chemical/>

²² Chemical Weapons, UNODA, 2017

²³ Chemical weapons, UNODA, 20117

²⁴ Chemical Weapons, UNODA, 2017



Furthermore, with the recent use of chemical weapons in the Middle East, the continued use of chemical weapons also continues to limit the possibility for societies to develop in accordance with Goal 16. Considering this, the escalation of the conflict has led to the use of WMDs by the parties to the conflict. The destruction caused by these weapons can create an irreversible impact on the foundation for development in accordance with the SDGs. Therefore, as an international community, failing to cooperate on disarming in this manner further hinders the implementation of the SDGs, and fails to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Committee introduction

The General Assembly is convening on this issue to facilitate discussion on disarmament between Member States as equals. Dialogue in this manner strives to contribute to consensus building between Member States. Moreover, recognizing the 2030 Agenda is based on the premise of consensus, it must be emphasized that the SDGs are attempting to encourage international cooperation on all matters associated with the goals. Therefore, the Agenda seeks to equally promote cooperation between Member States in order to further enable solutions based on trust, accountability, and a sense of community at the international level.

As mentioned previously, the current General Assembly has the jurisdiction to approach disarmament affairs in numerous ways. The Assembly has the power to shape international discourse through conventions, treaties, and resolutions. Currently, the General Assembly has direct jurisdiction over *The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Convention on Chemical Weapons, and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons*. Explicitly answering to the General Assembly, the mandate of the international community in this case is to ensure that disarmament occurs in a method that is in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. The Assembly should also address the shortcomings of each of the aforementioned conventions and committees. The key issues include: conventions pertaining to chemical weapons are not signed by all Member States; the Convention over Certain Conventional Weapons does not appeal to total disarmament, and is not signed by all Member States; and the Committee's proposed resolutions have not been adopted by consensus. Currently, the necessary environment to take action on disarmament is undermined by the lack of consensus. The Committee must address these issues while bearing in mind the importance of inclusion in accordance with the 2030 Agenda, and the manner in which inclusion can contribute to maintaining peace and security.



Initiatives Taken By Regional Blocs

The African Union

In 2012, the African Union created the *Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Capacity Program*.²⁵ The purpose of the Program is to strengthen the African Union's capacity as a bloc to support national and regional disarmament, demobilization, and combatant reintegration efforts on the continent.²⁶ Moreover, the African Union has enacted measures pertaining to disarmament issues by cooperating as an African community. The African Union has enacted a strategy pertaining to the control of illicit proliferation, circulation, and trafficking of small arms through resolution *AU/Dec.369*.²⁷ The resolution was adopted by AU states in 2011, with the aim of establishing controls and regulations on the proliferation of small arms in Africa.²⁸ However, the most significant attempt by the AU to address disarmament has been enacted through the *Common African Defense and Security Policy*.²⁹ The aim of this policy is to address security concerns of AU states, and it has been directly responsible for the implementation of an *African Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone Treaty*, *The Chemical Weapons Convention*, and the *Biological Weapons Convention*.³⁰ By creating such initiatives, the African Union as a bloc, strives to achieve disarmament through inclusion of all its members, and therefore, works together as an interconnected community. However, the AU has to date, failed to directly address the proliferation of nuclear arms in outer space.

The European Union

The European Union has made considerable efforts in order to achieve disarmament, as EU states have signed the UN Arms Trade Treaty.³¹ Moreover, the EU has directly enacted small arms and light weapons controls, the purpose of which is to counter small arms trafficking.³² Currently, the EU also has arms controls programs active in South-Eastern Europe, as well as through the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE).³³ The intended purpose of the OSCE is to provide management and security of stockpiled armaments in Europe.³⁴ The OSCE is based on the premise of cooperation between European states, in order to maintain security in matters pertaining to arms control. ³⁵

²⁵ Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration, African Union Peace and Security, African Union, 2015

²⁶ Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration, AU/Dec.369, 2011

²⁷ Small Arms and Light Weapons, The African Union, Last updated 2013, Accessed April 2017, From: <http://www.peaceau.org/en/page/62-small-arms-and-light-weapons>

²⁸ Small Arms and Light Weapons, African Union, 2013

²⁹ Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Non-Proliferation, The African Union, Last Updated 2015, Accessed April 2017, From: <http://www.peaceau.org/en/page/63-weapons-of-mass-destruction>

³⁰ Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Non-Proliferation, African Union, 2015

³¹ The Arms Trade Treaty, UNODA, 2014

³² Conventional Weapons, European Union External Action Strategy, European Union, 2015

³³ Conventional Weapons, EEAS, 2015

³⁴ Who Are We, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Accessed: March 2017, From: <http://www.osce.org/whatistheosce>

³⁵ What We Do, Organization for security and Cooperation in Europe, Accessed April 2017, From: <http://www.osce.org/what-we-do>



The EU also enacted the *Proliferation Security Initiative* within the confines of Europe.³⁶ The aim of the PSI is to enable coordinated participation between states to stop the proliferation of WMDs in accordance with international law, and frameworks.³⁷ The EU has also attempted to address the proliferation of nuclear arms in outer space. In 2014, the EU proposed an international space code of conduct, which directly lists the importance of preventing an arms race in outer space as a significant part of the draft's mandate.³⁸ However, while the EU has attempted to propose a binding code of conduct, it has yet to be adopted by EU states. Considering this, nuclear proliferation in outer space still remains a threat, which requires important attention from international bodies.

ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made considerable efforts pertaining to disarmament. In 1997, ASEAN signed the *Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty*.³⁹ Moreover, ASEAN also outlined that an objective of the Association is to promote inclusion and cooperation between Southeastern Asian Countries.⁴⁰ Therefore, it may be articulated that not only is ASEAN approaching disarmament in accordance with Article 11 of the Charter, but also in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. The organization has also enacted the *ASEAN Regional Forum, Non-Proliferation, and Disarmament Work Plan*.⁴¹ The intended purpose of the Plan is to prevent the illicit trafficking of WMDs, and hold ASEAN states accountable to the commitments and obligations that have been agreed-upon by members.⁴² However, while ASEAN has attempted to solve significant disarmament issues through cooperation, the organization has yet to address the threats of conventional and chemical weapons. Moreover, the nuclear weapon free zone that exists in the region does not address nuclear proliferation in outer space.

³⁶ *Disarmament, Nonproliferation, And Arms Export Control*, European Union External Action, European Union, 2016, Accessed: April 2017, From: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/427/disarmament-non-proliferation-and-arms-export-control_en

³⁷ About Us, The Proliferation Security Initiative, Accessed: April 2017, From: <http://www.psi-online.info/Vertretung/psi/en/01-about-psi/0-about-us.html>

³⁸ EU proposal for an International Space Code of Conduct, The European Union External Action, European Union, published 2014, accessed 2017, From: https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/disarmament-non-proliferation-and-arms-export-control/14715_en

³⁹ SouthEast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, Nuclear Threat Initiative, Published 2016, Accessed March 2017, From: <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/southeast-asian-nuclear-weapon-free-zone-seanwzfz-treaty-bangkok-treaty/>

⁴⁰ Establishment, Overview, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Accessed March 2017, From: <http://asean.org/asean/about-asean/overview/>

⁴¹ ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Nonproliferation and Disarmament (NPD) Work Plan, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Accessed April 2017, From: [http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/files/library/Plan%20of%20Action%20and%20Work%20Plans/ARF%20Work%20Plan%20on%20Non-Proliferation%20and%20Disarmament%20\(2014\).pdf](http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/files/library/Plan%20of%20Action%20and%20Work%20Plans/ARF%20Work%20Plan%20on%20Non-Proliferation%20and%20Disarmament%20(2014).pdf)

⁴² ASEAN Regional Forum Nonproliferation and Disarmament World Plan, ASEAN, 2017



Community of Latin American and Caribbean States

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean (CELAC) states has displayed immense concern over matters of disarmament and the threats that arms pose to its geographic location. *The Treaty of Tlatelolco* was implemented in 1969.⁴³ However, it did not come into full force until 2002 when Cuba signed on to the Treaty.⁴⁴ The Treaty of Tlatelolco directly created a nuclear weapon free zone prohibiting the practice of stockpiling WMDs across Latin America and the Caribbean.⁴⁵ However, while CELAC certainly contributes to achieving disarmament by enacting a nuclear weapon free zone, the organization has not addressed the possibility of an arms race in outer space. CELAC states may find it conducive to achieving prevention by approaching this matter as a regional bloc in the General Assembly.

Past International Actions

Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The NPT, which has been signed by 191 of the 193 UN Member States, is a cornerstone of disarmament measures taken by the international community.⁴⁶ Entering into force in 1970, the treaty is indefinite in duration, and continues to tackle nonproliferation issues.⁴⁷ The NPT requires that states use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and that non-nuclear states may never receive access to nuclear weapons through proliferation.⁴⁸ This Treaty has been highly effective, considering that the United Nations primarily functions on the sovereignty of states. The international community has taken great measure to ensure nuclear weapons are not proliferated for offensive purposes.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is an international initiative that was established in 1983.⁴⁹ Initially the Convention only had 15 signatures, but today, it has 115 signatories.⁵⁰ This Convention is a step forward in disarmament matters, as it discusses an international initiative to halt the proliferation of certain conventional weapons. The treaty itself only addresses the proliferation of particular weapons, which range from small arms to battle cruisers.⁵¹ However, small arms remain an issue, and there are other UN frameworks that deal with it specifically such as *A/RES/71/48*, a resolution pertaining to conventional arms trade.⁵²

⁴³ Treaty of Tlatelolco, Nuclear Threat initiative, Published 2016, Accessed March 2017, From: <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-prohibition-nuclear-weapons-latin-america-and-caribbean-lanwzfz-tlatelolco-treaty/>

⁴⁴ Treaty of Tlatelolco, NTI, 2016

⁴⁵ Treaty of Tlatelolco, NTI, 2016

⁴⁶ Treaty on The Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, UNODA, United Nations, Accessed 2017 From: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/>

⁴⁷ Treaty on The Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, UNODA, 2017

⁴⁸ Treaty on The Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, UNODA, 2017

⁴⁹ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, 2017

⁵⁰ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, 2017

⁵¹ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, 2017

⁵² *A/RES/71/48*, The General Assembly, The United Nations, December, 2016, From: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/48>



Adopted in 2016, this resolution seeks to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.⁵³

The Arms Trade Treaty

In 2014, the General Assembly adopted the *Arms Trade Treaty*. Striving to achieve international regulation of the arms trade, the treaty specifically targets the appropriation and proliferation of arms to both state and non-state actors.⁵⁴ Out of 193 Member States, only 130 have signed the Treaty,⁵⁵ which is cause for concern. This lack of universal recognition indicates that some states are currently active in trading arms in an irresponsible manner, thereby perpetuating conflict, as arms are easily accessible. Thus, this issue undermines the 2030 Agenda, as states and non-state actors are equipped to engage in conflict and further developmental stagnation in particular geographic locations.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

The Chemical Weapons Convention (full name: Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction) entered into force in 1997.⁵⁶ Recognizing that this Convention was created after the Cold War, its purpose is to eliminate chemical weapons as a category of arms. Efforts to do so are in line with disarmament. However, out of 193 Member States, 189 have actively signed onto the Convention.⁵⁷ Thus, chemical weapons continue to persist, although cases of its use are rare. However, recent events in Syria demonstrate that chemical weapons remain a threat to humanity.⁵⁸ Considering this, chemical weapons must be addressed in the General Assembly in order to further disarm in accordance with the UN Charter and the 2030 Agenda. *Prevention of an outer space arms race*

In 2005, the General Assembly adopted a resolution to ensure the prevention of an arms race in outer space.⁵⁹ With 160 in favor, 1 against (United States), and 1 abstention (Israel), the resolution entered into force.⁶⁰ However, the resolution was not adopted by consensus. This poses an issue with the resolution, given that states are entitled to sovereignty, and thus behave autonomously. Therefore, should one state decide to proliferate WMDs in outer space for defensive measures, an arms race can persist as other global powers may do the same.

⁵³ A/RES/71/48, The United Nations, 2016

⁵⁴ The Arms Trade Treaty ,UNODA, 2014

⁵⁵ The Arms Trade Treaty ,UNODA, 2014

⁵⁶ Genesis and Historical Development, OPCA, 2017

⁵⁷ Chemical Weapons, UNODA, 2017

⁵⁸ UN Chief Deeply Disturbed by Reports of An Alleged Chemical Attack OPCW Investigating, UN News Centre, United Nations, 2017

⁵⁹ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race, Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, United Nations, 2005

⁶⁰ *Prevention of an Outer Space Arms Race, Mediterranean Security Among Issues, As Disarmament Committee Approves Seven More Texts*, United Nations, 2005



The Biological Weapons Convention

The Biological Weapons Convention entered into force in 1975.⁶¹ The Convention is considered to be the first multilateral disarmament treaty aimed at banning an entire category of weapons.⁶² The convention aims to prohibit the development, production, and stockpiling of biological weapons under any circumstances.⁶³ The treaty is significant as it addresses efforts by the international community to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁶⁴

Committees and Organizations Devoted to Disarmament

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

The OPCW was established in 1997 after the Convention of Chemical Weapons entered into force.⁶⁵ The mission of the OPCW is to implement the provisions outlined in the Chemical Weapons Convention, and to achieve the OPCW's vision of a world without chemical weapons.⁶⁶ The organization was created during the negotiations of the CWC by the Preparatory Commission, which was established in 1993 during the negotiation phase of the CWC.⁶⁷ The goals the OPCW are explicitly imperative to both *The Charter of The United Nations* and the 2030 Agenda, as it strives to establish a world free of chemical weapons. It contributes to the Charter's Article 11, which outlines disarmament as a partial mandate of the United Nations.⁶⁸

The Committee on the peaceful uses of outer space

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was created by the General Assembly as a subsidiary body in 1959.⁶⁹ It was initially created as a part of the Security Council, and later expanded to create room for inclusion of all Member States, which was lacking in the initial effort.⁷⁰ Reorganizing the committee under the General Assembly created the capacity for international cooperation in maintaining peace and security through inclusion.⁷¹ Thus, the five treaties established by the committee had the capacity to contribute to global peace as all states were included in the process. This makes the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 milestone in international affairs,⁷² as it is passed during the height of the Cold War when tensions between the participants in the international community was high. However, it does not directly ensure the prevention of proliferation of WMDs in outer space.

⁶¹ The Biological Weapons Convention, United Nations Office At Geneva, United Nations, Accessed: March 2017, From:

[http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/\(httpPages\)/04FBBDD6315AC720C1257180004B1B2F?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/04FBBDD6315AC720C1257180004B1B2F?OpenDocument)

⁶² The Biological Weapons Convention, UNOG, 2017

⁶³ The Biological Weapons Convention, UNOG, 2017

⁶⁴ The Biological Weapons Convention, UNOG, 2017

⁶⁵ Genesis and History, OPCW,

⁶⁶ OPCW Mission Statement, Organization for The Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Accessed march 2017, from: <https://www.opcw.org/about-opcw/mission/>

⁶⁷ Genesis and History, OPCW, 2017

⁶⁸ Charter of The United Nations: Article 11, United Nations, Published 1945, Accessed March 2017

⁶⁹ *Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer space, UNODA, 2017*

⁷⁰ *Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer space, UNODA, 2017*

⁷¹ *Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer space, UNODA, 2017*

⁷² *Committee on The Peaceful Uses of Outer space, UNODA, 2017*



The Wassenaar Arrangement

The Wassenaar Arrangement was established in 1995,⁷³ and aims to contribute to regional and international security by preventing the destabilizing accumulation of arms.⁷⁴ The Arrangement seeks to accomplish this, by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in the transfers of conventional arms and technologies.⁷⁵ Another major mandate of the Arrangement is to prevent the accumulation of arms by terrorists.⁷⁶ States that participate in the Arrangement uphold the mandate of the organization through national policies to ensure that arms transfers do not contribute to the enhancement of military capabilities.⁷⁷

The International Atomic Energy Agency

The IAEA was created in 1957.⁷⁸ The creation of the IAEA was based on the ideas that President Eisenhower expressed in his famous 1953 'Atoms for Peace' speech to the United Nations. The purpose of the IAEA is linked to nuclear technology and its controversial applications either as a weapon or tool.⁷⁹ Thus, the mandate of the IAEA is to work with Member States of the UN and other partners worldwide to promote safe, secure, and peaceful nuclear technologies. Working to promote peaceful nuclear technologies and control nuclear proliferation, the IAEA considers disarmament as a key function of the Agency.⁸⁰

United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme has considered disarmament a critical aim of its mandate. The UNDP has addressed this issue by directly implementing measures pertaining to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) in the developing world.⁸¹ The UNDP seeks to ensure short-term security imperatives are addressed as an integral part of immediate post-conflict peacebuilding and early recovery actions.⁸² Moreover, UNDP strives to ensure that job and livelihood opportunities are made present to deter the perpetuation of irresponsible arms trade, and the resurgence of conflicts.⁸³ An example that reflects the significance of UNDP's DDR program is the reintegration process the UNDP used in Bosnia after the conflict ended in the 1990s. *The Pilot Emergency Labour Redeployment Project* was

⁷³ The Wassenaar Arrangement: Origins, The Wassenaar Arrangement, Accessed: March 2017, from: <http://www.wassenaar.org/about-us/>

⁷⁴ The Wassenaar Arrangement: About Us, The Wassenaar Arrangement, Accessed: March 2017, From: <http://www.wassenaar.org/about-us/>

⁷⁵ The Wassenaar Arrangement: About Us, The Wassenaar Arrangement, 2017

⁷⁶ The Wassenaar Arrangement: About Us, The Wassenaar Arrangement, 2017

⁷⁷ The Wassenaar Arrangement: About Us, The Wassenaar Arrangement, 2017

⁷⁸ History, International Atomic Energy Agency, Accessed: March 2017, From: <https://www.iaea.org/about/overview/history>

⁷⁹ History, IAEA, 2017

⁸⁰ History, IAEA, 2017

⁸¹ Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations, United Nations, Accessed march 2017, from: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/focus_areas/livelihoods_and_economicrecovery/disarmament-demobilization-reintegration.html

⁸² Our Goals, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations, Accessed March 2017, From: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/focus_areas/livelihoods_and_economicrecovery/disarmament-demobilization-reintegration/our-goal.html

⁸³ Our Goals, UNDP, 2017



specifically designed to assist the demobilization and reintegration of soldiers by providing ex-military personnel with the means for self-reliance by integrating them into the economically active population.⁸⁴ Thus, by approaching the peacebuilding process with reintegration in mind, the UNDP has worked to create long-term peace, as their work focuses on integrating former combatants. The UNDP limits the arms trade and thus the demand for weapons by rebuilding societies post-conflict.

Possible Solutions

Past solutions have included drafting resolutions pertaining to disarmament and installing tools to monitor arms proliferation. The UN Register of Conventional Arms is designed to fulfill this very purpose. The aim of the Register is to provide further transparency in armaments to ensure that states are following UN resolutions.⁸⁵ Moreover, the numerous treaties mentioned above are all intended as solutions to issues pertaining to arms proliferation.

However, solutions that have not been addressed include the approach to disarmament through consensus-building. The current procedure of the General Assembly is based on consensus in order to create a more inclusive international community. Considering that the 2030 Agenda has been passed by consensus, the attempt to create a more inclusive international community outlined under Goal 16 has the capacity to create impactful solutions in addition to already established conventions, treaties, and resolutions. Moreover, considering that many solutions proposed in the General Assembly have not directly targeted a whole category of weapons, it may be possible for a new resolution to be implemented that addresses disarmament in more detail. In addition, reforming past initiatives in accordance with new methods of conduct in the Assembly, has the capacity to possibly strengthen past initiatives, conventions, and treaties. Moreover, new initiatives, committees, treaties, and conventions can be formed with the support of the international community, as procedure in the General Assembly is defined by the use of regional blocs, therefore allowing initiatives to be created in a way where the individual circumstances of regional blocs can be taken into consideration.

⁸⁴ Turning Soldiers into a Work Force: Demobilization and Reintegration in Post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina, Heinemann-Grüder, Andreas, Tobias Pietz and Shay Duffy, 2003, Bonn International Centre for Conversion, Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁸⁵ UN Register of Arms, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations, Accessed March 2017, From: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/register/>



Questions to consider

- How can the implementation of the 2030 Agenda impact disarmament efforts?
- How can disarmament be achieved in the General Assembly with consensus?
- Why should delegates strive to achieve consensus on matters of disarmament?
- Considering UNDP's efforts in DDR, how can economic integration further enable disarmament efforts?
- Given the gravity of the threat that proliferation of nuclear arms in outer space poses to humanity, how can this issue be approached by the Assembly, bearing in mind that some states may not in fact be interested in preventing an arms race in outer space?
- When considering the impact that WMDs have on the environment, how can disarmament be combined with efforts to preserve, prevent, and repair environmental damage?
- How can economics be integrated with efforts pertaining to the preservation, prevention, and repair of the environment?
- How can incentives be created to disarm in the international community?
- How can conflicts which perpetuate the arms trade, be solved without breaching the articles outlined in the Charter of the United Nations?
- How can past conventions, treaties, and resolution be strengthened to further achieve disarmament?