



DISEC
TOPIC BULLETIN

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CHAIRS

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- THE TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE -

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to AMUN XXII!

My name is Catherine Park, and I'm a senior in the Academy for Business and Finance here at Bergen County Academies. I am beyond excited to be co-chairing the DISEC committee this year.

Ever since starting Model UN in my freshman year, I've been able to take on the role of delegate, chair, and even a member of a crisis committee backroom. MUN has continued to help me discover not only my passion for global affairs, but also connect with a large network of some of the most supportive and driven people I have ever met. Besides MUN, my passions include favorite pastimes include reading, listening to music and watching Netflix documentaries.

Whether it's your first conference or your twentieth, I would encourage you to collaborate and actively engage in discussion with your fellow delegates. I hope this conference will be a fun and valuable experience for all of you! Please don't hesitate to email me at catpar21@bergen.org with any questions or concerns.

I can't wait to meet all of you at AMUN XXII!

Best,

Catherine Park, Co-Chair, DISEC
catpar21@bergen.org

Dear Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to AMUN XXII! My name is Anindita Sisodiya and I am so excited to be your co-chair this year. I am currently a senior at BCA's Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology and have been a part of BCA's MUN team since freshman year. Ever since my first conference, MUN has become an integral part of my life, as it has introduced me to so many remarkable people and has helped me broaden my global perspective. I hope that through the many thought provoking discussions you will partake in at AMUN this year you are able to gain a new perspective on the global issues debated in this committee. As your co-chair, I hope to make your AMUN experience as memorable as possible, so don't hesitate to ask any questions you may have regarding the committee. I am really looking forward to seeing the solution you all come up with and I can't wait to meet you all!

Best of luck,

Anindita Sisodiya, Co-Chair, DISEC
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Introduction

One of the six main committees of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is responsible for dealing with affairs related to international security. Also known as the First Committee, its main goal is the maintenance of international peace and security and upholding the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, as well as promoting cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability.

Following World War II and the establishment of the United Nations, DISEC was created to deal with the implications and effects of the atomic bomb. Historically, it helped mediate and resolve multilateral conflicts. In the Sixty-Fourth Session of the General Assembly in 2010, DISEC passed forty-eight specific resolutions, including but not limited to policies on transparency of military expenditures, combating the illicit trade in small arms, and light weapons and prevention of an arms

race. In the Sixty-Fifth session, DISEC addressed additional issues around international security, such as the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, developments in the fields of information and telecommunications, and the relationship between disarmament and development. DISEC oversees the Office of Disarmament in the UN and has continued to work extensively with other branches of the organization, particularly the Security Council and Conference on Disarmament.

All 195 member and observer-status states in the UN are allowed to attend and participate in DISEC. This displays significant growth from the time of the committee's inception, at which the committee only included 51 member states (mostly the European and Latin American members of the League of Nations).

Today, DISEC continues to improve its organization of work, and rearrange and update its agenda to effectively concentrate its efforts on the most pressing security concerns of this day and age.



Topic A: The Yemeni Civil War

Topic History

The conflict in Yemen first began in 2011, following the Arab Spring-influenced Yemeni Revolution. After facing much retaliation from the northern Yemen-based Shiite rebels Ansar Allah (also known as the “Houthis”), Ali Abdulla Saleh resigned, leaving Abradduh Mansur Hadi as president. Hadi’s inability to deal with the humanitarians and political issues, as well as jihaadist attacks facing Yemen, increased support of the Houthis rebellion. Boycotting Hadi’s administration, the Houthis seized control of Sana’a, Yemen’s capital city. To subdue further conflict, the Houthis forced Hadi to resign. However, Hadi escaped and fled to Saudi Arabia, asking the Gulf Cooperation Council to use the military to protect the legitimate Yemeni government from the Houthis.

This conflict, however, does not just concern the Houthis and the Yemeni government. In fact, over the past decade, the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) has found itself entangled in many armed conflicts concerning internal



militant groups and foreign nations. These conflicts have further exemplified Yemen's state of political instability, resulting in the emergence of many "local centers of power." One specific conflict is Saudi Arabia's international coalition against the Houthis. After Hadi fled and appealed to the GCC, the Saudi-led coalition "launched a military offensive aimed at restoring Hadi's rule and evicting Houthi fighters from the capital and other major cities."

With its increased activity in Yemen, the terrorist group al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has further complicated the conflict in Yemen. Receiving opposition from both the Sunni and Shia Muslims, the AQAP has attacked both groups. Because of its "technical expertise and global capacity," the AQAP is regarded worldwide as one of the most dangerous branches of al-Qaeda. To combat this militant group, many Western nations, such as the US, have carried out drone strikes against AQAP. However, these were only effective when the Yemeni

government was in control and after the Houthis' acquisition of the government, these airstrikes have been less effective due to "lack of international cooperation". The reason why the AQAP is able to flourish and incite violence in Yemen is because of the nation's current state of political unrest. Although the Houthis and Hadi both oppose the AQAP, they focus all of their energy and resources towards fighting each other, rather than the AQAP. However, the Houthis have had some victories over the AQAP whereas the government has had none.

Current Situation

Now in its sixth year, the Yemeni Civil War has turned into one of the worst humanitarian crises the world has faced. To subdue the conflict, the UN brokered a ceasefire in 2018, called the Stockholm Agreement, which included an immediate ceasefire and redeployment of forces in the city of Hodeidah, facilitating the movement of humanitarian aid, and a prisoner swap. However, this



agreement still hasn't been fulfilled. Moreover, the conflict now involves many other entities, whether it be foreign nations or militant groups. Many foreign nations have been committing human rights violations as they form coalition air strikes against civilian targets. The flow of arms from foreign nations, like Saudi Arabia, has also exacerbated the conflict in Yemen by increasing access to military arms. Iran has also violated the targeted international arms embargo (UN Security Council Resolution 2216) by offering military aid to the Houthis, providing them with "assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, anti-tank guided missiles and more sophisticated cruise missile systems." Increasing access to military grade weapons allow the Houthis to become a bigger threat to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations. Many western nations who support Hadi's administration, are placing sanctions and embargoes on the Houthi government to cut off the Yemeni economy from the global economy.

Country Policy

Middle Eastern Nations (Sunni):

Sunni Middle Eastern nations, including Saudi Arabia, support the Sunni-dominated Yemeni government. They want to remove the Houthis from their state of power and want to reinstate Hadi as Yemen's president.

Middle Eastern Nations (Shia):

Shia Middle Eastern nations, including Iran, support a predominantly Shia Yemeni government and so they secretly support the Houthi movement.

Liberal Western Nations:

Most liberal western nations are against the Houthi movement and believe that President Hadi is the rightful head of Yemen. These nations have a more diplomatic approach to combating the Houthis and are taking apart in embargoes and sanctions to deprive the Houthis of crucial resources.



UK, US, France:

The UK, US, and France support the Saudi-led coalition and the weapons embargo on Yemen. These nations are active arms suppliers to Saudi Arabia and send military aid to President Hadi.

China:

China wants to preserve political stability in Yemen, which it feels can be achieved by backing the Saudi-aligned Hadi government.

African Nations:

Sudan, Senegal, and Morocco support the Saudi-led coalition which many suspect may be in exchange for large amounts of money. Other African nations want the conflict to resolve quickly and have offered some humanitarian aid.

Questions to Consider

How do you plan on combating and eventually eradicating the terrorist organizations present in the region?

What measures should nations take to reduce the flow of arms into Yemen?

What measures should be taken to ensure that political stability is achieved in Yemen?



Topic B: Arms Trafficking in the Illegal Drug Trade

Topic History

Historically, the issues of arms trafficking and the illegal drug trade have been largely analyzed separately. An examination of the current situation will better illustrate the connection between the two issues.

Throughout the years, however, records of arms trafficking have displayed a fairly independent history. The wars of the twentieth century spawned sky-rocketing demand for small arms and other weapons across the globe. Thus, the issue of illicit arms trafficking started as a global phenomenon and remains an issue that impacts countries all over the world. During the Cold War, governments utilized private arms brokers to facilitate covert arms deals. These operations remained in place after the Cold War ended and only expanded. Over the last one or two decades, the world's black markets have become increasingly globalized, and brokers have become increasingly adept at taking advantage of the lack of international cooperation and



transnational communication between involved countries. In 2002, arms traffickers acquired five thousand AK-47s from the Yugoslavian army and moved them from Serbia to Liberia under the pretense of a legal transaction with Nigeria. In that same year, a group of West African gun smugglers coerced the Nicaraguan government to sell the smugglers three thousand assault rifles and 2.5 million pounds of ammunition by pretending to be brokering the deal on behalf of the Panamanian National Police. In reality, the illegal goods were directed to South America and sold to the United Self-Defense Forces of Columbia, a terrorist organization. Furthermore, between 1995 and 2001, the Colombian military seized more than 15,000 small arms that were circulating in the black market. It may be worth noting that arms brokers have historically relied upon counterfeit documents and/or legitimate documents acquired through bribery, which implies cooperation between these brokers and corrupt officials with access to these kinds of sources.

The other issue at hand is the issue of illicit drug trafficking. For decades, countries have participated in drug control efforts by prioritizing the eradication of production, interdicting traffic, and criminalizing consumption. However, the global drug problem has proved difficult to contain; overall production, trafficking, and consumption levels have remained largely unchanged. This can be attributed to what is called the “balloon effect”, which describes the phenomenon in which even when eradication programs lower levels of production in one country, production is simply moved to a different region. This phenomenon was observed in the 1980s and 1990s with coca production in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia (cocaine) and also with opium production in Burma and Afghanistan (opioids). Today, the illicit drug industry accounts for an estimated \$320 billion annually. The UN has maintained a criminal justice approach rather than a health-oriented one, something that critics have called effective as it allows the international community to be “locked into a model that promotes



lucrative illicit markets dominated by organized crime.”

Current Situation

The Small Arms Survey estimates that there are currently more than one billion firearms in the world, and it predicts that within the next 50 years, world production of military assault rifles, carbines, pistols, and machine guns would range between 36 to 46 million units. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the total value of the global arms trade in 2017 was at least \$95 billion, with the top hundred arms companies making an estimated \$398.2 billion worth of sales. Like any other lucrative business, the sale of firearms has spawned multiple submarkets and an expansive international underground economy. Illicit small arms sales accounted for ten to twenty percent of the total trade in small arms worldwide in 2001, according to the Small Arms Survey conducted for that year. Illicit arms trafficking fuels civil wars, contributes to rising crime rates

worldwide, and supplies the arsenals of terrorist organizations. Hundreds of thousands of small arms in legitimate government arsenals are vulnerable to theft, loss, and diversion. Traffickers acquire these weapons in order to smuggle them across national borders to their buyers in various different ways, making them difficult for governments to trace. In particular, the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SA/LW) proves to be nearly impossible to resolve for good. Unlike weapons of mass destruction, these firearms have legitimate military, law enforcement, and/or recreational uses. Thus, governments cannot impose total bans on manufacture, stockpiling, and/or sales; instead, they must try to prevent the diversion and misuse of SA/LW without infringing upon legitimate use and trade.

The problem that must be addressed currently is the issue of arms trafficking specifically in the illegal drug trade. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the number of



arms seized in connection with other suspected offenses surpassed 38,600 in 2017. In the Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020, the UNODC found that firearms trafficking “often takes place to satisfy demand from criminals who need the arms for use in various unlawful activities”. Illicit drugs are the most common non-firearms-related commodities seized together with firearms; the higher the rate of illicit drug seizures, the greater the amount of firearms seized in that criminal context. The link between drug trafficking and gun violence has been a well-documented phenomenon in Latin and the Caribbean, as well as in Europe. For example, during 2016-2017, the nation of Albania reported three notable seizure cases (among others) that involved the “seizure of large quantities of cannabis in conjunction with several rifles.” North Macedonia reported a case in which 13 weapons were seized in connection to an organized crime group involved with drug trafficking. In Denmark, firearms were often trafficked either in conjunction with or in exchange for narcotic

drugs. In Peru, there were reports of cartel involvement in the illegal importation of firearms by air. The recipients of these firearms included drug traffickers, seeking weapons as a way to enhance their personal security and to enable their confrontations with law enforcement. Moreover, corrupt officers in the Peruvian National Police and Armed Forces “diverted weapons from their holdings. Firearms diverted from the armed forces of other countries also entered Peruvian territory to be used in various forms of crime, including organized crime and drug trafficking.” In Brazil, most trafficked firearms were on pathways to big cities like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, where one of the main drivers for these weapons was their use in maintaining control of areas for drug dealing.

Arms are trafficked within the illegal drug trade as either a form of currency or as a desired commodity. The involvement of firearms in the global narcotics problem continues to prolong the issue, as one continues to fuel the



other through the formation of gangs, organized crime, and other drug-related violence.

Historically, the UN has taken measures to help resolve the issues associated with arms and drug trafficking. Major international agreements regarding illegal arms trafficking include programs like the UN Program of Action (POA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. International bodies like the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) form measures like the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), which requires countries to properly mark their weapons and provides a framework for international gun tracing. Measures to counteract the effects of the illegal drug trade include programs like the 1991 UN International Drug Control Programme.

These examples, though encouraging displays of progress, still leave much to be desired in the pursuit of resolving this crisis for good. Delegates must work to formulate solutions that can tackle

both the issues of arms trafficking and drug trafficking in conjunction with each other in acknowledgement of the relationship between these two problems.

Country Policy

Latin America:

The issues of trafficking are particularly prevalent in Latin American countries. Because it is such a persistent issue, many countries have taken steps to address it. In January 2003, the countries of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela (also known as the Andean Community) adopted Decision 552 and approved a plan to crack down on illicit arms trafficking. Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela (also known as the Mercosur states) focused on resolving the problems associated with small arms trafficking, namely urban violence and drug trafficking. Brazil in particular has been active in working with nongovernmental



organizations in order to prevent the trafficking from becoming more severe.

However, the efforts around gun control as a whole are still lacking. Latin American governments have played only a mixed role in the numerous treaties, international agreements and other related initiatives undertaken by the international community regarding the small arms trade. Furthermore, one of the most significant and well-organized illicit arms-trafficking networks in the world exists within the ongoing conflict in Colombia. The resulting arms race between rebels, paramilitaries, and regular citizens has had a drastic impact on public security in the country.

Europe:

The European Union (EU) has recognized that firearms are the “lifeblood of organised crime in Europe” and that they “facilitate the trade in illegal drugs”. In 2014, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, better known as Europol, estimated that

there were almost half a million lost or stolen firearms in the EU. European governments continue to try and disrupt criminal markets and provide financial support to law enforcement and research on arms trafficking. For example, Europol has a “Weapon & Explosives” project supporting cross-border investigations and tracing of firearms. Because the market for firearms in the EU is relatively modest in size, trafficking occurs on a smaller scale than other areas of the world.

However, recent terrorist attacks in Europe have spurred initiatives to concentrate efforts in preventing weapons trafficking. The European Counter-Terrorism Centre (ECTC) participates and helps facilitate information-sharing and multilateral cooperation with regard to monitoring arms trafficking in the context of anti-terrorism.

Asia:

In West and Central Asia, drug trafficking remains a significant issue. Afghanistan dominates the



worldwide opium market. The “Balkan route” through Iran, Turkey, and southeastern Europe is a key factor in this; the total value of illicit opiates trafficked on this route is estimated to amount to around \$28 billion U.S. dollars per year.

In East Asia, drug trafficking has grown in recent years as law enforcement struggles to keep up with the expansion of organized criminal groups and their business of trafficking narcotics across national borders. The 2009-2014 Regional Programme for East Asia and the Pacific covers UNODC work in the region in the 34 countries and territories across East Asia. It encompasses the UNODC’s response to illicit trafficking as whole, including both drug and arms trafficking.

In Southeast Asia, illicit movement of small arms have historically had a significant impact on political and economic stability. They fuelled an already expansive drug-related black market, discouraged foreign investment, and undermined the strength of still-developing

democratic governments by encouraging corruption. The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) was worked at a nongovernmental level to conduct research and dedicate its resources towards the eradication of small arms trafficking.

Africa:

Currently, approximately 30 million firearms are being circulated through the African continent. The illegal arms trade, which can be partially blamed for the persistence of wars across the region, continues to hinder development across Africa. Conflict frequently follows the flow of arms, and when arms are smuggled across borders, a lack of transnational cooperation between African security forces has only exacerbated the issue. In a paper published in 2006 by the Federation of American Scientists, researchers observed that only a handful of African countries have the capacity to manufacture weapons, and their output is largely insignificant in terms of the global small arms trade. Small arms are



instead stolen from government and law enforcement forces, looted from state armories, purchased from corrupt soldiers, and/or stolen from private owners. All these weapons fuel the problem of drug trafficking. A 2013 UNODC report put the annual cost of drugs trafficked through West Africa at \$1.25 billion.

The United States:

The illegal trade has had a profound impact on the U.S. and continues to remain an unresolved issue. Illegal drug abuse cost American society \$181 billion per year in health care costs, lost workplace productivity, law enforcement, and legal costs. Over thirty percent of all criminal offenses in 2013 were related to drug trafficking, and over twenty-two thousand cases of drug trafficking were reported in the same year. The demand for illicit drugs in the U.S. fuels the expansion of criminal organizations, and illicit arms dealers play key roles in black markets from which drug traffickers procure their weapons.

Historically, U.S. federal law enforcement agencies have intercepted large numbers of weapons being smuggled to countries like China, Russia, Mexico, the Philippines, Somalia, Turkmenistan, and Yemen. Furthermore, the U.S. State Department's SA/LW Destruction Program has facilitated the destruction of over 800,000 light weapons and 80 million rounds of ammunition in 23 countries to combat arms trafficking.

Questions to Consider

What is the relationship between arms trafficking and the illegal drug trade in your country?

How can you identify the root causes of arms trafficking in your country? What steps can be taken to address these root causes?

What preventive measures can be taken to counter the current illicit drug trafficking problem in your country?



What institutional changes must be made, if any, in order to prevent arms trafficking?

How can trafficking be traced without unlawfully infringing upon international standards and/or citizens' rights?

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