

**Saint Andrews Model United Nations conference 2018**

**DISEC**

**Chairs :**

**Luke Chan**, Director

**Chahnaz Lagha**, Assistant Director

**Sarah Kroll**, Assistant Director

**Topics :**

1. Nuclear Proliferation
2. Space Militarization

**WELCOME LETTER**

A warm welcome to the delegates of the DISEC committee at SaintMUN 2018! We are Luke Chan, Chahnaz Lagha, and Sarah Kroll, and are delighted to chair this committee.

Luke is a 3rd year student studying international relations at the University of Edinburgh. He has extensive experience in Model UN, both as a delegate, a chair, and a crisis backroom staffer. He is very excited to see what the delegates have to offer at this year’s SaintMUN!

Chahnaz is a history and translation student currently spending an exchange year in Edinburgh. She has been MUNing since 2015 and chaired at varied conferences in Europe. This will be her second SaintMUN and she is very much looking forward to an exciting committee and conference.

Sarah has been involved with MUN for over eight years in the UK, Canada, and Ireland as a delegate, chair, and organizer. She graduated from St Andrews in 2016 with a degree in International Relations and Classical Studies, and is now pursuing a graduate entry accelerated law degree at the University of Edinburgh. Her research interests are the interplay of politics, religion, and gender, as well as international humanitarian law.

The DISEC committee handles issues related to international peace and is therefore of the utmost importance. Both discussed topics, namely nuclear proliferation and space militarization, are to be dealt with as all of the world’s citizens are concerned. The Iranian nuclear program, the DPRK vs USA issues, or the unsanctioned nuclear activities of Israel, Pakistan, and India are among the topics that should be brought up over the debates.

Furthermore, if space militarization was seen as futuristic until a few decades ago, global powers are staunchly working on enhancing and developing weaponry in outer space. Such a topic is captivating as it is not usually discussed within MUN DISEC simulations and we cannot wait to listen to the delegates’ opinions on this issue.

We worked hard to provide delegates with a detailed study guide. We expect you to use it well, and to utilize its varied information to find fields to explore, especially during the Moderated Caucuses. We believe that the more information you have, the more research you do, the more your debates will be lively and your final resolutions will be complete and efficient.

We are truthfully looking forward to what will be an entertaining conference, and to have the best time in Fife!

Best regards,

The Chairs of DISEC

**INTRODUCTION TO THE DISEC COMMITTEE**

DISEC is the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. It deals with disarmament, global security challenges, regulation of armaments, promotion of cooperative arrangements, measures destined to strengthen stability and threats to peace that could affect the international community. It works on finding solutions to those challenges.

All threats and international security matters are dealt with bearing in mind the Charter of the United Nations and the rules and principles of this organization. The very first GA resolution, “Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy”, was adopted on the 24th of January 1946 in London by the DISEC committee.

The DISEC committee usually works along other institutions or UN bodies, including but not limited to the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the United Nations Human Rights Council, the Conference on Disarmament (based in Geneva), the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other international and regional organizations.

The real-life DISEC sessions are structured into the following stages: general debate, thematic discussions, and action on drafts. The Model UN counterpart follows this pattern by discussing the topics through the formal debate, moderated and unmoderated caucuses, and the votes on resolutions.

**TOPIC A : NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION**

**Introduction to the topic**

World War II came to an end in 1945 after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The nuclear proliferation risk and the development of weaponry throughout the world increased, which appeared as a major threat to international peace and security.

Former American president Dwight D. Eisenhower suggested in 1953 through “Atoms for Peace” speech a contract to all nations. Eisenhower’s proposed contract included renouncing nuclear weaponry in order to use the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. As such, the International Atomic Energy Agency - IAEA was created in 1957 to supervise the use of nuclear energy. These measures did not prevent the number of countries with nuclear armament from growing. Indeed, the USSR in 1949, the United Kingdom in 1952, France in 1960, and PRC in 1964 all conducted nuclear weapons tests. In 1968, the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of the Nuclear Weapons was signed on the 1st of July 1968.

**History:**

While it is generally thought that concerns relating to atomic energy and nuclear weapons are addressed by the IAEA, UNODA, and independent bi- or multi-lateral negotiations and treaties, nuclear disarmament has always been a substantial concern for the First Committee. The General Assembly’s very first resolution, establishing a commission to deal with issues raised by the discovery of atomic energy, was adopted in January of 1946 on the recommendation of DISEC. The importance of this topic to the UN is evident in the multi-committee and agency approach to questions concerning nuclear weapons, energy, and disarmament. DISEC’s wide remit covering both disarmament and international security issues and its high level of interaction with the UNSC’s mandate puts the committee in a unique coordinating position. As the topic is so broad, we would strongly encourage delegates to stay as focused as possible and ensure all actions recommended are within the committee’s powers.

The history of nuclear weapons as the defining hallmark of total warfare needs little explanation. The devastation and traumatic aftermath of their usage in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have left a lasting mark on the international conscience. While these weapons have never since been used on a civilian population, states have continued to develop and build these weapons for their value to deter military rivals. Currently China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States are declared nuclear weapons states, listed in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT – 1968). It is worth considering the impact of this list on the composition of the Security Council’s permanent five veto members. India, Pakistan, and North Korea are also known to be nuclear weapon states, and it is broadly assumed that Israel also possesses nuclear weapons and technology, though the state maintains a policy of deliberate ambiguity.

Following the well-known events of World War II, nuclear tensions continued to escalate throughout the Cold War, broadly defined as the period following WWII until the fall of the Soviet Union, though the term was coined by Bernard Baruch in 1947, the same year India and Pakistan gained independence from the United Kingdom and the United Nations ordered the withdrawal of forces from the Korean peninsula. Throughout the Cold War the United States continued to modernize and enlarge its arsenal, building over 70,000 warheads – more than all other nuclear states combined.

The Soviet Union quickly caught up with the United States following an espionage campaign during and after WWII, testing its first nuclear device in 1949. The USSR created the most powerful explosive ever detonated, Tsar Bomba, with a theoretical yield of 100 megatons (3,000 times the size of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs) resulting in an 8 kilometer wide fireball and 64km high mushroom cloud in 1961. A technical knowledge of weaponry is not necessary to appreciate the potential devastation the deployment of such a device could cause – the heat of the explosion could have caused third-degree burns over 100km away from ground zero, and damage to property was reported as far as 900 km away from the test site. The Soviet Union has built roughly 55,000 warheads since 1949.

While weapons are of course built in various sizes and with varying technology for more or less precise targeting and destructive power, this information is presented to impress upon delegates how greatly nuclear weapons technology has changed, and how nuclear warfare would be an unthinkable pursuit incredibly far removed from - and more extreme than - any images we have of the destruction in WWII. However, this is not a Cold War simulation committee, and strategies have changed.

South Africa also produced six weapons in the 1980s, but dismantled them in the 1990s. There was detection of a covert test in the Indian Ocean, and there is strong speculation that it was a test by Israel in collaboration with South Africa, though this has never been confirmed. South Africa is now a party to the NPT. While Israel has not acknowledged any nuclear capability, it is presumed to have had ‘rudimentary but deliverable’ nuclear weapons as early as the 1960s. This ambiguous policy is largely seen as an attempt to gain the benefits of deterrence with minimal political cost. There is renewed speculation that Israel still likely possesses up to 200 weapons, and nuclear capable ballistic and submarine-launched missiles.

Various crises during the Cold War, both nuclear and non-nuclear, hugely complicated matters. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 is largely considered the closest the world came to the outbreak of nuclear war. A covert CIA plan under the Kennedy administration to oust Castro resulted in preparations to install Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba with the capacity to target the US. While Khrushchev eventually backed down, Castro later stated that he would have been more than prepared to use nuclear weapons, as it was taken for granted that it would have become a nuclear war anyways. In a less well known example, it was also revealed in 2008 under the Freedom of Information act that the US Air Force was very narrowly overruled in a plan to use nuclear weapons against China in 1958, during a confrontation over Taiwan.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, Russia drastically cut military spending, and the US has shifted to a policy of Stockpile Stewardship. This policy means no new weapons have been developed and no weapons have been tested, but the existing arsenal is subject to a program of reliability testing and maintenance as their components age and their likelihood of failing or acting in unpredictable ways rises. States are of course quite guarded about disclosing the full extent and capabilities of their nuclear arsenals, but it is estimated that the US possesses a current strategic arsenal of 1800 deployed nuclear warheads and stockpile of roughly 4000. In the early post war years funding was put into helping former Soviet states eliminate their nuclear sites, and to assist Russia in inventorying and securing their stockpile.

In 1992 former Soviet nuclear states – Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan – signed the Lisbon Protocol and agreed to join the NPT. Russia as the Soviet Union’s successor took control of the Belarusian and Kazakh weapons, while the Ukraine opted to dispose of all weapons in its territory (with Russian assistance in the disassembling process) in exchange for territorial security guarantees from Russia, the UK, and US, supported by China and France. While this is often cited as a successful example of non-proliferation and accession to the NPT, it has conversely been interpreted as a consolidation of Russian nuclear power and control over post-Soviet states. However, while these states possessed physical control, operational control was dependent on Russian electronic Permissive Action Links.

**Previous actions**

While it is necessary to understand the historic developments and context of the development and threat of nuclear weapons, it is equally important to be familiar with the development of the international and regional framework for managing and limiting proliferation. Created by various UN and regional organizations, DISEC must respect and work with these existing treaties and programs to strengthen the existing regime.

The most pivotal instrument in the regime to control nuclear proliferation, which has already been referenced extensively, is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which aims to halt the production and spread of nuclear weapons and to encourage denuclearization. The Permanent Five are signatories, while the remaining nuclear states are not. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has withdrawn from the agreement. This limited adherence to the Treaty potentially compromises its full application and jeopardizes international cooperation and transparency. An important aspect is the treaty is the application of safeguards developed by the IAEA for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The economic, environmental, and developmental importance of nuclear energy is held to be an inherent right of states, and the NPT establishes the IAEA as the main body handling nuclear related matters. As such, DISEC must be careful not the infringe on the competences of the IAEA and must be careful to work with the existing regime if questions of energy and technology arise in conjunction with issues arising within DISEC’s mandate concerning disarmament and security. The United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is another important subsidiary body that reports directly to the committee and helps promote nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, among other disarmament projects. It provides substantial organizational support, and any efforts of the First Committee should utilize these bodies to their full potential.

A discussion of relevant organizations is incomplete without a mention of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO’s role as a security alliance includes tracking and assessing member’s nuclear capabilities and assisting in the destruction of stockpiles, yet it also serves as a nuclear alliance and facilitates US nuclear sharing programs, stationing US weapons across European states. While NATO is certainly the most controversial, other regional mechanisms such as the Asian Nuclear Safety Network and recent declarations by the Organization of American States aim to foster dialogue and ensure nuclear-free areas in their regions. The Non-Aligned Movement, comprised of states not aligned with either the US or USSR in the cold war, has also released relevant declarations with the specific goal of supporting regional governance frameworks in the modern world of disarmament. Civil society engagement also play a large role in the process towards non-proliferation. Various initiatives, NGOs, and research organizations aid policymakers and play increasingly prominent roles.

Another key statutory instrument is the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, from 2005. It is very much worth reading for its clear definitions of nuclear weapons, devices, radioactive substances, etc. and its outline of rights and obligations of the member states. It is comparatively modern, and applies to both individuals and member states – it discusses nuclear terrorism and the supplying of terrorist groups with nuclear capability. This shift beyond state-centrism in the non-proliferation dialogue is an important area which requires further development.

It is also worth considering the existing drafted but unenforced efforts at strengthening the nonproliferation regime. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed in 1996, but is not in force. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, one of the most ambitious projects yet to place an outright ban on nuclear weapons (which is unlikely to be supported by nuclear states but could set a strong persuasive precedent for international customary law) was opened for signature recently in 2017.

**Current situation**

● NWS vs NNWS

The NPT aims at combating nuclear proliferation, but does not ban nuclear weapons altogether. During the Cold War, the international security system was based on the "balance of terror" born of nuclear deterrence. In the face of the risk of reprisals, each bloc refrained from attacking the other, which is called "mutually assured destruction" (MAD) by geostrategic specialists and scholars.

The NPT does not derogate from this framework and distinguishes the nuclear-weapon States (NWS), which must have conducted nuclear tests before 1 January 1967, from those that do not own nuclear weapons (NNWS). The Cold War five NWS were also the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (United States, USSR, China, United Kingdom, France). The NPT prohibits the NWS from providing nuclear weapons or the means of making them available to the NNWS, which, in return, have no right to manufacture or acquire them. NNWSs, on the other hand, must encourage the development of civilian nuclear energy among the NNWS.

Article VI finally refers to the goal of "general and complete" nuclear disarmament for which all signatories must conduct negotiations of "good faith" that must lead to a "close" date to a treaty on the subject. No such treaty has yet emerged, even though arms-control negotiations are taking place regularly, including between the United States and Russia.

● More nuclear states in the 21st century than in 1968

Despite the signing of the NPT by 189 of the 200 states recognized by the UN, several countries have adopted nuclear weapons since 1968, bringing the total number to nine. In addition to the five NWS, three non-signatory states - Israel, India, Pakistan - acquired the bomb, while North Korea signed the NPT before it emerged in 2003 and made its first nuclear test in 2006. The NPT has nonetheless been effective. Three countries that had a nuclear program - South Africa, Argentina, Brazil - have also abandoned it and joined the NPT.

● DPRK, Iran: will their military nuclear programs truly come to an end?

On the one hand, Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un have reached an agreement but these are only declarations of intent, not a binding text. On the other hand, there is the Iran agreement, from which the United States has nevertheless withdrawn.

● The NPT facing multilateralism

The cases of North Korea and Iran epitomize the crisis of multilateralism. The strength of the NPT during the Cold War came from the fact that it had the support of both then-great powers. But since 1990, the United States, while retaining the substance of the NPT aims, has engaged in a unilateral process. For instance, one can think about the examples of Iraq, Iran or North Korea as "rogue states". It’s a designation that is proper to the United States and not to the UN Security Council. Iraq had accepted the game of disarmament, but Saddam Hussein was overthrown in 2003. It appears that for authoritarian regimes, the atomic bomb is the best life insurance. In the North Korean nuclear program, there is a heavy American responsibility.

● Horizontal vs vertical proliferation

Two kinds of proliferation are generally distinguished. The horizontal is characterized by a growing number of nuclear actors, and the vertical by already nuclear states that acquire more weapons and develop their arsenal. Regarding the latter, nearly 15,000 warheads are possessed together by Russia and the United States, which represents more than 92% of the total number of warheads in the world. This figure is huge, but it nevertheless corresponds to a drop compared to the peak of 1986 (69368 warheads). For forty years, the big two have signed several bilateral agreements, including SALT (1972), START (1991), SORT (2002) and NEW START (2011).

It is still necessary to distinguish inside nuclear weapons the "strategic" ones, responsible for ensuring nuclear deterrence, and “tactical" weapons. The latter, less powerful, are intended to be used on battlefields.

In February 2018, the United States published its Nuclear Posture Review, a document setting out their nuclear doctrine, the latest version of which discusses the development of these tactical weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin also presented many of these weapons in May 2018 in his annual speech.

● Should the NPT be terminated?

In 2017, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the ICAN campaign, an associative initiative also promoted by states that voted at the UN General Assembly a new, mostly symbolic, outright prohibition treaty on nuclear weapons. They recalled that the NPT was discriminating because it allows five states to be endowed while the disarmament component of the NPT is not respected. This new treaty is not an alternative. It could, on the contrary, weaken the regime established by the NPT. Proponents of the ban treaty target the public opinion of states under the US 'nuclear umbrella', at the risk of endangering the security of states confronted by neighbors with expansionist ambitions, which demonstrates that disarmament can thus weaken Japan or South Korea against North Korea.

**Bloc positions**

* Iran

2002 is a major turning point as the international community started suspecting the Islamic Republic of Iran of seizing the nuclear energy. Iranian dissident Ali Reza Jafarzadeh revealed the construction of enriched uranium and heavy water sites, respectively in Natanz and Arak. Both sites were confirmed through satellite images and close IAEA inspections in Iran. From 2003 onwards, the Islamic Republic pursued on the development of its nuclear program.

One has to bear in mind that Iran’s willingness to develop its nuclear program is directly related to the Iran/Iraq war, which occurred between 1980 and 1988. The military power that is Israel, called “Little Satan” by the Islamic Republic, is also another reason as to why Iran is investing in nuclear energy.

Legally, Iran has no right to use its nuclear military power. It can merely utilize nuclear power for civil purposes. The civil nuclear energy includes natural uranium enriched in small proportions (3%). Contrary to that, the natural uranium used for military purposes is heavily enriched (90%) through an elaborate process. The steps of this process are regulated by the Treaty of Non Proliferation, which has been signed and ratified by the Islamic Republic. Iran has thus the right of enriching its uranium for civil purposes, and must abide by the international supervision of the IAEA.

The first negotiations aiming at convincing Iran of abandoning its military nuclear program began in 2003 and were led by the EU three (France, Germany, United Kingdom - the then most powerful EU member states). Having reached what looked like an agreement by the end of 2004, the situation worsened in 2005 after the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as President of the Islamic Republic. The latter claimed the right for the Islamic Republic to develop its civil nuclear program. In 2006, the EU three are joined by three world powers, namely the Russian Federation, the United States, and People’s Republic of China. The newly-created negotiation group is called “P5 + 1” (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council + Germany). The situation did not get any better, and international economic sanctions were imposed on the Islamic Republic. In 2013 nonetheless, Hassan Rohani was elected as President of the Iran and negotiations were resumed. Following the 2013 Geneva agreements, a compromise has been reached on the 14th of July 2015 in Vienna.

The Iran nuclear deal is composed of no less than 100 pages and rests on three pillars:

* Harsh limitation on Iranian nuclear program for a duration of no less than a decade
* Removal of international sanctions against Iran
* Strengthening of IAEA nuclear program control
* DPRK

The North Korean nuclear weaponry is a particularly controversial diplomatic, as far as the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Japan, and the United States are concerned. The DPRK was part of the NPT until the 10th of January 2003 when it retired from the treaty after being accused of developing an illegal nuclear program since 1989. Several diplomatic discussions gathering the DPRK, the ROK, the United States, Japan, the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China were held over the decades, and the North Korean threat seemed to have been slowed down. Nevertheless, it eventually conducted nuclear trials on the 9th of October 2006, and a second one on the 25th of May 2009. The third one occurred on the 12th of February 2013. North Korea was suspected of developing intercontinental ballistic missiles. The international community has condemned such nuclear trials, given the fact that neither Kim Jong-Il nor Kim Jong-Un showed the willingness of abiding by the international agreements on nuclear proliferation. The last nuclear test occurred on the 3rd of September 2017.On 8 March 2018, it was announced that both heads of the United States and the DPRK would meet in the hope of achieving permanent denuclearization. Negotiations are still being conducted.

* Iraq

Under the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein, Iraq was accused of possessing weapons of mass destruction. The Iraqi army was allegedly known for using chemical weapons against Kurdish and Iranian civilians during and after the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). This weapons of mass destruction program, considered clandestine, was severely hampered by UN sanctions against Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War.

Triggering argument of the Iraq war, underpinned by the so-called revelations of Tony Blair's administration presented by Colin Powell; the effective continuation of this program in the 2000s and the presence of these weapons later will not be confirmed by the UN inspections carried out under the direction of Hans Blix who will indicate that weapons of mass destruction were not found in Iraq. Between 2003 and 2011, more than 5,000 chemical munitions were discovered by US occupation forces. However, in 2013, Hans Blix reiterated that “In Iraq, some countries have tried to eradicate weapons of mass destruction that, in fact, did not exist".

* Israel

The Israeli nuclear program is officially destined to atomic research, despite the fact that sources have proven that Israel developed atomic weaponry. The state of Israel refused that its nuclear military sites get inspected by the IAEA. The latter institution rejected several times the resolution of 18 countries urging Israel to put its nuclear sites under the supervision of the IAEA.

Israel is believed to possess between 200 and 400 nuclear warheads, which can be transported through ballistic missiles, warships, and warplanes. Israel produces no less than 10 nuclear bombs yearly. The country developed up to 950 kgs of plutonium since the beginning of its nuclear program.

In addition to the DPRK, India, and Pakistan, Israel is one of the four countries that possesses nuclear weapons despite not having signed the NPT.

* KSA

In May 2014, the US press reported that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had asked Pakistan, whose nuclear program it had financed for thirty years, a return on investment in the form of atomic bombs available at will, but which "finished goods" would remain in Pakistan. Two years earlier, a first BBC investigation had already revealed a nuclear deal between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The goal of the Kingdom was to always be ahead of Iran and Israel, technology-wise. At the time, Amos Yadlin, head of Israel's military intelligence commented that if Iran had the bomb, "the Saudis will not wait a month, they have already paid for the bomb, they will go to Pakistan and they will take what they need ". The increasingly tense relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran has stoked fears of a regional nuclear arms race.

* India

Having taken advantage of the Atoms for peace program launched by US President Eisenhower, India has been using nuclear energy for civil purposes until 1964 when Indian President Nehru - who was in favor of a civil nuclear program rather than a military one - passed away. Besides, the People’s Republic of China launched a nuclear military program in 1964.

The 1971 war between India and Pakistan urged the Indian leaders to further the country’s military nuclear program. On 18 May 1974 India realized a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) and thus became a military power, although not recognized by the NPT. On 11 and 13 May 1998, India realized five nuclear tests.

Nowadays, India has been internationally recognized as a nuclear power, having submitted its civil nuclear sites to IAEA control, which represents a challenge to the NPT as the country can resume both its civil and military nuclear programs and become an official military nuclear power despite not being a signatory state.

* Pakistan

Shortly after Pakistan was defeated in 1971 in the war against India, then President of the Islamic Republic Zulfikar Ali Bhutto launched a nuclear research program. Forty years later, Pakistan got hold of a nuclear arsenal that was acquired with the help of France. The French Republic secretly provided Pakistan with nuclear reprocessing technology in 1976. The People’s Republic of China and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea provided assistance, respectively for the development of the A-bomb and missiles.

The Indian nuclear tests that occurred on May 11 and 13, 1998 confirmed the detention of a nuclear arsenal by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In the beginning of the 21st century, Pakistan has significantly increased its nuclear arsenal, both qualitatively and quantitatively. This force has increased from 70 to about 110 warheads in ten years. It may be inferior to the Indian nuclear power, but Pakistan has never hidden that in case of conventional attack, its arsenal could be used first. In this regard, Pakistan has developed a land component with Chinese and North Korean technical assistance and air force.

* PRC

The People’s Republic of China currently has a growing nuclear triad (missiles, strategic bombers, SSB/SSBN - ballistic missile submarines -) and the question arises on whether its doctrine will become more bellicose in the next decade, despite a policy of minimal deterrence and non-employment policy. China is indeed the only official nuclear power that increased its arsenal and has not carried out unilateral disarmament measures. The exact size of its nuclear arsenal is difficult to assess, but it is generally estimated at 200 deployed nuclear weapons, bearing in mind that the size of the supplies remains unknown.

**Questions a resolution should consider**

* What constitutes the violation of the NPT? How could such actions be responded to?
* What roles should DISEC play in reinforcing the NPT and other laws on nuclear proliferation?
* How could the UN reinforce controls over nuclear proliferation programs of the countries that haven’t signed the NPT?
* How should member states of DISEC respond to potential threats to international peace and security created by the proliferation of nuclear power?
* How could the DISEC cooperate with other international bodies to prevent NPT violations and illegal use of nuclear power?

**Further readings**

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/72/resolutions.shtml>

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/institutions/disarmament-commission/>

<http://www.unidir.org/publications>

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**TOPIC B : SPACE MILITARISATION**

**Introduction**

*“The exploration and use of outer space … shall be for peaceful purposes and shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. … [The] prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security.”*

-Prevention of an arms race in outer space, United Nations General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/55/32, January 2001

Early space exploration was strongly rooted in motivations concerning the militarization of space, evident during the 20th century when the USSR-US space race provided both countries an opportunity to demonstrate ballistic missiles technology among other technologies and the potential for military applications. Moreover, the imaging and communication satellites among other military spacecraft that provided the US with indispensable tactical information further serve as evidence of this military based technological advancement. As the technological capacity of states developed upon entering the new millennium, the conversation has once again been opened surrounding the use of arms in outer space.

While there lacks a definition for space militarization that draws an uncontested consensus, any general definition of space militarization will concern the deployment of weaponry and other military technologies in outer space which have the capacity to attack either space or ground targets. This further includes any weaponry land-, sea- or air-based able to damage space systems (e.g. satellites, their ground stations and communication receivers).

**History of the Topic**

Space Treaties

Modern space exploration is guided by two treaties: the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, and the Space Preservation Treaty, passed in 2014.

1967 Outer Space Treaty

The 1967 Outer space treaty serves as a the basic legal framework for space activities, hence is also the basis for international space law. Considered by the legal subcommittee in 1966, it was later agreed upon in the general assembly. This treaty specifically allows for space militarization. While **it does prohibit weapons of mass destruction in orbit**, it does not prevent states from any other type of weapon being stationed in space, bar the surface of planets, moons, asteroids and/or any other celestial body.

The treaty can be summarized by the UNOOSA in the following points:

* the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all mankind;
* outer space shall be free for exploration and use by all States;
* outer space is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means;
* States shall not place nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit or on celestial bodies or station them in outer space in any other manner;
* the Moon and other celestial bodies shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes;
* Astronauts shall be regarded as the envoys of mankind;
* States shall be responsible for national space activities whether carried out by governmental or non-governmental activities;
* States shall be liable for damage caused by their space objects; and
* States shall avoid harmful contamination of space and celestial bodies.

(<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/spacelaw/treaties/introouterspacetreaty.html>)

As of July 2017, 107 countries are parties to the treaty, while another 23 have signed the treaty but have not completed ratification (UNOODA, 2017). Iran in particular has signed but not ratified the treaty. Notably, the Republic of China (RoC) (Taiwan) ratified this treaty prior to the GA vote to transfer the RoC’s seat to the People’s Republic of China (PRoC) in 1971. The PRoC has since brought contention to the legality of the RoC’s ratification however the RoC remains committed to the requirements of the treaty, and the United States has declared the RoC to still be “bound by its obligations”.

Space Preservation Treaty

The Space Preservation Treaty was proposed resolution in 2006 at the UN General Assembly against all space weapons without exception. This was developed into the *Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects* proposed by China and Russia in 2008. The US remained opposed to the draft treaty due to security concerns, primarily citing a state’s inherent right to self-defense. However, despite the US opposition, three draft resolutions were passed in 2017 aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

*Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space* (document A/C. 1/72/L.54)

With 121 in favor to 5 against (France, Israel, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States), and 45 abstentions, the GA urged the Conference on Disarmament to “agree on a balanced program of work that included the immediate commencement of negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

*Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space* (document A/C. 1/72/L.3)

With 175 in favor to none against and 2 abstentions (Israel, United States), the GA also approved this draft resolution calling upon states (particularly those with major space capabilities) to “refrain from actions contrary to that [eponymous] goal and to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space”.

*No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space* (document A/C. 1/72/L.53)

With 122 in favor to 4 against (Georgia, Israel, Ukraine, United States) and 48 abstentions, this text was passed to “encourage all states, especially space-faring nations, to consider the possibility of upholding, as appropriate, a political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space”.

Other notable passed texts

*Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Document A/C. 1/72/L.23)

*Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and their Destruction* (Document A/C. 1/72/L.49)

**Current Situation**

Despite the media having only recently ridiculed Donald Trump's calls for a US “Space Force”, it seems the militarization of space by world powers has been in development for some time. Within the US, US Air Force Chief of Staff General David Goldfein has warned “American forces will find themselves fighting from space “in a matter of years”, with the Pentagon having recently told Congress there was ongoing study for a “combatant command for space warfare to counter recent efforts by China and Russia to militarize Earth orbit”. In fact, the militarization of space has not actually reached a new breaking point, but instead as John Logsdon, former director of the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University states, "by saying what [Trump] said, where he said it, with the media paying attention, it caught the world's attention for something that’s been going on a long time". Logsdon further elaborates by explaining that the US already spends more on military operations in space than it spends on NASA’s $19 billion annual budget, with military communication satellites costing approximately $15 billion per year, and the National Reconnaissance Office space budget costing an addition $10 billion, putting the total the US spends on space militarization at $25 billion annually.

Outside the US, China has also invested heavily in space militarization, having in 2007 demonstrating a direct ascent anti-satellite and antiballistic missile system which could destroy most US satellites if deployed. Moreover, Russian President Vladimir Putin has spoken of a “hypersonic glide vehicle that can be launched into space, navigate on its own into Earth’s atmosphere and avoid radar and anti-missile defenses”.

Other states such as India and North Korea have also have begun development of laser-based weapons aimed at disarming satellites, electromagnetic pulse weaponry to be stationed in space capable of disrupting power grids and militarized satellites that would target other satellites. As it stands, it seems given the indispensable role satellites play in most forms of communication for all states, many of the proposed celestial weaponry target this weakness.

While the aforementioned treaties do prevent weapons of mass destruction from being deployed into space, onto the moon or other celestial bodies, no international law prohibits conventional weapons in space, or weapons that may be fired from earth into space. As such, scholars and politicians alike have theorized over potential solutions to preventing a arms race in space. However, many remain non-optimistic due to questionable behavior from even those who are signatories to the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space resolution. Intelligence communities claim China and Russia are both actively testing anti-satellite systems and making no effort in keeping this discreet, while the US (albeit not a PAROS signatory) has been questioned on the development of the X-37B since 2010.

Considering the arms race of the Cold War, nuclear proliferation theory and game theory, the future does remain seemingly bleak. Further concerns arise with the potential of future extraterrestrial resource mining. While the mining should not be considered a short-term concern due to the extraordinary costs currently still associated with it, research and development associated with the field has lowered considerably the cost of placing payload into orbit, and regulating the militarization of space could potentially make a significant impact in the long run.

**Key Bloc Positions**

United States

The US military has consistently relied on communications, intelligence, navigation missile warning and weather satellites systems for decades and their space systems remain indispensable providers of tactical information in times of conflict. Moreover, given the recent talks of the “space force” (which mostly shifts the US air force space command assets into the new branch of the military albeit needing congressional approval and being a logistically difficult to establish), it is unlikely the US will back down from their 2006 stance in favor of the militarization of space. The US was the only state to vote against the 2006 UN GA resolution *Space Preservation Treaty*. However, despite the US’s stance, the US will likely remain defensive in its approach to the militarization of space, likely focusing on protecting US space military assets.

Israel

Israel has previously received considerable economic support from the United States in the past and continues to receive aid in the form of military assistance. Moreover, out of the 83 times the US has used its veto power within the United Nations Security Council, 42 were for resolutions pertaining to Israel. As such, Israel is likely to be favorable with the stance held by the United States.

China and Russia

Having drafted and submitted *Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects* (Draft) to the UN in 2008, China and Russia have both adopted the official stance of being against space militarization. However, it should be noted that this has not prevented their continued research and development in the field of space militarization as aforementioned.

**Questions a resolution should consider:**

-How might the UN ensure the enforcement of any potential treaties regarding space militarization?

-What further precautions can be taken to prevent a ‘space arms race’?

-How might the eventual rise of extraterrestrial mining affect space militarization?

-How far does a state’s right to self-defense justify the militarization of space?

-How can DISEC further promote ‘cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments’ despite the challenges further space exploration may bring?

**Further Readings**

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<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/spacelaw/treaties/introouterspacetreaty.html>   
<https://swfound.org/media/9550/chinese_asat_fact_sheet_updated_2012.pdf>

<https://www.ft.com/reports/space-mining>

<https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/36/a36r099.htm>

<https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/proposed-prevention-arms-race-space-paros-treaty/>

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