



# **GECMUN X**

## **BACKGROUND GUIDE**

### Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)

*Regulating the use of Conventional Weapons for conflicts in the  
MENA region*

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

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Last updated on 8.20.2023

## Committee Introduction

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is one of the six committees of the United Nations General Assembly. It was founded in 1945, or when the United Nations Charter was signed, with the need for an international forum to discuss peace and security. As emphasized by the devastating impact of WWII, it was created to prevent future conflicts and strengthen international relations. DISEC cooperates with UN organizations such as United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament to achieve its mandate of “promoting the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.” This committee is responsible for dealing with “disarmament, global challenges, and threats to peace that affect the international community” and “seek solutions to achieve international security.”

For the past years, DISEC has worked towards reducing the use of Conventional Weapons to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), preventing the spread of terrorism and the risks of cyberwarfare, and promoting the peaceful use of space. DISEC is the only main committee of the UN General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage, which means that summaries of speeches and actions from previous conference meetings can be used as references. While the committee cannot directly require the countries or the international community to take specific actions, it can recommend actions to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). In order to promote stability and ensure international security, delegates are expected to hold diplomatic discussions, come up with comprehensive solutions, and draft resolutions that restrict the use of conventional weapons in conflicts in the Middle East and Africa.

## Agenda Introduction

The agenda calls for attention to the Conventional Weapons usage in conflicts in the Middle Eastern and Northern Africa Region (MENA). MENA is facing armed conflicts including territorial conflicts (Israel-Palestine), political conflicts (Saudi Arabia-Iran), terrorism (Taliban in Afghanistan), civil wars (Yemen and Syria), and many more. Most conflicts in the region involve conventional weapons. The lethality of the weapons are evident with an estimate of 937,000 people were killed in conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, and Pakistan. Those numbers do not include people who are injured, displaced, or dead due to a lack of resources and destroyed infrastructure by the use of Conventional Weapons.

Conventional Weapons are defined as “weapons in conflict and crime settings that encompass a wide range of equipment” by the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs. Its broad definition includes all weapons that are not Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) such as small arms (guns), light weapons (rockets and grenades), landmines, ammunition, and artillery into the scope of debate. Although these weapons do not wipe out countries as WMDs would, violence and destruction brought by the usage of these weapons can not be undermined. Conventional Weapons are often associated with genocides, massacres, violent extremist activities (terrorism), and wars between groups. The United Nations Security Council has reported that more than 50% of the deaths in conflict from 2010 to 2015, approximately more than 100 thousand people, were caused by small arms and light weapons. The inhumane and extreme uses of Conventional Weapons violate International Humanitarian Law, and the Geneva Convention as well as make it harder to fulfill the UN Charters, specifically Chapter VI on Pacific Settlement of Disputes as the weapons not only impact those directly in conflict but also civilians in the conflict zones.

The United Nations has attempted to address the issue on multiple levels by implementing the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCCW), the United Nations Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA), the United Nations Firearms Protocol (UNFP), and many peacekeeping efforts. Despite these efforts, the blind and unethical uses of conventional weapons continue to be an agenda yet to be resolved.

Especially in the MENA region, the regulation of conventional weapons and immediate attention to the issue is dire. The many weapons listed under the term ‘Conventional Weapons’ call upon revisiting the former Conventions and reestablishing the standards of unethical uses of Conventional Weapons. The scope of the issue does not limit itself to regulating the usage of Conventional Weapons in immediate conflict but also regards the prevention of arms trade and disarmament

after the conflict. Arms trade continues to escalate the issue by increasing the supply of conventional weapons. Landmines and weapon fragments continue to threaten civilians even when a conflict has ended. The constant political and social tensions in the MENA region also play an important role in resolving the issue. The committee must address all aspects of the agenda to successfully achieve DISEC's mandate for peace and security.

## Letters from the Chairs

On behalf of the Secretariat and the Executive Board, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the DISEC committee. We, head chair Liam Junseo Kim, deputy chair Anna Kim, and associate chair Iris Kang, extend a warm welcome to you as a delegate to our esteemed committee at GECMUN X. All three of us are from KISJ, and have been building our career in MUN conferences, both local and international, over the past multiple years. We are also the three best delegate award nominees from GECMUN IX! We are thrilled to have you join us in our collective pursuit of promoting global security and disarmament.

DISEC, as the premier committee of the United Nations General Assembly, holds a vital position in addressing issues of international peace and security, with a particular focus on the regulation of conventional weapons. Together, we will navigate the challenges posed by the proliferation of conventional weapons and work towards innovative solutions to foster stability and reduce the risk of violence in the Middle Eastern and African region, the agenda for this year's DISEC committee. Throughout our committee sessions, you will have the opportunity to explore and debate complex issues that have far-reaching implications for our global community. We hope for DISEC to be a platform for comprehensive and inclusive discussions, encompassing the perspectives of all 22 member states within our committee.

Your presence as a delegate will play a pivotal role in representing your nation's stance on disarmament and security matters. Your unique insights and contributions will enrich our deliberations and further strengthen the collective efforts of the committee. Us chairs also aim to create an environment of delight and cheer, believing that Model United Nations conferences can function as a unique space for networking, forming lifelong friendships, and cultivating a sense of camaraderie among delegates. With this in mind, we encourage you to embrace this experience with open minds and hearts, engaging in fruitful exchanges with fellow delegates from different backgrounds and perspectives.

Should you have any questions or need assistance in preparation for the conference, please do not hesitate to reach out to the chairs.

Once again, welcome to the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC). Let us embark on this memorable journey together, making a positive impact and contributing to a safer and more peaceful world.

Best Regards,

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## Key Terms

### **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

A collection of treaties that outline standards for violence committed during armed conflicts. The laws generally address two issues: protection of those not involved, or no longer involved in the conflict (veterans, civilians, etc.) and regulations for the use of certain weapons and military tactics. The International Humanitarian Law is, however, limited to only armed conflict with two or more engaged parties. Due to its scope, IHL does not apply to terrorism, independently organized non-state activities, internal disputes (civil war), or tensions without direct conflict. Some laws within the International Humanitarian Law include but are not limited to:

- 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Protocols
- 1972 Biological Weapons Convention
- 1980 Conventional Weapons Convention and its five protocols
- 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention
- 1997 Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines
- Hague Conventions
- **1949 Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols**

The majority of International Humanitarian Law is based on the Geneva Convention's 4 chapters and its 3 Additional Protocols. As violations of the Geneva Convention are considered dehumanizing, the International Court of Justice may punish the acts of violation as war crimes under its jurisdiction. Chapter I & II of the Convention addresses treating the wounded in both land and sea combat; Chapter III discusses prisoners of war; Chapter IV discusses the protection of civilians. The Geneva Convention has a legally binding effect on all nations as it has been signed unanimously by all 196 member states of the United Nations, including the 22 member states of this committee.

### **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**

Small Arms and Light Weapons refer to weapons aimed at individuals, unlike weapons such as mines that may cause more casualties at once. Some weapons classified as SALW are guns, pistols, submachine guns, and grenade launchers. SALW usage and production are highly correlated with the illicit arms trade and arms trafficking, threatening the safety of civilians and hindering any peacekeeping efforts.

### **Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)**

Also known as the "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to

Have Indiscriminate Effects or the Inhumane Weapons Convention”, the CCW aims to limit any usage or excessive production of weapons that cause inhumane and unnecessary suffering during warfare. Some weapons restricted under the CCW are mines, booby traps, incendiary weapons (weapons that cause fire), and more. In addition, it defines weapons and clarifies the scope of which weapons apply to the definition provided. However, the CCW only has 50 signatories and has shown little impact in means of its implementation.

### **Middle Eastern and North African Region (MENA)**

MENA region is an acronym commonly referred to countries around the Middle East and North Africa. As it is a region, not an association of countries, the definition is flexible and the countries enlisted to be in the region also differ. The list of countries below are those in this committee and are according to the 2021 UNICEF classification of countries in the MENA region.

### **Illicit Arms trade**

Illicit arms trade, or arms trafficking (gunrunning) refers to the illegal trade of weapons across borders and often is highly correlated with other illegal activities such as funding/supplying terrorist groups. As conventional weapons not produced legally are being distributed for illegal uses by criminal organizations, border control and regulation of illicit arms trade remains a crucial step to alleviate the situation. Although unconfirmed, some governments are accused of supplying weapons to groups in internal conflicts. Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Turkey are some countries serving as the source for the flow of arms.

### **Arms Trade Treaty**

A multilateral agreement that aims to regulate the trade of conventional weapons. So far, the treaty has been ratified by 113 states as well as 28 additional signatories. While it acknowledges the right of each state to possess weapons in means of self-defense by the United Nations Charters Article 51, it also regulates the trade of “Warships, Battle tanks, Armored combat vehicles, Large-caliber artillery systems, Combat Aircraft, Attack helicopters, Warships, Missiles and missile launchers, Small arms, and light weapons”.

### **United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA)**

A system created to implement strategies for regulating inhumane uses and trafficking of small arms amongst different UN bodies. Established in 1998, CASA fosters the collaborative action of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations International Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for the united cause of actions on Small Arms. CASA also



focuses on collecting data in its database with the assistance of the Department of Public Information (DPI) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

## Historical Background

\*Please note that the situation for some of these conflicts has changed with some resolved and some continuing. This section provides a historical background to these issues to understand the efforts and the causes.

### **1948 (Start Year) - Israel-Palestine Conflict**

The creation of the State of Israel in 1948, accompanied by the eviction of Palestinians, was the primary cause of the Israel-Palestine conflict. The conflict was characterized by territorial disputes, political tensions, and violent waves. Both sides have used conventional weaponry, such as small arms, rockets, mortars, and artillery, resulting in a large number of casualties, the destruction of infrastructure, and a protracted humanitarian crisis. The conflict is still being fuelled by important issues like borders, settlements, and the status of Jerusalem.

**United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 (1947):** This resolution recommended the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. While accepted by Jewish leaders, it was rejected by Arab states and Palestinian leaders, leading to further tensions. This resolution was a response to the growing tensions and conflicts between Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine during the mandate period. The UN General Assembly Resolution 181 remains a significant milestone in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as it represents a crucial moment in the history of efforts to find a peaceful resolution and establish separate Jewish and Arab states in Palestine. However, the resolution's failure to gain widespread acceptance and implementation underscores the deep-rooted challenges and complexities involved in addressing the competing national aspirations and grievances of both sides, leading to the Arab-Israeli War in 1948.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (1967):** This resolution called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 war and emphasized the need for a just and lasting peace in the region.

**Oslo Accords (1993):** The Oslo Accords were a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) aimed at achieving a comprehensive peace settlement. However, the implementation of the accords faced numerous challenges and ultimately did not lead to a final resolution of the conflict. Under the Oslo Accords, Israel recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and the PLO recognized the State of Israel. The agreements outlined a phased approach to negotiations, including interim self-governance arrangements, a timetable for further negotiations, and the eventual establishment of a permanent status agreement to determine the final status of the territories.

While the Oslo Accords were initially hailed as a significant breakthrough and raised hopes for a peaceful resolution, their implementation faced numerous challenges. Both sides experienced difficulties in fulfilling their obligations, including issues related to security, settlements, borders, and the status of Jerusalem. The outbreak of violence, such as the Second Intifada in 2000, further complicated the peace process and eroded trust between the parties. However, the accords did pave the way for subsequent negotiations and peace initiatives, demonstrating the potential for dialogue and diplomatic efforts in addressing the complex and longstanding issues of the Israeli-Palestine conflict.

**Camp David Summit (2000):** This summit, facilitated by the United States, aimed to reach a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. However, the negotiations broke down due to disagreements on key issues such as borders, Jerusalem, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

**Annapolis Conference (2007):** This conference, initiated by the United States, sought to revive Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. The objective was to create a framework for negotiations that would address the core issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, such as borders, settlements, the status of Jerusalem, security arrangements, and the rights of refugees. The delegations in Annapolis also aimed to build on previous peace initiatives, particularly the Oslo Accords, and create a conducive environment for meaningful and productive negotiations. Despite some initial positive momentum, however, the talks did not result in a comprehensive agreement.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016):** This resolution condemned Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as a violation of international law and called for their cessation. It also reaffirmed the international consensus on the two-state solution.

**Peace process mediated by the United States:** Numerous U.S.-led initiatives, including the efforts of Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, have been made to facilitate negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. However, various obstacles, including disagreements on core issues, continued violence, and a lack of trust, have hindered progress.

**Regional and international peace initiatives:** Several regional and international actors, such as the Arab League and the Quartet on the Middle East (comprising the UN, United States, European Union, and Russia), have made efforts to facilitate peace negotiations. However, the complex nature of the conflict and divergent interests have impeded successful outcomes.

**1979 (Start Year) - Saudi Arabia-Iran Proxy Conflict**

Political, sectarian, and regional power struggles interact in a complex manner, giving rise to the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It shows up in proxy conflicts, ideological disagreements, and rivalry for Middle Eastern hegemony. Direct conflicts have resulted from the employment of conventional weaponry, such as ballistic missiles, drones, and naval assets, which has heightened tensions. The region's instability is further exacerbated by proxy wars in Yemen and Syria, which have grave humanitarian repercussions.

**Riyadh-Tehran Agreement (2001):** Riyadh and Tehran signed a security agreement, pledging to cooperate in fighting drug trafficking, crime, and terrorism. This agreement aimed to improve their relations by promoting regional stability. Both showed a willingness to reach an agreement as they avoided discussing security issues on which they disagree. Although there weren't notable actions implemented by the agreement, this effort showed potential cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Iran despite differences.

**Hajj Pilgrimage Agreement Attempt (2016-2017):** Saudi Arabia and Iran attempted to arrange for Iranians to attend the year's pilgrimage to Mecca, aiming to improve their exacerbated relationship since the deadly Hajj disaster in 2015. However, in late May, they failed to reach an agreement as the officials shifted the blame for the death of more than thousands to each other.

**Diplomatic Visits Attempt (2017):** Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said Iran and Saudi Arabia would exchange diplomatic visits. He told Iranian media, "We are waiting for the final steps to be completed so diplomats from the two countries can inspect their embassies and consulates." However, this attempt failed due to escalating tensions between the countries.

**Iraq and Oman's Mediation Efforts (2021):** Baghdad (Iraq) hosted the first direct talk between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Between April and September 2022, four rounds of talks, mostly mediated by Oman and Iraq, were held. Khamenei, the top advisor, made the decision to reopen the Iranian and Saudi embassies after the fifth summit was held.

**Hajj Pilgrimage Arrangement (2022-2023):** Saudi Arabia agreed to allow 40,000 Iranian pilgrims for Hajj. In the resumed official talks between Tehran and Riyadh in Baghdad, they discussed ways to facilitate the Hajj Pilgrimage for Iranians and engage in economic cooperation.

## **1996 (Start Year) - Taliban in Afghanistan**

The Taliban's advent in the 1990s and subsequent rule over Afghanistan have led to a protracted struggle with wide-ranging effects. Serious violations of human rights

and support for international terrorism were hallmarks of the Taliban's rule. Both the Taliban and the opposition have made considerable use of conventional weaponry such as firearms, explosives, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Massive suffering has resulted from the conflict, including massive displacement, infrastructural loss, and a persistent threat to regional stability. As of right now, the Taliban is ruling Afghanistan with the Afghani government collapsing. International society is refusing to consider the Taliban's rule as a regime but rather regards the Taliban as a terrorist organization.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 1267 (1999):** The Security Council imposed targeted sanctions on the Taliban and banned Ariana Afghan Airline flights (except for religious and humanitarian purposes).

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 1333 (2000):** This resolution imposed an arms embargo over the territory of Afghanistan and expanded the air and financial embargo to include freezing the funds of Usama Bin Laden.

**Operation Enduring Freedom (2001):** The United States military strikes targeted the al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and Taliban military installations, its coalition allies providing humanitarian aid to the citizens of Afghanistan in the meantime.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 1383 (2001):** This resolution endorsed the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions (Bonn Agreement), stressing the importance of human rights and a formation of a representative government in Afghanistan.

**NATO's Lead of the International Security Assistance Force (2003):** NATO took the lead of ISAF to achieve its mission of providing effective security across Afghanistan and developing security forces. ISAF provided support to training and mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) to build a professional and sustainable force that is capable of providing security to the Afghan people.

**Afghanistan Compact (2006):** This compact was established as a result of the cooperation between the Afghan government with the United Nations and the international community to provide the framework for security, development, and governance in Afghanistan.

**Establishment of the Taliban Political Office in Doha (2013):** The Taliban Political Office served as a platform for peace talks and negotiations between the Taliban and parties such as the Afghan government and its High Peace Council.

**First Kabul Process Conference (2017):** The first Kabul Process Conference was held to discuss ways to promote peace in Afghanistan. However, since the Taliban

believed that the Afghan government didn't have any authority and the main party for negotiation was the United States, it opposed the Afghan government's strategy for peace, posing challenges to the conference.

**Direct Talk between the U.S. and the Taliban (2021):** The talk focused on the international demands that the Taliban form an inclusive government respecting women and minorities' rights. Also, the U.S. delegation and the senior Taliban officials discussed the safe passage out of Afghanistan for the remaining foreign nationals.

## **2011 (Start Year) - Syrian Civil War**

The civil war in Syria, which broke out in 2011, has turned into a complicated battle involving a number of parties. Conventional weaponry, such as artillery, small arms, and aircraft bombardments, has caused extensive destruction. Millions of people have been domestically displaced by the violence or have sought asylum abroad. It has also damaged vital infrastructure and resulted in widespread violations of human rights.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2043 (2012):** As a result of this resolution, the United Nations Supervision Mission was set up to oversee the implementation of the Kofi Annan peace plan for the Syrian Civil War.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139 (2014):** This resolution strongly urged the end to the indiscriminate use of weapons and the lifting of sieges in the Syrian civil war.

**Geneva II Conference on Syria (2014):** This conference was held to fully implement the Geneva Communiqué to establish a transitional governing body with mutual consent in Syria.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015):** This resolution calls for a ceasefire in the Syrian civil war and stresses the need for a Syrian-led political process.

**Astana Peace Process (2017):** This process was launched in January 2017 by Russia and Iran, allies of the Damascus regime, and rebel-backer Turkey. This led to the creation of four de-escalation zones, aiming to cease the hostilities of the civil war.

**Syrian Peace Talks in Sochi (2018):** The talks were called by Russian President Vladimir V. Putin with the goal of breaking the deadlock in negotiations to end the Syrian civil war. They were expected to broaden the range of Syrian voices as well. According to the UN Special Envoy De Mistura, it was the first time the Syrian government and its opposition showed a willingness to discuss the principles of the new constitution.

**Russia, Türkiye, and Iran's Mediation Efforts:** The Astana peace process, aimed to bring a ceasefire to the conflict, was launched at the initiative of Türkiye, Russia, and Iran. Russia has shown a longstanding effort to open a dialogue between Türkiye, which supports the opposition in the Syrian civil war, and Bashar al-Assad. Also, Türkiye tried to mediate the conflict by hosting and sheltering refugees.

## **2014 (Start Year) - Yemeni Civil War**

Since 2014, Yemen has been embroiled in a complex struggle between the Houthi rebels and the internationally recognized Yemeni government, with the Saudi-led coalition supporting the government's forces. Conventional weapons have been used in the fight, including airstrikes, artillery shelling, and ground assaults, resulting in a serious humanitarian disaster. Significant civilian losses, displaced populations, and an urgent need for humanitarian aid have all occurred in Yemen.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216 (2015):** The resolution demanded the Houthis cease all actions falling under the authority of the government of Yemen. Also, it called upon the Houthis to refrain from any actions that may threaten neighboring states.

**Yemen Peace Talks in Kuwait (2016):** The United Nations has sponsored and led peace talks between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels, aiming to achieve a political agreement to create an inclusive government and restore state authority over the country which is divided between Houthis and Hadi's administration.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2451 (2018):** The security council endorsed the Stockholm agreements. The Yemeni government and Houthis agreed on the city and ports of Hodeidah, an executive mechanism for activating the prisoner exchange, and Taiz.

**United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement 2019/9 (2019):** The security council showed its concern over the development in Southern Syria, including the violent attempt to take over state institutions. It fully supports an inclusive dialogue to address the concerns of Yemenis in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions.

**Riyadh Agreement (2019):** The Riyadh Agreement was built with the objective of strengthening the role of state institutions, providing security in liberated areas, and restoring government control. As a result of the agreement, a new power-sharing government that includes the Southern Transitional Council (STC) was formed. The new government enabled an option for the STC to take part in the UN-sponsored peace talks between the Yemeni government and the Houthis.

**United Nations Security Council Resolution 2624 (2022):** This resolution reaffirmed the need for the implementation of the political transition in accordance with the National Dialogue Conference and the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative. Also, it stressed the need for reconciliation through dialogue and communication which is impossible to achieve through the use of military force.

### **Historical Context and Current Challenges**

Historical, political, and socioeconomic considerations have a significant impact on these wars. The historical context includes things like colonization, regional conflicts, geopolitical vested interests, and unresolved resentments. The use of conventional weapons worsens conflict, fostering retaliatory cycles and obstructing efforts to achieve peace, stability, and development. The situations are further complicated by elements like arms trafficking, military assistance to rival factions, and involvement of non-state entities.



## Current State of Affairs

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region still experiences a number of armed conflicts and security issues as of the present, with the employment of conventional weapons playing a significant role in the escalation of violence and humanitarian crises in the region. Such devastating wars that consist of many different politically entangled entities and cause enormous suffering and displacement include those in Syria, Yemen, and the Israel-Palestine region.

Despite several changes in geographical control and power dynamics amongst the parties involved, the Syrian civil war, which started in 2011, is still going on today. Multiple armed factions are competing for authority and control over various regions of the country, which is fueling the conflict that is still being fueled by regional and international interests. Infrastructural destruction and considerable civilian casualties have resulted from the employment of conventional weaponry, such as airstrikes, artillery shelling, and ground offensives. A thorough settlement of the conflict is still difficult despite efforts to promote peace talks and amicable diplomatic interactions.

The Yemeni civil war, which began in 2014, is also a still protracted and deadly battle. The Houthi rebels and the internationally acclaimed Yemeni government are at odds. The coalition is commanded by Saudi Arabia. There is a major humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the deployment of conventional weaponry, including airstrikes and ground operations, and millions of people require immediate humanitarian relief. The conflict has not been ended, aggravating the humanitarian situation, despite numerous attempts at peace negotiations and settlements.

There have long been geographical disputes and political tensions in the Israel-Palestine conflict, and fighting between Israelis and Palestinians continues in the occupied areas. Consistently, the employment of conventional weapons—such as small arms, artillery, and airstrikes—leads to the death of civilians and destruction of civilian infrastructure. The situation is still tense and prone to further escalation, and efforts to secure a two-state solution have encountered substantial challenges.

On 15 August 2021, the Taliban force entered Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan. Ever since the U.S. president Joe Biden announced the withdrawal of U.S. military forces, the Taliban began to rapidly seize more territory continued its offensive repression. The force have been shopping for left-behind American weapons as bombs, rockets, shoulder-fired grenade launchers, and American assault rifles were sold in the bazaars. The Taliban leaders have discussed confidence-building measures including the lifting of sanctions and travel bans with the U.S. officials in Qatar for the first time since they returned to power in Afghanistan.

Many international humanitarian law (IHL) treaties and conventions, including the Geneva Conventions and its additional protocols, have been accepted by the majority of the MENA region's nations in reaction to the conflicts and the use of conventional weapons there. These treaties set forth guidelines for acceptable levels of violence during armed conflict, including provisions for the safety of people and limitations on the use of particular weapons and military strategies.

Furthermore, the 1998-founded United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) system seeks to put policies in place that would help in controlling the inhumane use and trafficking of small arms in the MENA region. The influence of CASA and other international initiatives to stop the illicit trade in arms and stop the abuse of conventional weapons, however, is still limited because the proliferation of weapons and the trafficking in illicit arms remain major problems in the region.

Despite the fact that there are international treaties and conventions governing the use of conventional weapons, the current state of affairs presents significant obstacles to their enforcement and implementation. It is difficult to hold perpetrators accountable for breaking international humanitarian law in the MENA region's many conflicts because non-state entities and proxies are frequently involved. The effectiveness of these treaties is hampered by the absence of a reliable system to monitor and enforce compliance.

In addition, the involvement of external parties that support rival factions in various conflicts only makes the situation more complicated in a militaristic aspect. Weapons continue to cross borders through illicit trade, which consistently contributes to the never ending instability and insecurity within the MENA region.

Instability and armed conflict continue to afflict the MENA region, and the employment of conventional weapons significantly contributes to the escalation of humanitarian catastrophes. While arms control agreements and international humanitarian law offer a legal foundation for limiting the use of these weapons, their effectiveness and enforcement confront significant obstacles. Greater commitment from all parties involved, better international cooperation, and tougher measures to stop arms trafficking and illegal commerce in the area are necessary to address the inefficiencies in the current system. For the MENA area to experience long-term peace and stability, a comprehensive and inclusive approach to conflict resolution, governed by the norms of international law, is still necessary.

## Stances of Parties

### Afghanistan

Afghanistan's volatile past has a profound impact on Afghanistan's historical involvement in the illicit arms trade in the Middle East and Northern Africa. The Afghan Mujahideen received major military assistance from numerous nations throughout the battle that was started by the Soviet invasion in 1979, paving the way for a culture of weapons proliferation. The Afghan civil war, the Taliban's ascent in the 1990s, and the U.S. invasion in 2001 all contributed to the problem's continued escalation as different factions accumulated and trafficked weapons. A highly unstable climate has been produced by the recent U.S. exit in August 2021 and the quick comeback of the Taliban. Concerns regarding the spread of weapons have been raised by the Taliban's access to large military hardware, which has been taken from Afghan security personnel and possibly obtained from outside sources. Along with the potential spread of violence and arms trafficking to neighboring countries, such as Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asian countries, the status quo of arms trafficking has contributed greatly to intensifying the regional instability and international security issues. In order to monitor and address the illicit arms trade in Afghanistan and its repercussions for the larger region, a concerted effort is required given the complexity of the situation.

### Canada

Canada has been a major player in leading the ban of landmines by encouraging signatures to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (also known as the Ottawa Treaty), which resulted in over 30 countries declaring mine-free 24 years later. It is among the first group of countries to sign the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons which restricts the use of particular weapons and addressed concerns and development of conventional weapons. However, Canada was blamed for its ambiguous stance on restricting autonomous weapons (likely due to its high expectation in the development of technologies in that area). It invested over \$4 billion to deliver basic needs such as water, shelter, food, and sanitation to the conflict-affected populations in Iraq and Syria. Canada has a crucial trade presence in the MENA region, maintaining Free Trade Agreements with Israel.

### China

China is one of the largest arms suppliers, exporting around \$16.6 billion TIV (Trend-Indicator Values) worth of conventional weapons around the world between 2010 and 2020. Because of its dominance, many Middle East countries consider China as a secondary arms supplier, revealing a potential displacement of their political dependence on the United States of America and Europe. Beijing's

accedence to the Arms Trade Treaty and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons contradicts its records of promoting cross-border trades and selling conventional weapons to Middle East countries including conflict zones. China's growing influence over MENA conflicts was emphasized when the Saudi-Iran Normalization Agreement brokered in Beijing and the officials showed their interest in de-escalating the Israel-Palestine conflict.

## **Egypt**

Egypt signed but not ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons which restricts the use of specific weapons and addresses concerns over conventional weapons. In 2021, Egypt imported \$6.57M in Military Weapons as one of the largest arms importers in the world. Egypt played a mediator role in the Israel-Palestine conflict, as Suhail al-Hindi, a member of Hamas's political bureau, appreciated Cairo's effort to help the nations reach a ceasefire after Tel Aviv's offensive on Gaza. Egypt maintains a close relationship with Arab Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in areas of economy and security. It has shown its support for Syria when Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry met his Syrian counterpart to discuss the steps for Syria to end the civil war and regain its position in the Arab world.

## **France**

At the 77th UN General Assembly First Committee meeting, France stated that "We must ensure that the development and use of potentially lethal weapons systems integrating a degree of autonomy is done in full respect of international humanitarian law." France, as one of the biggest arms exporters, has played an active role in the negotiation, implementation, and promotion of the Arms Trade Treaty. In 2019, Defense Minister Florence Parly reiterated that the arms sent to Saudi Arabia for the Yemeni Civil War will be used solely for defense purposes. Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the major clients of France's arms sales despite the concerning voices regarding the brutality of the regimes. France has suggested a two-State solution for the Israel-Palestine conflict and called for a lasting political solution regarding the Syrian Civil War.

## **Germany**

Germany has been a leading advocate of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and is ranked as one of the top exporters of arms. In 2012, Germany's weapons sales to Saudi Arabia peaked at €1.24 billion, indicating its active arms export to the latter. Berlin's ban on arms exports to Riyadh, due to its involvement in the Yemeni civil war, revealed its stance of not exporting weapons to conflict zones. However, Olaf Scholz, the chancellor of Germany, reached an agreement with the Greens and Free Democratic Party to allow weapon exports to

Saudi Arabia in specific individual cases. During the uprisings of the Palestinians and the Israelis, Germany publicly condemned the human rights violations while its weapons exports to the Middle East were criticized. Germany recognizes United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia as important partners for economic cooperation while remaining vigilant.

## **Hungary**

Hungary ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and signed the Arms Trade Treaty, showing commitment to regulating and eradicating the illicit arms trade. Hungary maintains a strong diplomatic relationship with Israel as it declined to join the agreement among EU nations to call a ceasefire to end violence in Palestine. The United Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) condemned Hungary for forcing two asylum-seeking Afghan families to leave the country under the legislation.

## **India**

While India ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, it didn't sign the Arms Trade Treaty as it believes that the treaty lacks the provision of rights of the states to import arms for national security. India is an active participant in the defense export market as its exports have increased by twenty-three-fold, reaching an estimated Rs. 16,000 Crore in 2022-2023. India's shifting stand in the Israel-Palestine conflict makes it harder to maintain a delicate balance between its developing ties with Israel and its support for Palestine. The defense tie between India and Israel has been deepening as they have explored the coproduction of weapons systems, spanning arms sales, and being active in defense trades.

## **Iran**

Iran has been involved in a proxy conflict with Saudi Arabia which exacerbated due to religious differences. Iran is not a signatory of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty. Mohammad Khazaei, Iran's UN Ambassador at that time, explained that the treaty failed to ban the transfer of conventional arms to aggressors and foreign occupiers. In 2010, the United Nations Security imposed an embargo on the export of most conventional weapons such as combat aircraft, battle tanks, large-calibre artillery, warships, and certain missiles and missile launchers to Iran (was amended to allow supplies of major arms and was expired in 2020). According to a confidential draft UN report leaked in 2012, Iran was accused of exporting arms such as machine guns, explosives, assault rifles, and detonators to the Syrian government in violation of the ban on weapons sales.

## **Iraq**

Iraq accessioned the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons but didn't sign or ratify the Arms Trade Treaty. It is one of the largest importers of heavy weaponry in the world. In 1990, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions on Iraq to restrict supplying, selling, and transferring arms such as weapons, ammunition, and military vehicles in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Arab Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have shown hostility towards Iraq for the past years, however, Iraq is striving to strengthen its tie with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Iraqi president, Abdul Latif Rasheed, expressed the country's full support for the national dialogue to achieve security and stability in Yemen.

## **Israel**

In recent May, Israel's deployment of hundreds of bombs, shells, and missiles killed over 240 Palestinians and wounded over 1900 others, with half of them being civilians. 75 years have passed, yet the use of advanced weapons largely supported by the United States such as the U.S.-made Apache helicopter gunships have resulted in over 14,000 deaths and destroy of more than 400 homes. The United Nations experts have condemned the Israeli violence and urged and the international community to react without delay to ensure accountability. In 2022, the annual Israeli arms sales totaled \$12.5 billion, reaching a new peak in defense exports. As Arab nations normalized their ties with Israel, the demands for Israeli-made weapons increased. Israel accessioned the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and signed the Arms Trade Treaty.

## **Japan**

H.E. Ambassador Shino Mitsuko recently explained, "The illicit trade in and uncontrolled accumulation of small arms and light weapons can fuel instability and terrorism..." at the United Nations Security Council. Japan accepted the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty. According to the nation's policies, arms exports are not permitted to communist bloc countries, countries subject to arms exports embargo under the UNSC resolutions, and countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts. Japan has been actively involved in the development of arms as the United Arab Emirates agreed to cooperate in developing and transferring defense equipment. It is an important trading partner to the Middle East and has heavy dependence on imports for oil. Japan has provided assistance to conflict zones in MENA, including additional emergency grant aid of \$10 million to support internally displaced people in Syria and refugees and USD 2.5 million to provide emergency health services in Yemen.

## **Palestine**

The Israel-Palestine conflict started in 1948 when Arab nations invaded Palestine and declared the independence of the state of Israel. The United Nations data (from 2008~2022) shows that Israel has used conventional weapons such as drones, missiles, helicopters in IDF strikes, tear gas, and SALWs to kill more than 6327 people and injure 148,367. These casualties were not limited to the military but also civilians, including many children. Many human rights organizations and United Nations bodies have recognized the human rights violations in Palestine by Israel. Tensions heightened in 2021 when Palestinians protested against forced displacement by raiding a mosque. Since then, multiple armed resistance groups emerged against Israeli rule such as the Jenin Brigades and the political party HAMAS (engaged in a 11-day war with Israel). These armed groups have retaliated against Israel by using mainly rockets, missiles, bombs, and guns. There is still a heavy exchange of fires and nondiscriminatory usages of conventional weapons.

Palestine does not have an official government but is authorized by the Fatah Palestinian political party and military organization which partakes in the \$ majority of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Fatah works to liberate Palestine involving any measures including “first and foremost armed struggle”. In this committee, due to the nature of the agenda in which Palestine is heavily involved, Palestine will have the same voting rights as other nations, despite it officially being a non-member observer status in the United Nations.

### **Republic of Korea**

The Republic of Korea is a signatory to many UN conventions on Conventional Weapons not limited to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the Arms Trade Treaty and also has many strong diplomatic relations with many Middle Eastern countries excluding Syria and Palestine. The foreign ministry of the Republic of Korea has condemned the usage of violence by conventional weapons in the Israel-Palestine conflict stating, "We express grave concern over massive civilian casualties, including children, caused by indiscriminate rocket attacks in the Gaza Strip and counter attacks against them." The ministry has also provided humanitarian aid for those affected by armed conflicts such as the \$13.8 million to Syria. Due to its conflicting stance against DPRK and the geographic location, the Republic of Korea possesses conventional weapons prepared for any possible conflict with DPRK.

### **Russian Federation**

The Russian Federation has been heavily involved in conflicts in the Middle East and plays a key role in the balance of power and the supply of conventional weapons for Middle Eastern states. Due to the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War, many nations have enforced an arms embargo and sanctions against the Russian Federation, condemning any action by countries that supply the Russian military. Russian

Federation is known to have close ties with Iran and Syria and has an oil alliance with Saudi Arabia. The Russian Federation has forged an arms deal with Iran and received accusations of supplying and receiving conventional weapons. The increased supply of conventional weapons on both sides may worsen conflicts (Iran proxy conflict and Russo-Ukrainian war). While the Russian Federation is a signatory of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), it formally withdrew from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) in June 2023.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia and Iran are currently in the midst of a proxy war for dominance in the Middle Eastern region. While both states are not engaging in direct armed conflict, they are, however, engaging in conflicts in other nations. Saudi Arabia has been most heavily involved in the Syrian Civil War, supplying conventional weapons such as aircraft missiles to different rebel groups. More directly, Saudi Arabia is fighting against the Iran-backed Yemeni Houthi forces that are attacking the border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, stating that Saudi Arabia forced the Yemen government to oppress its citizens. The Houthi are attacked by mainly using ballistic and cruise missiles, drones, landmines, and Small Arms and Light Weapons, injuring not only soldiers but Saudi Arabian civilians. Saudi Arabia possesses many conventional weapons not limited to combat aircraft, armored combat vehicles, and Small Arms and Light Weapons.

## **Sudan**

An armed conflict arose on April 2023 between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and Sudan's official army after years of instability. The heavy exchange of artillery and machine gun firings caused at least 1800 deaths and more than 1.6 million people to be displaced. States like the United States and Saudi Arabia proposed peace talks for a ceasefire, yet the conflict continues. Sudan currently ranks 2nd in the number of firearms it holds among Middle Eastern Nations, holding over 3 million firearms. The Sudan Army uses its strong air force and heavy arsenal in the war while the RSF relies more on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The United Nations Security Council has enforced an arms embargo as a means to alleviate the crisis. Due to the high number of conventional weapons, there is a prone risk of increased violence and violations of human rights.

## **Sweden**

Sweden has shown their commitment to the agenda of conventional weapons by participating in all of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) meetings. Sweden has strong diplomatic relations with many Middle Eastern countries. Sweden also recognized Palestine as a state in 2014 and expressed its



concern for the Israel-Palestine conflict by calling attention to problems such as “Accelerated illegal settlement expansion, harmful Israeli legislative measures, resurgent violence including rocket attacks, the grave and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza” Sweden remains neutral in most conflicts, mostly acting only for humanitarian aid.

## **Syria**

Syria has had an ongoing civil war since 2011 with more than 307,000 civilians dead, according to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. Syria has used conventional weapons such as air-dropped munitions and explosive weapons. The blind usage of explosive weapons left 93% of its casualties to civilians. The United Nations acknowledged the instances of human rights violations, heavy displacement, and political instability and adopted 27 resolutions on Syria. Syria relies on the Russian Federation, illicit smuggling across borders, and the black market for its weapons supply. As of 2023, the direct military engagement between the government and the rebel groups decreased, but the conflict is yet to be resolved with the continuation of the employment of conventional weapons in Northwestern Syria.

## **Türkiye (Turkey)**

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated “Türkiye attaches particular importance to the efforts in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as factors that strengthen the stability.” Türkiye also actively supported the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs). Türkiye has a complicated relationship with different Middle Eastern countries due to its long-standing history as a key player in many conflicts in the MENA region.

## **United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates has joined the Gulf Cooperation Council and has allied with Saudi Arabia and the United States. In 2020, the UAE and Israel made a peace agreement, agreeing on having good diplomatic relations. The efforts to maintain good relations with all Middle Eastern states extend to UAE’s actions such as sending 38 metric tons of aid to Afghanistan and donating \$883 million to Palestine. Not only has the UAE been involved in conflicts by providing humanitarian and monetary aid, but also the UAE is a key stakeholder in the involvement of proxies in the Middle Eastern conflicts. The UAE played a major role in Yemen, fighting against the Houthis. The Houthis have attacked Abu Dhabi using drones and the UAE retaliated by bombing the Saada city (Houthi). The UAE army holds sophisticated conventional

weapons such as air-defense weapons, combat vehicles, ammunition, rockets, and more.

## **United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom has diplomatic relations with all MENA countries in this committee. The United Kingdom also relies heavily on the Middle East for its weapons export; 51% of the United Kingdom's military items were exported to the Middle East. While the United Kingdom has a history of exporting arms to the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, it has also implemented sanctions and arms embargo when there was a risk of increased conflict in the Middle East or severe violations of human rights. The United Kingdom donated \$1 billion to Yemen, \$320 million for the conflict in Sudan, and launched the largest-ever humanitarian operation in Syria. As one of the P5 nations in the Security Council, the United Kingdom drafted, supported, proposed, and signed many resolutions such as on Iran for violating the arms embargo enforced on Yemen.

## **United States**

The United States has the largest arms sale in the world. Because the United States supplies many of the weapons to countries with ongoing conflict, most of the conventional weapons and sophisticated military aircraft and vehicles used in armed conflict are produced in the United States. The United States is a proxy acting in the Middle Eastern conflicts such as in Israel-Palestine and Iran. The US troops placed in Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates demonstrate the close ties the United States has with many Middle Eastern Nations and its major role in conflicts. The United States has allied itself with all Middle Eastern countries except for Iran and Syria.

## **Greece**

The location of Greece in between Europe, Middle East, and North Africa makes Greece highly relevant to any issue in the MENA region. Greece acknowledges the importance of regulating conventional weapons as it is involved indirectly by the refugee crisis (18,600 refugees by 2019), a second hand impact of conflicts using conventional weapons. However, Greece did not establish its stance on having a legally binding instrument as a solution to the crisis but emphasized the importance of "human dignity over the decision of life or death" in the 2019 meeting of the CCW. Greece is a signatory for the CCW and the Arms Trade Treaty and has general well-established trade relations with all MENA countries. Greece especially has a strong tie with Saudi Arabia, opposing Iran.

## **Ukraine**

Ukraine ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and signed, but not ratified the Arms Trade Treaty. Fuelled by the threats of Russia-Ukraine war, Ukraine was the world's third-largest arms importer in 2022. For example, arms included 5000 guided artillery rockets from the United States, 280 tanks from Poland, and more than 7000 anti-tank missiles from the United Kingdom. While the United Nations urged sufficient control over arms supplies to reduce casualties, the majority of civilian deaths were caused by the explosive use of weapons. Although arms provided by the NATO allies bolstered Ukraine's defense capabilities, it has raised a concern that the chaos of the war may facilitate a thriving illicit arms trade. Also, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, more European countries wanted to import more arms faster and the arms imports to the Middle East remained at a high level. The repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war heavily affected the instability of the MENA region, such as exacerbating the food insecurity crisis in Yemen caused by the civil war.

## Possible Solutions

When exploring ways to regulate the usage of conventional weapons in conflicts happening in the Middle Eastern and African region, it is important to approach the situation through a thoughtful and well-rounded measure. The types of conflicts that happen in MENA mostly bear a deep sense of complexity and are deeply intertwined with historical events, which has been used as ingredients to build the history of the regions over time. The long-standing Israel-Palestine conflict, which has stemmed from the forced exodus of the Palestinians from their own lands that they had been living upon for centuries after the inducement of the Israeli control over the region in 1948, is one popular topic that is highly likely to be debated within this DISEC committee, and is an event that the delegates may consider grasping a deep understanding in. Various types of weapons were used in this conflict to destroy each other, which escalated tensions and worsened the animosity between the two nations over decades. Should the delegates like to learn more about this topic, please refer to the *Key Terms* section of this very background guide.

On a similar note, the political, religious, and economic rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia has also been another stage for conventional weapons to be used to destroy human life in the Middle East, in the form of proxy conflicts. It would also be helpful for the delegates if they would consider the case of the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, when both nations heavily relied on a selection of conventional arms during the war, which resulted in numerous losses of lives. In addition, the Taliban takeover of the Afghanistan government with its harsh rule and extremist views, and the Soviet-Afghan War which brings into light the impact of external involvement and weapon proliferation on the region's stability are key historical events that triggered prolonged conflicts in which the damages from the use of conventional weapons played a crucial role on the outcome of such wars over the past multiple decades.

As a direct approach to mitigate the harms of the use of conventional weapons, delegates might consider solutions such as imposing arms embargoes or restrictions on the countries that are directly involved in the conflicts happening in MENA, as seen with the United Nations embargo on South Africa during apartheid. Establishing zones of disarmament, as was done in Bosnia, could also contribute in building trust between nations and reducing potential conflicts that could arise from a steady condition of being armed. Benchmarking the initiatives from entities such as the *Chemical Weapons Convention* and the *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)* could also be a good standing point to start the research for finding possible solutions, as both examples could guide the delegates in establishing the oversight and the accountability for conventional arms use. While taking direct approaches, delegates must also consider to what extent arms regulations should be enforced, deciding whether or not the usage and possession of

conventional weapons could be allowed to a certain extent if it does not bypass the standards of the relevant international laws set by the United Nations. When drafting resolutions, delegates are also encouraged to keep in mind that the conventional weapon issue in conflict zones is not only limited to its use but also with its production, transport, and aftermath.

Furthermore, it would be helpful for the delegates to draw inspiration for preventive measures from regional organizations such as the *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*, an entity that succeeded in mediating the conflicts in Liberia that were accompanied by the deaths from the usage of conventional weapons. By weaving together historical insights and fresh ideas from these past resolutions that have built some positive changes for the stakeholders in the past, delegates will gain the opportunity to craft effective resolutions that could pave the way for a safer and more politically stable future in the MENA region.

## Questions to Consider

1. What would be the political/social/economic aspects of a nation and its relations with surrounding countries that may result in further usage of conventional weapons?
2. How are nations outside the region (i.e. P5), involved in the conflict and the agenda?
3. How can third party mediators, UN Peacekeepers, or other UN bodies be strategically involved in negotiations to alleviate conflicts?
4. What is an arms race and how should countries prevent it from occurring?
5. Would regulating the usage of conventional weapons be a violation of sovereignty? Or is it an essential action for the peace of the world?
6. What should the standards be for regulations of conventional weapons?
7. How could countries, international organizations, NPOs and NGOs assist in the implementation of any mutual treaties or new laws for regulating the usage of conventional weapons?
8. Subtopics that delegates are encouraged to explore...
  - a. Arms trafficking and black market (illegal production of conventional weapons)
  - b. Refining and amending pre-existing conventions and laws on the agenda
  - c. Political tension in the MENA region and mediation efforts
  - d. Post conflict disarmament (landmines, civilian possession of arms, e.t.c)
  - e. Sovereignty and intervention
  - f. Standards of what conventional weapons are considered lethal and should be regulated
9. Some ways delegates could approach solutions are...
  - a. Long-term and short-term
  - b. Regional and international
  - c. Law and implementation

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