



Background Guide

Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)

1 | Mitigating Nuclear Proliferation

JEJUMUN IX

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Date of Conference

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Committee Introduction

Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) was the first committee of the UN general assembly, a significant step forward in establishing the roots of the now all-inclusive United Nations. This committee was founded in 1945, and was made during the same year that the UN Charter was signed. It was created as a measure to prevent future wars, and has worked henceforth to strengthen international relations well after the Second World War. This committee handles issues regarding militarization, security and terrorist threats, and the sociopolitical impacts that come as a result of proliferation. DISEC has managed to bring forth potential solutions after World War II, during and after the Cold War, and the subsequent civil and multinational conflicts which have happened since then. The committee works closely with the United Nations Disarmament commission and the terms agreed upon in the Geneva Conference, which allows for retrospective analysis of current world events. Resolutions passed in DISEC therefore make a large impact on international arms, and are a major factor in maintaining global peace. Additionally, The Disarmament and International Security committee also serves as a prelude to Security Council meetings, as many topics which are discussed will be forwarded to said committee for further consideration. Countries are able to suggest potential resolutions to long-term military questions, which allows for more fruitful, healthy debate.

Agenda Introduction

Currently, there are 9 states that are publicly known to have possession of nuclear weapons: Russia, USA, China, France, UK, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea possess a total of approximately 13,080 nuclear warheads combined. Due to the concerning numbers of nuclear weapons and increasing global uncertainty, DISEC committee aims to work with Nuclear states to prevent the possible risks that come with possession. Such uncertainty has happened all over the world and throughout time - with the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the recent Ukraine war with Russia being a few instances where the military integrity of the world has been put at risk. A rapid increase in tension has resulted in global anxiety, and the possibility of a third world war. This is most simply described as Nuclear Proliferation - the spread of nuclear weapons and technology to countries that either lack or are yet to have possession of any weapons. This term also refers to the act of terrorist or armed groups getting hold of any nuclear weapons owned by a country. The agenda wishes for all member states to collaborate together to come up with a way to ensure security on a global scale. Questions such as whether countries should be able to hold these nuclear weapons, and whether their existence affects different countries in a negative or positive manner can be considered.

Letter from the Chairs

Hello, and welcome to JejuMUN IX! We are Chiedza Banga, Jiyun Chung and Hannah Sexton, your chairs for the DISEC committee. We all come from BHA, and are a part of the school's chairing committee. Each one of us carries unique, multifaceted experiences in MUN, which we hope to use in order to make our committee engaging, constructive, and enjoyable. Additionally, we all have at least three years of experience, and will be open and excited to work with both seasoned and inexperienced delegates alike.

DISEC deals with serious issues with global ramifications, and so we encourage all delegates to collaborate and truly delve into the nature of lobbying, debating, and collaboration in a way which considers the ever increasing threat of nuclear proliferation. Many countries hold more hardlined stances than others, so do not be afraid to adopt the roles you deem necessary for the task at hand. Additionally, we ask that all delegates handle the matter with sensitivity and seriousness, as many peoples, states, and continents have had to deal with the imminent threat of nuclear war.

With all that being said, our foremost goal is to make sure this conference is a memorable one for all delegates. Engage in research, assert yourself, and be unwavering in your delegation's beliefs in order to truly immerse yourself in the nature of JejuMUN.

Do not be afraid to reach out to any of us for questions – after all, we want all of you to be outstanding!

Signed,

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Key Terms

Proliferation

When something increases in a large amount in a short amount of time (suddenly). In this case, the large increase in numbers of nuclear weapons and warheads owned by particular countries around the world.

Dirty Bombs

A type of bomb that has aspects of radioactive material built into it, in order to allow it to cause mass damage to the environmental systems of its target destination.

Nuclear weapon state

A country that has previously or currently manufactured, owned and used a nuclear weapon in any period of time.

Warhead (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear)

The foremost part of a nuclear weapon contains explosives.

Ballistic missile defence system:

A defence system that intends to protect a country or state from any incoming attack, by launching interceptors that would intercept the line of attack and destroy incoming missiles and warheads.

Cruise missile

A type of missile that is controlled by a computer/electronic device that sometimes may contain explosives.

Deterrent force

A deterrent force is an action that prevents the occurrence of an event or prevents people from making a certain move.

Dismantlement

The act of disconnecting or destroying an object to make it not able to do its normal purpose. In this case, dismantling nuclear bombs would be pulling them apart and making them neutral.

Dual (multi)-capable weapons

Any weapon, vehicle, or system that is capable of performing two or more military procedures. For example, there can be nuclear and non-nuclear attack systems.

Historical Background

As mentioned earlier, nuclear proliferation has a short, yet extremely turbulent history. The Nuclear Age began during WWII, when the United States developed and dropped the first bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan. Both bombs combined killed nearly 250,000 people from the onset – but the number only increased as reports of cancer, extreme radiation, and environmental damage as a result of the atomic bombs further damaged the cities. The carnage resulted in the Emperor of Japan surrendering in 1945, effectively ending the Second World War. Many debate the ethics and reasons behind the United States dropping both bombs, but one prevalent reason was a fear of the axis powers developing and using one first.

The United Nations calls for a commission to prevent the elimination of Nuclear Energy in 1946, yet it wouldn't be long before tensions spiked once more, with the Soviet Union successfully testing its first nuclear bomb in 1949. The ever surmounting cold war between the USA and USSR caused a ripple effect, with more and more countries militarising using nuclear goods. The United Kingdom, France, and many more countries begin secretly developing atomic bombs. Worse yet was the invention and successful testing of hydrogen bombs, which were exponentially more powerful than the weapons which ravaged Japan not too long before then.

However, no crisis would come closer to nuclear war than the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, where the USA discovered Soviet Missiles in the Latin American state; prompting a blockade and a subsequent standoff between the two nuclear states. Historians say this is the closest the world has gotten to nuclear war, with tensions spreading throughout the world as Israel, South Africa, China, India, and many more countries begin testing nuclear weapons.

Just as soon as these weapons were tested however, global outcry called for “Nuclear-Free Zones”, enacted by several UN-backed treaties which promised the disarmament of nuclear materiel worldwide. By 1996, The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty opened, promising an end to nuclear testing completely. However, it was clear that not all countries seemed to agree on the dissolution of nuclear proliferation, which effectively put demilitarisation at a standstill.

Current State of Affairs

As of 2022, approximately 90% of all nuclear weapons are owned by the United States and Russian Federation. Even with the notable agreements made throughout the cold war, there are nearly 13000 warheads counted this year. Although the stockpiles themselves haven't increased tremendously, there has been a concerning rise in military assignments to weapons. Nearly 2000 have been put on high alert for use at any time- a number which is concerning, especially considering the ever surmounting tensions happening in several parts of the world.

The Russo-Ukraine war is the most notable current nuclear concern in widespread media by far, as Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine impedes on the nation's sovereignty, alongside rising concerns of NATO involvement. As the situation continues to escalate, there have been questions on if the Russo-Ukraine War will result in a "tipping" point- perhaps being a catalyst for global war. Ukraine does not have nuclear weapons, but if NATO countries such as the United Kingdom and USA become active allies in the conflict, the situation may very well evolve into Nuclear war.

Another issue is that of North Korea's ballistic testing, which has continued for nearly 8 years. Multiple missiles have been launched from Pyongyang, and have not ceased regardless of western sanctions imparted over the years. North Korea's increasing capabilities have been a concern for South Korea in particular, as the release of nuclear warheads would kill millions. With over 14 tests being conducted by the state in 2022 alone, it is clear that stricter measures need to be taken in order to avoid the possibility of nuclear war in the pacific.

Yet another concerning development is in the middle east, where the Iran Nuclear Deal threatens the disarmament protocols put in place decades ago. Iran has made strides in developing nuclear goods, now coming closer than ever to producing its first nuclear weapon. The United States has attempted to mediate this with no success, and as the Persian Gulf Crisis continues to threaten international relations, calls have been made to cease the development of nuclear goods in the middle east altogether.

These are just a few of the current world events contributing to Nuclear Proliferation, with many more calls for rearmament destabilising the nuclear world order even further. Political figures and civilians alike fear that without immediate action, these events will escalate into a conflict much deadlier than ever seen before.

Stances of Parties

Russia

Russia is the country with the most nuclear weapons in its arsenal. With 5,977 known warheads, its stance on Nuclear Proliferation is one of the most important. When it was the Soviet Union, Russia stood as a massive power ready to attack at any time, and in the present, there are threats of large scale nuclear attacks on neighbouring countries such as Ukraine. The current president Vladimir Putin was an intelligence officer during the Cold War, and his current actions imply a desire to return Russia back to its “former glory” – even at the cost of heightened nuclear tensions.

USA

The United States is second only to Russia in terms of nuclear weapons with 5,428, and has more which are at high alert. Although historically known for nuclear tensions with Russia, the United States has been steadily decreasing their nuclear arsenal, and has been adamant on such following the Cold War. Subsequently, their approach to nuclear proliferation is one of mounting uncertainty, especially as a country dealing with a rapidly militarising nuclear world. As such, the United States of America will be particularly disapproving of nuclear aggression, especially as it is unprepared for large-scale nuclear war.

China

At an estimated 350 nuclear warheads, China has intentions to rapidly increase its nuclear capability in the interest of self-preservation and national security. Many state officials believe that China seeks to break the nuclear superiority that is held by the United States by maintaining good relations with Russia, as well as introducing new technologies to its own arsenal. President Xi Jinping aims for “national rejuvenation”, which may be achieved through military means such as increasing weapon stores, further exacerbating nuclear proliferation.

France

The current French President has a positive view of nuclear power. Its technological advancements in terms of nuclear energy and weaponry development have been a source of national pride for the government. With roughly 290 nuclear weapons, France is yet another state with a significant stake in nuclear proliferation. President Emmanuel Macron states that “Without civilian nuclear energy there is no military use of this technology – and without military use there is no civilian nuclear energy”, which indicates a fair degree of pushback for complete demilitarisation.

UK

The United Kingdom is also recognised as a nuclear state, with roughly 225 nuclear warheads in its stockpile. Although the state had previously agreed to reduce 65% of its arsenal, the commitment has been walked back due to increasing security concerns. Information on the current stockpile – both deployed and inactive – has been made unavailable. Overall, the United Kingdom has shown decreasing commitment in terms of

mitigating nuclear proliferation, and adopts a more conservative stance in terms of demilitarisation, due to a lack of assurance of its security.

Pakistan

Pakistan has over 160 nuclear weapons, and has been in increasing internal conflict in recent years. A concerning terrorist presence alongside general government instability has endangered Pakistan and its allies, as well as all other neighbouring countries. Over time, more and more countries have grown distrustful of Pakistan militarily, forcing the state to make promises which stretch the limits of its political capability.

India

India has kept relatively quiet regarding its nuclear weapons arsenal. Regardless, It is considered another nuclear state with well over 100 weapons, and plenty of material to produce more. Continued nuclear research and test firing in neighbouring countries has increased tensions in South Asia, especially considering its historically negative relations with countries like Pakistan.

Israel

Israel is thought to possess between 70 and 400 nuclear warheads. Israel is a secretive state which has historically withheld information from the United Nations and its neighbouring countries. The war with Palestine has caused massive international uproar and disapproval, but Israel insists its a fight on terrorism within its borders. The concern is a potential use of Nuclear weapons, especially considering that it remains globally unchecked for the foreseeable future.

North Korea

North Korea currently stands at about 40 nuclear warheads in its arsenal, and shows no signs of slowing down development, threatening neighbouring countries on multiple occasions within the last decade. The capital city Pyongyang has consistently tested ballistic missiles despite sanctions and international outcry, which has now cemented it as an extreme security threat not only for South Korea and Japan, but for the United States as well. A large percentage of its GDP goes towards weapondry, and as a historically isolated country, its true capabilities remain largely unknown to the rest of the world.

South Korea

South Korea remains in jeopardy as its sour tensions with North Korea continue, especially with North Korea's increasing nuclear capability. With increasing thoughts of developing its own nuclear arsenal alongside decreased support from the United States, the state seems more inclined to kickstart a nuclear research programme in an attempt to increase its national security, and increase its chances of protection should North Korea pursue any form of military aggression.

Japan

Japan is the only country who has experienced the devastating effects of nuclear weapons, as bombs were dropped on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki towards the end of WWII.

Regardless of the fact, Japan is not actively against nuclear weapons, seeing them as an invaluable source of protection within its allies, especially the USA.

Germany

Germany has indicated on several occasions that it is for the disarmament efforts made in the UN, despite voting against nuclear weapons resolutions repeatedly over the last five years. In the past, the country has agreed that allied protection with nuclear states will be beneficial, which could explain their lack of clarity between speech and actions.

Cuba

Although it was previously the location of the most escalated nuclear event in cold war history, Cuba does not have a nuclear weapons arsenal, and has advocated for complete global denuclearisation. Due to its complex nuclear history and its unwillingness to have war within and near its borders, Cuba has remained politically neutral for a large majority of nuclear resolutions, there is a possibility it can be in the forefront for mitigating nuclear proliferation in the current age.

South Africa

South Africa is the only country who has developed, then dismantled its nuclear arms programme. The state sees no need in developing any more weapons as it is recognised by the United Nations, and deems it unimportant to continue advancing weapons, not being in direct danger. As such, South Africa opposes the current trend of Nuclear Proliferation, especially in its likelihood to produce a “knock-on” effect on other African states.

Australia

Australia is one of the few countries with a hardline stance against Nuclear weapons. Besides formulating some of the most impactful non-proliferation treaties which have been signed in the UN, the country has also made sweeping efforts to create bilateral agreements ensuring the eventual disarmament of Oceania and the greater world. Australia has traditionally kept amiable ties with the west, and has been continuously allied with a few nuclear states. Despite this, it remains a completely nuclear free country which has disarmament set within its national values.

Canada

Canada is yet another country with no nuclear weapons, but does not have a strict view against them, as indicated in their involvement in NATO and a lack of action in signing specific non-proliferation treaties. The state is slow-moving in regards to any military agreements, and maintains healthy relations with several nuclear states.

Taiwan

Although Taiwan is traditionally viewed as a non-member state, its ever-increasing vulnerability in east and southeast Asian relations has resulted in a need to act as a voice for countries which are not recognised by the UN. As the US has continuously rolled back its alliance initiative held previously, Taiwan is at risk of developing a nuclear arms programme, which will rapidly accelerate nuclear proliferation in Asia.

Switzerland

Switzerland has remained neutral for over two centuries, and has continuously disagreed with the use of nuclear weapons. Recent challenges to this neutrality have been seen in the Russo-Ukraine war, which Switzerland has openly denounced, but the threat of nuclear proliferation has remained low for the state.

Belgium

Although not possessing any weapons of its own, Belgium has expressed its disapproval on banning nuclear warheads, particularly due to its ties with the US, as the country currently holds roughly 20 weapons for the United States.

Italy

Italy was at the forefront of nuclear developments directly following WWII. However, it does not own any nuclear weapons to date, despite also storing a few US weapons in its arsenal. Italy has discussed signing on non-proliferation acts, but has not made significant efforts to do so.

Turkey

Although Turkey does not currently have a nuclear weapons programme, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has expressed that Turkey has full authority to produce and store weapons. As the Iran crisis builds up in the Middle East, the Turkish government has begun flight tests with limited capability.

Ukraine

The current war with Russia has left Ukraine in dire need of support, especially Russia has indicated its intention to use Nuclear Weapons if necessary. Ukraine gave up over 1500 Soviet weapons after its independence, and has no nuclear weapons programme to date. Many Ukrainians believe giving up nuclear warheads was a mistake, however a lack of knowledge on nuclear weapons has made Ukraine unlikely to develop any for the foreseeable future.

New Zealand

New Zealand has been historically opposed to Nuclear weapons ever since its first use in Japan, and is well known for being a “nuclear-free” zone, with no chemical, weapons and biological programmes to date.

Iran

Iran has shown an increase in nuclear capability and aggression over the last few decades, even though a deal was signed in 2015 to limit its nuclear programme. Having historically had bad tensions with the west, and consistent insurgency presence within its state, Iran has shown itself to be both capable and aggressive – much to the display of other nuclear states.

Possible Solutions

Safeguard systems

A Safeguard system or safeguard agreement is a restraint on international trade or economic development of nuclear programmes. Existing international safeguard systems such as The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have continuously prevented nuclear proliferation by restricting the diversion of nuclear-explosive materials and relevant technologies. New systems can be developed and current safeguards can be improved upon to address the undeclared nuclear activities, and eventually contribute to mitigating nuclear war.

Inviting more countries

Despite efforts to form international agreements, the greatest threat of nuclear explosions remains with the few countries that have decided not to sign non-proliferation treaties. Inviting those countries to accept safeguard systems or sign treaties is of utmost importance. Some organisations deem it necessary to take strong stances, such as excluding countries that refuse to be part of nuclear demilitarisation efforts. To eliminate possible threats of nuclear activities and ensure international security faster, adding pressure on certain countries may be necessary.

Limiting access to key nuclear explosive materials

The production of fissile materials such as high-enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium are threatening to world peace as they are the key components of nuclear weapons. Therefore limiting access to these fissile materials can lead to overall reduction of nuclear weapon programmes. The Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) by the United Nations, for instance, aims to prohibit production of the two aforementioned nuclear-explosive materials internationally. These measures can be strengthened to verifiably end the production of fissile materials over all countries.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the country's past and current view on nuclear proliferation?
2. How is the country involved in nuclear activities (trade of nuclear materials, production of nuclear weapons, etc.)
3. How developed is the country in terms of nuclear technology?
4. How can the existing or future agreements be accepted by more countries?
 - a. Should the safeguards be kept as a voluntary offer?
5. How should nations deal with hidden nuclear weapons or materials?
6. Are existing international policies fair to all nations?
 - a. Should the authority be distributed or concentrated?
7. How can the budget for nuclear proliferation be spent effectively?

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