Study Guide

United Nations Security Council

Ensuring international cooperation and security amidst the growing war industry

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United Nations Security Council – Study Guide

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Ms. Manca Eržen

Dear all, I'm very happy to welcome you to this year's GimBMunVI as the President of the General Assembly and to the Security Council as your chair. To say a few words about myself, I am an IB student in the last year of the international school, here at Gimnazija Bežigrad. Some of my interests include international relations and history, as well as literature, volleyball, skiing, travelling and music. I have been immersed in the world of Mun since my very first year in Bežigrad, when I participated in conferences in Budapest and Barcelona as a Delegate. Since then, I have become a member of my school's Mun community, and, throughout the years grew very close with the people here. I believe the best thing about Mun is meeting new people and making connections and friendships. I am sure I will meet many extrordinary people at this conference as well. See you soon!!

Ms. Ana Dimitrijević

Hello everyone, I'm delighted to welcome you all to our new GimBMUN conference, where I will be your other chair of the Security Council and the Deputy-President of the General Assembly. I'm currently beginning my third year of high school as an IB student and am passionate about debating (obviously), philosophy and international laws and systems. From a very early age, I've included myself in debate clubs however, none have made me as interested in the bigger picture as MUN. I hope you will enjoy the debates and try to immerse yourself in your country's role as much as possible. Outside of debating, I also enjoy running, Pilates, baking, reading modern literature and (some) fine arts. I truly hope you will have a memorable experience, meeting new people and acquiring new skills. Good luck!

Introduction to the Security Council

United Nations Charter in Article 1, outlines the main principle of the United Nations as an organisation, which is to maintain global peace and security via international cooperation and respect for the law. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), being the only council able to pass binding resolutions, making it the most powerful and authoritative UN body, thus holds the main responsibility of upholding global peace and security as such. It has been instrumental in resolving international problems, averting wars, and fostering peace and cooperation among nations ever since it was established in 1945.

The Security Council, which has 15 members, has considerable power to make decisions, including the ability to enact sanctions, approve military interventions and approve peacekeeping missions. Five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have veto power, while ten non-permanent members are chosen by the General Assembly for two-year terms. This arrangement reflects the delicate balance of representation within the organisation.

The duty of the Council is to address threats to global peace and security, which can include everything from armed conflicts and terrorism to the spread of weapons of mass destruction and humanitarian catastrophes. It serves as a place for discussion, negotiation, and coordination, bringing the Member States together to look for diplomatic solutions and create group responses to complex problems. The United Nations Charter's guiding principles—maintaining international peace and security, respecting state sovereignty, mediating conflicts peacefully, and advancing human rights—serve as the foundation for the Security Council's activities. All of its member states must abide by its rulings because they have great weight and are binding upon them.

The Security Council has dealt with many complicated topics over the years, including global problems like climate change, cyber threats, pandemics as well as regional conflicts like those in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. To ensure a thorough and inclusive approach to conflict resolution, it frequently consults with relevant parties, international organisations, and regional actors during its deliberations.

"Ensuring international cooperation and security amidst the growing war industry"

Key terms

War, War industry, Paramilitary groups, Militarization, International cooperation, Security policies, Armed conflicts, Weapons, Terrorism, Atomic Weapons;

Introduction of the topic

As the war industry continues to grow, the Security Council has to act immediately to ensure global cooperation and security. Addressing the effects of this rise has become essential due to advances in military technology, an increase in the proliferation of weapons, and an increase in the number of conflicts occurring worldwide.

The rise of the war industry raises concerns about global peace and security. The influence of modern weapons' destabilising effects is one crucial concern. Production and trade of highly developed weapons have the potential to further aggravate already ongoing conflicts, increase tensions in the region, and prolong the violence. Significant dangers include the proliferation of weapons among non-state actors and illicit arms trade, which could encourage hostility and terrorism.

The war industry's ties to economic and political interests aggravate the situation further. Efforts to promote collaboration and peaceful conflict resolution are frequently impacted by the profitability of arms manufacture and sales, which affects nations and companies. It's crucial to strike a balance between maintaining international law and humanitarian values and national security considerations.

The rise of the war industry has ethical ramifications that cannot be disregarded. Armed conflict causes civilian deaths, displacement, and violations of human rights. To resolve such issues, it is essential to balance security requirements and the observance of international rules.

HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

The development of international conflicts, improvements in military technology, and shifts in the dynamics of international relations all have an impact on the topic's history. Understanding this history helps one better understand the difficulties and methods used by the Security Council and the international community.

The environment of international security underwent a radical transformation following World War II. The United Nations was founded in 1945 as a response to the disastrous effects of the war, with the major goals of averting future conflicts and upholding global peace and security. With the duty of resolving threats to peace and coordinating international security operations, the Security Council developed as its main institution.

The bipolar rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union had a profound impact on the war industry and the dynamics of global security during the Cold War. Concerns about a potential global catastrophe were sparked by the arms race between these two countries, which fuelled technological development and the proliferation of weapons. The Security Council had to manage regional crises and proxy wars while maintaining a balance in power dynamics and preventing nuclear proliferation.

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in a shift in the world order in the years following the Cold War. With the restrictions of bipolar competition lifted, the war industry saw a rise in privatisation and the entry of new competitors into the arms market. Conflicts in regions such as the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East highlighted the impact of arms proliferation on international security and the need for concerted action.

The Security Council has addressed several crises and wars over the course of this history. To ensure global security and collaboration in the expanding war industry, it has made use of a variety of tools. Economic sanctions, peacekeeping deployments, and the installation of arms embargoes have all been essential tools in reducing the illicit trade in weapons, controlling conflicts, and fostering stability.

International norms and laws have been significantly shaped by the passage of pertinent resolutions and legal frameworks. Initiatives to regulate the conventional arms trade, including the Arms Trade Treaty, have sought to provide uniform standards and improve transparency. However, problems still exist. The war industry's financial success and commercial interests frequently impede efforts to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. It is challenging to successfully enforce restrictions due to the secretive nature of illicit arms trafficking. The introduction of new military technology, such as autonomous systems and cyber weapons, adds new complexity that calls for international regulation and cooperation.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Globally, the absolute number of war deaths has been declining since the United Nations Security Council has been established. And yet, conflict and violence are currently on the rise, with many conflicts today waged between non-state actors such as political militias, criminal, and international terrorist groups. Unresolved regional tensions, a breakdown in the rule of law, absent or co-opted state institutions, illicit economic gain, and the scarcity of resources exacerbated by climate change, have become dominant drivers of conflict. Furthermore, this regionalisation of conflict, which interlinks political, socio-economic and military issues across borders, has seen many conflicts become longer, more protracted, and less responsive to traditional forms of resolution.

The rise of conflict and violence correlates with the rise of war crimes and human rights violations, which brings back the core job of the UN and thus the Security Council - to enforce international law and protect the rights of citizens globally. Further on, this rise of conflict and increased militarization also confluence the numbers of mass killings, genocides, etc. which gives international cooperation cruciality on the matter.

Among the countries maintaining some of the world's largest military budgets, China, India, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, the UK and the US are frequently recognized to be the great powers, using increasing amounts of their GDP on the military and defence. As of 2022, global military spending topped US$2.3 trillion. It increased 3.7 percent over the previous year. With the Russo-Ukrainian War, European expenditures rose by 13 percent, the largest year-to-year increase since the end of the Cold War. In the list of countries by global militarization index, countries of the Middle and Far East tend to be found at the top.

Not only the Russo-Ukrainian war, and the Israeli-Palestine conflict, however, are currently ongoing armed conflicts. They have been on the rise in the past years also in countries including Myanmar, Ethiopia, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and so on. The fact that the list of ongoing armed conflicts is getting longer and longer, gives countries several reasons and excuses to militarise, following the principle that only a protected country, able to defend its citizens, can allow them to fully flourish and thrive.

The rise of militarization is also connected with the rise of terrorism and paramilitary groups. In the past decades, a new issue has been arising besides that - development of new technologies that further on expand the means of militarization. Concerns for potential cyber-attacks with highly developed artificial intelligence is high, many questions are also posed regarding the use of atomic and biochemical weapons.

PAST ACTIONS OF THE UN AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Since the birth of the United Nations, the goals of multilateral disarmament and arms limitation have been central to the Organization's efforts to maintain international peace and security. The UN has given the highest priority to reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons, destroying chemical weapons, and strengthening the prohibition of biological weapons – all of which pose the direst threats to humankind. While these objectives have remained constant over the years, the scope of deliberations and negotiations has changed as political realities and the international situation has evolved.

The international community continues to consider more closely the excessive and destabilising proliferation of small arms and light weapons and has mobilised to combat the massive deployment of landmines – instruments that threaten the economic and social fabric of societies and kill and maim civilians, all too many of whom are women and children. There is also wider recognition that all types of weapons impact women, men, boys and girls differently.

The UN is also focusing on the impact of new information, telecommunications technologies and other emerging technologies on international security.

Through global efforts, several multilateral treaties and instruments have been established with the aim of regulating, restricting, or eliminating certain weapons. These include the Geneva Protocol on Chemical and Biological Weapons (1925), Outer Space Treaty, signed and entered into force (1967), Biological Weapons Convention (1972-1975), Missile Technology Control Regime - MTCR (1987), Chemical Weapons Convention (1993-1997) and Arms Trade Treaty (2013-2014).

In 1945, the UN was primarily designed as a tool to manage interstate relations as the world reeled from the horrors of two world wars. While today's world is in many ways safer, the nature of the threat has evolved considerably. New, more complex and more sophisticated threats require imaginative and bold responses and strengthened collaboration between states, as well as the private sector and civil society. Institutional boundaries must also be bridged, so that political, human rights, and development partners can work in concert.

Member States shall strive towards resolving conflicts that can a lot of times be causes for armed conflicts such as settling different religious or border conflicts. The international community should also work towards more specific, fair and united arms control, referring to international restrictions upon the development, production, stockpiling, proliferation and usage of small arms, conventional weapons, and weapons of mass destruction. UNSC typically tries to achieve such aims through the use of diplomacy, which seeks to persuade governments to accept such limitations through agreements and treaties, although it may also be forced upon non-consenting governments.

BLOCK POSITIONS

Afghanistan: Afghanistan has been at war for several decades, and its government has relied heavily on international help, notably military assistance, to battle rebel groups and stabilise the country. Certain opinions shared by Afghan authorities and leaders include reliance on international military assistance, economic factors, and a desire for self-sufficiency.

China: Several major variables can be used to understand the Chinese government's stance on the war industry, including national defence and security, modernization and technological advancement, domestic economic development, and regional and worldwide impact. Overall, China has an optimistic outlook on the war industry.

France: France has a long history of involvement in the military business and maintains a sizable defence industry. Several essential features of the French government's stance on the war industry includes national defence and security, strategic autonomy, economic concerns, export prospects, and multilateral cooperation.

India: The Indian government's stance on the war industry includes the importance of national security, self-sufficiency and indigenous manufacturing, technological advancement, economic development and international cooperation.

Iran: The Iranian government views the war industry through a variety of lenses, including geopolitical stance, regional security concerns, and historical context. Regional security and defence, self-reliance and defence autonomy, deterrence and strategic influence, economic reasons, and support for proxy organisations are all important to them.

Iraq: The perspective of the Iraqi government on the war industry can be influenced by various factors, including the country's security situation, defence needs, and economic considerations. Their view on the war industry can be understood through the perspective of national security and defence, self-defence and sovereignty, reconstruction and stability, international cooperation and regional dynamics.

Israel: Because of the country's unique security problems and emphasis on maintaining a strong military posture, the Israeli government regards the war industry as strategically important. Studying their national security, technical innovation, self-sufficiency and export, strategic collaborations, and the defence innovation ecosystem might help us better grasp their position.

Pakistan: Pakistan's stance on the war industry heavily aligns with the stance of their neighbouring countries.

Palestine: Palestine has a complex situation with multiple political entities and factions. However, the Palestinian Authority (PA), which governs parts of the West Bank, values self-defence, resistance against occupation, international solidarity and socioeconomic considerations when considering the war industry.

Russia: The Russian government places significant importance on the war industry for various reasons. Alongside national security, economic benefits and technological advancements Russia prioritises the war industry for geopolitical influence, arms export and regional security.

South Africa: South Africa's government has historically held a critical stance towards the war industry due to the country's experiences with apartheid and its commitment to peacekeeping and diplomacy. Their history is also the reason they value peacekeeping and diplomacy, disarmament and non-proliferation as well as human rights and democracy. Nevertheless, they still understand the importance of regional security and the economic aspect of the industry.

Sudan: The government of Sudan, similar to South Africa has had a complex relationship with the war industry. Sudan has experienced periods of internal conflict and has been affected by external factors, including regional conflicts and arms trafficking.

Syria: The Syrian government, led by President Bashar al-Assad, relies heavily on the war industry due to the ongoing civil war and the country's security challenges. Similar to Afghanistan their country prioritises national security, self-sufficiency and also economic aspects.

Türkiye: The Turkish government places significant importance on the war industry for similar reasons as the USA.

USA: Being a country, which funds their military the most, the United States government has historically placed significant importance on the war industry for various reasons such as national defence, global power projection, technological superiority, arms sales and the economic considerations as well as counterterrorism and peacekeeping.

UK: The United Kingdom's government places significant importance on the war industry for various reasons. Even though it has similar interests as their allies, the UK still respects humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts.

QUESTIONS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS

Arms trade among the growing war industry

For several decades, the trade in weapons has been among the most lucrative businesses in the world with predictable increases year after year. The ready availability of weapons and ammunition leads to human suffering, political repression, crime and terror among civilian populations. Irresponsible arms transfers can destabilise an entire region, enable violations of arms embargoes and contribute to human rights abuses. Investment is discouraged, and development disrupted in countries experiencing conflict and high levels of violence. Countries affected by conflict or pervasive crime have the most difficulty attaining internationally agreed development goals.

32% of the arms imported are imported to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Pakistan, India and China, whereas the biggest exporters are the USA, France, Germany, Russia and China, which are collectively responsible for 74% of the global arms export; it's the US and Russia, that supply 56%. There has been 14% jump in arms sales in the past decade.

It is crucial for the UN to set global norms regarding the matter. All areas of world trade are covered by regulations that bind countries into agreed conduct. Before the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in April 2013 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, there was no global set of rules governing the trade in conventional weapons. The ATT sets robust international standards to help guide governments in deciding whether or not to authorise arms transfers. It provides for cooperation and assistance to help countries develop adequate regulatory systems and safe weapons stockpiles. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty marked a turning point in the international community's efforts to regulate global trade in conventional arms and to promote peace and security.

The Arms Trade Treaty holds powerful promises, by reducing armed conflict and violence, which impact millions of civilians every year, helping to create a more conducive environment for the UN to carry out its mandates in peacekeeping, peace-making and post-conflict peacebuilding and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and fostering a safer environment for humanitarian actors operating in volatile areas across the globe such as those delivering food aid, protecting refugees, working on gender equality and empowering women.

Paramilitary organisations

A paramilitary is an organisation whose structure, tactics, training, subculture, and (often) function are similar to those of a professional military but is not part of a country's official or legitimate armed forces. Paramilitary units carry out duties that a country's military or police forces are unable or unwilling to

handle. It is impossible to deny that such paramilitary organisations can have a great influence on national and global security.

An example of how paramilitary groups affect the domestic stability of countries is Al-Quwat al-Da'm al-Sari, a paramilitary group created in Sudan, initially to destroy government threats. It slowly became a threat itself and in April the fighting that completely derailed Sudan's wishes for stable democracy erupted. Based on official UN reports, the fighting between Sudan's military and a powerful paramilitary force has displaced more than 1.3 million people.

Moreover, paramilitary groups can also be included in conflicts on a larger scale. Just recently Russian private paramilitary group Wagner was found behind the slaughter of 500 in Mali village, which was not the first time the notorious group was allegedly guilty of international crimes.

Nuclear weapons

Today, we are witnessing the unravelling of the international arms control architecture and gradual backtracking on established arms control agreements, which have supported global stability, restraint, and transparency. The continued existence of nuclear weapons poses an ever-greater threat to the survival of humanity. While the number of nuclear weapons has dropped from more than 60,000 during the Cold War to around 14,000 today, nuclear weapons are more powerful today. At the same time, relations between nuclear-armed states are fraying, and divisions over the pace and scale of disarmament are growing.

When the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty ended in August 2019, the UN Secretary-General deplored the loss of "an invaluable brake on nuclear war". The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) faces a similar demise. The total elimination of nuclear weapons can still be achieved, but it will require a renewed commitment to trust and cooperation between the world's most powerful countries. The Secretary-General has called on states to renew fervour on outstanding and current arms control agreements.

New technologies

Technological advances are contributing to the changing nature of conflict. There are concerns about the potential for artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to enhance cyber, physical, and biological attacks. For example, by making them more finely targeted, harder to attribute, and easier for small groups perhaps even 'lone wolves' to carry out.

Emerging technologies are lowering the barriers to the acquisition of biological weapons – toxic substances or diseases used to harm or kill humans, livestock, and crops. There are concerns that advances in AI and 3D printing could facilitate biological attacks, by automating the development and production of the weapons and the systems that develop them.

There is also mounting international concern over the development of so-called lethal autonomous weapons (LAWs), which could identify and engage a specific target without human guidance, thereby transferring responsibility over life and death from human moral systems to complex data systems, devoid of an ethical compass. The UN Secretary-General has called for fully autonomous weapons to be prohibited by international law, as have over 30 nations. Regardless, countries such as China, Israel, Russia, South Korea, the UK and the US are investigating heavily in the development of various autonomous weapons systems, while a lot of countries, such as Australia and Turkey are also making investments.

Perhaps the most prevalent modern-day threat is that of cyber-attacks. According to IBM's X-Force Incident Response and Intelligence Services, the number of cyber-attacks doubled in the first half of 2019 in comparison with the second half of 2018, most of them targeting manufacturers, oil and gas companies, and educational institutes. Owners of critical infrastructure are especially at risk, as malicious actors seek to target airport control towers, nuclear power plants, hospitals, and dams. Over the past year, more than a hundred cyber incidents with the potential to undermine international peace and security were identified. Such attacks would cause substantial damage and casualties.

On the flip side, advances in AI and other technologies also provide new tools and preventive strategies for police and counterintelligence agencies to better prevent attacks and identify perpetrators. But here too there are risks. For example, predictive policing comes with its own downsides, including inbuilt racial and religious biases, which can engender radicalisation to violent extremism.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Security Council of the United Nations is a crucial organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security. Composed of 15 member states, including five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), it aims to prevent conflicts and resolve disputes through diplomatic means. The Security Council has the authority to impose sanctions, establish peacekeeping missions, and authorise the use of force when necessary. Its decisions are binding on all UN member states. At this year's GimBMun, the Security Council will discuss the emerging issue of ensuring international cooperation and security amidst the growing war industry. Despite the tragedy of warfare, there have always been states, which profited greatly off wars and weapon sales. With recent years causing many to suspect the new polarisation of the world, wars and its industry will continue to grow and threaten peace and diplomatic ties that have previously taken decades to establish. The Security Council will hold discussions from many angles, with an emphasis on minimising the drawbacks brought on by the growing war industry. The discussion will cover a variety of issues, such as the spread of modern weapons, restrictions on the arms trade, and the effect on global peace and stability. Delegates will also investigate the socioeconomic effects of the growing war industry, emphasising the necessity for sustainable growth and the distribution of resources to nonviolent causes. This involves promoting discourse and diplomacy as alternatives to military expansion, encouraging economic diversity, and spending on infrastructure and education.

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