

# **DISEC**

## **Disarmament and International Security Committee**

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**GSMUN 2011**



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Greetings Delegates!

We, your dais, are very excited to have you all as delegations in the Disarmament and International Security Committee of GSMUN XIV! We will address two very pressing topics: nuclear, chemical, biological weapons proliferation, and private military corporations. While DISEC is traditionally a novice committee, by no means does this suggest that debate will be any less lively and enjoyable. Even for more experienced delegates, this conference will help you hone your skills in diplomacy as well as your understanding of parliamentary procedure. Now, for the moment you all have been waiting for, here is your dais!

Arthur Wu, one of your co-chairs, is a junior and has been actively participating in Model UN since freshman year. As a delegate to several conferences at WMHSMUN and VAMUN, he has had great pleasure in dealing with international affairs. Last year, he served as the crisis director for FUNSC 2025. Outside of Model UN, Arthur is also very active in the Maggie Walker Future Problem Solvers Club and Public Forum Debate, as well as other clubs and honor societies. He enjoys reading, playing violin and tennis, as well as destroying intergalactic Zerg Banelings, even if they do massacre his marines.

Scott Hazelwood is a junior at Maggie Walker and has been a member of the Model UN club since freshman year. A veteran of several WMHSMUN, VAMUN, and NAIMUN conferences, he is excited to be your other DISEC co-chair. Outside the scope of Model UN, Scott is a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish and German clubs. He has also been involved in the art program at Maggie Walker since freshman year and swims competitively for the school team. In his free time, Scott enjoys reading, listening to music, and playing video games (often simultaneously).

Nitin Nainani, your vice chair, is a junior and has been participating in Model UN ever since sophomore year. Outside of Model UN, Nitin is also very active with the Maggie Walker Battle of the Brains Team and serves as Junior Class Co-Treasurer, among other clubs, honor societies, and activities. He enjoys reading, playing piano, and watching football in his free time.

We can't wait to meet you all at GSMUN XIV! Please do not hesitate to contact us at [gsmunxivdisec@gmail.com](mailto:gsmunxivdisec@gmail.com) or at our personal email addresses listed below, with any questions about anything MUN-related. Have fun diving into these very intense topics!

Sincerely,

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# Committee Information

## Committee Background

On June 26, 1945, the UN Charter established the UN General Assembly in San Francisco. The UN describes the General Assembly as its “chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ.” Its inclusion of all 192 UN member states allows for full representation in discussing and setting standards for international law. Recommendations from the GA committees are not binding, but states often carry them out.

The division of the General Assembly into six committees enables specific discussion of varying topics. One such committee is the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC). DISEC meets for one month each year, and all UN member states may attend. As defined by Chapter 4, Article 11 of the UN Charter, DISEC works in conjunction with the UN Security Council in three key ways. First, DISEC discusses and recommends actions pertinent to topics discussed by the Security Council. Second, when a member state, a non-member state, or the Security Council presents DISEC with concerns regarding

disarmament and international security, the committee responds with recommendations. Third, DISEC informs the Security Council of instances threatening international peace and security. DISEC attempts to maintain global peace through a spirit of cooperation, continues to reduce arms production and weapons spending, and provides a forum for discussion of arms issues on a global scale.

DISEC frequently discusses the impact of new technologies on a global scale, including the stockpiling of nuclear and chemical weaponry, arms trade regulation, demilitarized zones, confidence-building measures to promote transparency, and cluster munitions. To address these issues, DISEC works with both UN organs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Currently, DISEC and the IAEA are discussing the management of Iran’s nuclear energy program. In light of recent crises, such as North Korea’s violation of, and subsequent withdrawal from, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Iran’s development of nuclear weapons, DISEC is important to the maintenance of global peace.

# Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons Proliferation

## Introduction

New discoveries are constantly being made in the fields of nuclear, biological, and chemical engineering. With the advent of the Information Age, the emergence of innovative technology has taken precedence in the development of weaponry. At least 20 countries have already developed nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons. Of these, nuclear power is rightfully the most feared. The issue of nuclear weapons

proliferation began during World War II, when the first two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the threat intensified during the Cold War, causing a nuclear power struggle between the US and the Soviet Union.

In order to alleviate the threat of nuclear catastrophe, the NPT was established. With the exceptions of India, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea, all nations are currently signatories to the NPT. While the NPT

obviously calls for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, there are other key provisions in the treaty. It allows for the development of nuclear technology for peaceful uses, but signatories agreed to disarmament at an ambiguous “early date.” The NPT forbids signatories from providing volatile materials to countries that are not nuclear powers and requires signatories to accept safeguards as set by the IAEA. The treaty came into effect on March 5, 1970, and originally was set to expire after 25 years. However, on May 11, 1995, the signatories decided to renew it unconditionally and indefinitely.

Of course, nuclear weapons are not the only type of arms with which DISEC is concerned. Another key threat is chemical warfare. Rather than utilizing combustion and explosions, chemical weapons depend on unique properties that often cause more destruction than conventional weaponry. The modern perception of chemical warfare emerged in World War I with the use of tear gas and poisonous chlorine gas. Unfortunately, chemical weapons are easily produced and can thus be utilized by many terrorist organizations. For example, when thiodyglycol (a chemical that is used to make ink) is mixed with hydrochloric acid, the result is mustard gas. Thus, it is imperative that the exportation of such common chemicals is regulated. Chemical weapons are the only NBC munitions that have been used in large-scale, post-World War II conflicts – most recently in the Iran-Iraq War. After chemical weapons are deployed, decontamination operations are required. Chemical warfare is typically more predictable and covers a much smaller area than biological or nuclear weapons.

The last type of weapon in the NBC trio is biological weaponry, which some consider to have the same destructive potential as nuclear bombs. Not only are biological weapons extremely dangerous, but they are also far cheaper to manufacture than nuclear or chemical weapons. According to a

report entitled *Biological Warfare: Opposing Viewpoints*, it costs approximately \$1 million (USD) to kill one person with nuclear weaponry, \$1000 with chemical weaponry; and \$1 with biological weaponry. Furthermore, the mortality rate of common biological agents is astounding. The Ebola virus has a 70 percent mortality rate, and the mortality rate for anthrax is 90 percent. These and other deadly diseases can cause great devastation in everyday civilians’ lives.

The new threat of rogue terrorism, coupled with the destructive power of NBC weaponry, poses a significant threat to the welfare of the global community. Therefore, NBC non-proliferation should be given the utmost priority.

### **Current Status of NBC Disarmament**

Although the NPT is effective to a certain extent, it does not cover all aspects of the development of nuclear weapons. The United States, in particular, takes advantage of its political clout in order to provide nuclear weapons to other NATO states. Many argue that this is a violation of both Articles 1 and 2 of the NPT, which state that countries may not give or receive nuclear weapons.

The NPT does not completely prevent all nuclear weapons proliferation, as demonstrated by several recent examples. North Korea has withdrawn its status as signatory of this treaty. Additionally, reports issued in late 2009 by Mohammed ElBaradei, the former Director General of the IAEA, stated that Iran had the capabilities to create a nuclear bomb. Since then, Iran has resisted efforts to halt their production of nuclear weapons, contributing to its ongoing violations of the NPT. Trade sanctions and diplomatic threats have been used against the nation but have had little to no effect. Hostile relations between India and Pakistan, both of which are nuclear powers, should also be considered.

Chemical weapons pose a more immediate threat to civilians because of how readily available they are. While the Cold War

concept of mutually assured destruction is a consideration for those with control of nuclear weaponry, this is not true for terrorists, who aim to cause disruption within populated cities. A recent example is that of Aum Shinrikyo's 1995 sarin (a toxic gas) attacks in Tokyo. Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese cult whose name means "supreme truth," believed that they would become super-humans by eliminating the majority of the earth's population with biological and chemical weapons. It managed to attract thousands of members, some of whom had advanced degrees in science. In March 1995, Aum Shinrikyo killed 12 people and injured more than 5,000 with a well-timed sarin attack on Tokyo.

In 1999, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was signed. This required that all signatories give accounts of shipments of possible dangerous chemical materials. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was also created to enforce these measures, and it requires the full cooperation of all signatories of the CWC. As of June 30, 2010, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons claimed that 60 percent of the world's chemical weapons stockpiles have been destroyed. Unfortunately, over 28,000 tons of toxic chemical agents still remain.

In general, arms control and regulation of developing technologies have a greater effect on nuclear weapons proliferation than on chemical or biological weapons proliferation, since it is much easier to uncover the production of nuclear weapons. Chemical and biological weapons proliferation is encouraged by black market and terrorist organizations. Consequently, it is much more difficult for peacekeeping organizations to effectively track down the production and usage of chemical and biological weaponry. The only means to solve this problem is to increase international transparency, or the sharing of information between all nations, in order to promote trust and safety.

Perhaps one of the most significant

drawbacks of NBC weaponry is their disposal. Destroying NBC agents is a dangerous and expensive task. Nations that choose to demilitarize their NBC agents must be certain that the agents have been rendered completely harmless. The methods of disposing of NBC agents present a great controversy for the UN. The primary method of incineration releases smaller particles of agents into the atmosphere.

### **Biological Weaponry**

The lack of law enforcement and concrete measures to counteract biological weaponry is a testament to how unpredictable it is. Just as chemical weapons are most dangerous in the hands of terrorists, the biggest threat posed by biological weaponry is their use in bioterrorism. One hundred kilograms of anthrax spread by an airplane can kill three million people overnight. Despite bioterrorism's massive potential, it has not recently seen widespread use. Bioterrorism is classified into three categories: A, B, and C. Category A biological agents have a very high mortality rate and are capable of causing mass panic and risks to national security. These agents include anthrax, the Ebola virus, and smallpox. Category B biological agents have a lower mortality rate; they include salmonella and Q fever. Finally, category C agents are pathogens that may be engineered into harmful weapons.

The most recent case of bioterrorism is the infamous anthrax-lined envelopes sent in 2001, which killed five and infected many. The US government quickly mobilized and spent billions of dollars to prepare for another biological attack. The Department of Defense also tried to create an anthrax vaccine but encountered massive financial and administrative blocks. Clearly, the strategic usage of bioterrorism, even on a small scale, can cause widespread panic.

NBC weapons may soon be almost completely disarmed, although a state of complete disarmament may never be achieved. It is imperative that DISEC

continue to provide an environment conducive to the goal of disarmament. Helpful resolutions will ensure the efficiency of this process. In order to continue successfully down the road to disarmament, one must view it as an ongoing, ever-changing project. New aspects of disarmament emerge daily as technology advances and NBC weapons become both deadlier and easier to access.

### **UN Efforts**

Clearly, the UN regularly deals with issues of disarmament and international security. Through a number of operations in the past decades, the UN has become increasingly aware of the dangers of NBC proliferation. The UN Security Council has passed many resolutions to deal with the issue. Resolution 1540 clearly prohibits the manufacture, possession, transfer, and use of NBC weapons. Resolution 1887 calls for the reaffirmation of the NPT and urges non-compliant states to accede to the treaty or face consequences. It is important to note that the problem is two-dimensional. First, the UN must identify the large underground network of clandestine trades between parties. Then, the UN must also unite the will of nations and NGOs alike in order to deal with the issue effectively.

In the past decade, the UN has also devoted time to create Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) in key areas. On December 11, 1975, the UN General Assembly promoted NWFZs stating, "Nuclear Weapon Free Zones constitute one of the most effective means for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and for contributing to the elimination of the danger of a nuclear holocaust." Current NWFZ treaties cover nearly half the globe; these agreements include the Treaty of Rarotonga (South Pacific), the Treaty of Tlatelolco (Latin America and the Caribbean), the Treaty of Bangkok (Southeast Asia), and the Treaty of Pelindaba (Africa). Creating more NWFZs in

key areas could be a potential solution to the problem of nuclear weapons proliferation.

### **Conclusion**

The disarmament of NBC weaponry is an issue of utmost importance to DISEC and the global community. NBC weapons have the power to wipe out large areas in a single strike. Not only are they capable of physical destruction, but the psychological effects of these weapons must be taken into consideration as well. The fear of an attack, as experienced in the Cold War, can be nearly as devastating as the attack itself. Therefore, the disarmament of NBC weapons must be dealt with in a quick and efficient manner. As a global forum for discussion of these particular issues, DISEC provides the ideal conduit for disarming NBC weapons.

### **Questions to Consider**

- What is your country's position with regard to NBC weapons?
- What is the political, economic, and social situation in your country? How does this affect its opinion on nonproliferation?
- What is the best way to withhold biological weapons from terrorists and other rogue organizations?
- What would be the most effective incentives for the encouragement of NBC disarmament?
- How should the IAEA deal with countries that do not comply with the regulations outlined in the NPT?
- Is a complete ban or freeze on NBC weapons feasible for your country? Is the military and intelligence support powerful enough to maintain it?
- What are the most important roles that DISEC can play in NBC disarmament?

# Private Military Companies

## Introduction

The history of private military companies (PMCs) is rooted in centuries of violence and war. The Hundred Years War between England and France is a testament to the value of mercenaries in supplementing an army. As English and French forces dwindled, mercenaries filled the gaps in their armies. Profitable confederations of mercenaries, such as the Swiss Guard, were formed to take advantage of the fact that mercenaries were paid more than the average soldier. During the American Revolutionary War, German Hessians were paid by the British to combat the colonial insurrection. Though most were conscripts and debtors, the German government was paid for their service.

Following the end of the Cold War, former freelance soldiers and ex-military personnel began to form PMCs, using excess military resources overlooked by demilitarization efforts. While the use of professional soldiers had previously been somewhat limited, their role in warfare expanded in response to the development of new and innovative weapons technologies, the modernization of military strategy, and the growth of opportunities in support operations. Since that turning point in the history of warfare, PMCs have distinguished themselves greatly from their mercenary outfit origins, and today, they comprise a \$100 billion (USD) industry active on every continent except Antarctica. They have also been involved in some of the most controversial military operations in modern times and continue to be at the forefront of debate regarding the criminalization of mercenary operations and the regulation of the paramilitary industry.

The end of the Cold War was a monumental occasion with respect to PMCs, primarily because it precipitated a shift away from the large-scale conflicts of the twentieth

century (e.g. World War I and World War II) toward much smaller regional conflicts.

Additionally, demilitarization initiatives by the world's most powerful and influential nations led to smaller standing armies, and thus room for military privatization. While a PMC is sometimes portrayed as an illegitimate fringe group, it is technically defined by the UN as "a legally chartered company or corporation organized along business lines and engaged in military operations across the spectrum of conflict." It is also important to consider the involvement of PMCs in legitimate humanitarian efforts and the main employers of PMCs, which include national governments, private companies, journalists, and diplomats.

High-profile controversies relating to PMCs have dealt with mistakes on the battlefield, such as civilian casualties, but their primary function is often not as sinister as is implied. Many opponents of PMC operations have an exaggerated notion of mercenaries engaged in direct warfare on the front line. In fact, most firms are highly specialized, providing a range of services, such as consultation on matters like strategy or personnel for support and maintenance issues. From an economic standpoint, PMCs can complete military support roles more efficiently than the state, so governments do not have to spread their resources thinly. On the other hand, criticisms about PMCs' accountability to standard military protocol and a history of human rights abuses raise legitimate questions about their activity. Therefore, the role of this committee is to analyze the current situation regarding PMCs and seek solutions that take into account the complex risks and benefits of employing them.

## The Privatization of War

All legal and ethical concerns aside, reliance on PMC forces is increasing.

Interestingly, even strongly democratic states, such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, each with capable armies, have privatized many core military functions. One of the main concerns about the expansion of the paramilitary industry is the supposed erosion of the state's monopoly on the use of military force, since PMCs are essentially private corporations that have the same physical, if not legal, ability to wage war as established nations.

Awarding contracts to PMCs gives states the ability to wage war without democratic accountability. Traditionally, a nation's standing army is composed of volunteers who undergo military training, or of conscripts in the event of a draft. Since the state is dependent upon its civilian population to sustain the war effort, public opinion of war has always been an important factor in determining the feasibility of armed conflict. PMCs eliminate the ability of the public to force the government's hand by opposing the war, since the general population has no control over PMC soldiers. Thus, it is possible for the state to circumvent the people and continue a costly war, ignoring democratic tradition and principles. In this capacity, PMCs can act as a clandestine agent of the state in lieu of the regular army, leading to the criticism that they offer a state a "clean hands" international relations policy.

Another concern is the uncertain legal status and poorly defined standards for PMCs. Generally, PMC soldiers are immune from local laws when engaged in international warfare, and bilateral agreements, such as one negotiated between the US and Iraq, shield them from prosecution on the basis of property damage and civilian casualties. PMC accountability under international law is especially weak in developing nations, where they often operate. These countries, particularly in unstable regions of Africa, are often unable to defend against rebel insurgencies, employing PMCs for military aid. However, since their services are very expensive, PMCs sometimes negotiate

lucrative deals with governments that extend beyond the tenure of their employment. These deals often include mineral concessions, which allow PMCs to exploit weak nations' natural resources and wrest control of a country's assets away from the people.

### **Ethical Concerns**

Since their contracts are derived from a need to maintain security or support a war effort, violence and instability are profitable for PMCs, and they have been proactive in creating a niche for the paramilitary industry, regardless of humanitarian repercussions. They have been accused of aiding some criminal organizations, particularly those involved in the drug trade, and of funneling money to support warlords and rebel leaders. PMC activity could therefore be construed as detrimental to the objectives of the UN Charter, which aims to prevent sovereign nations from resorting to force. On the other hand, PMCs profit from conflict. In short, PMCs are expected to make a positive contribution to war efforts resulting in more revenue if they were protracted, which seems like a conflict of interest.

Accusations of fraud and overbilling are common, perhaps stemming from the fact that PMC soldiers are often paid more than soldiers in the state armed forces. According to the US Congressional Budget Office, roughly 20 percent of the United States' wartime spending as of August 2008 could be attributed to PMC contracts. However, much more serious ethical issues exist. Contractors have been accused of engaging without having been fired upon, though lethal force is allowed only when there is an imminent threat. One of the most explosive controversies of the Iraq War pertaining to PMCs was the Nisoor Square massacre, in which Blackwater soldiers engaged in a shooting that left 17 civilians dead. Allegations of extrajudicial executions have also surfaced, and private contractors who



worked as interpreters at the Abu Ghraib prison were implicated in an abuse scandal.

### **UN Involvement**

In the past, the UN was decidedly opposed to the use of PMCs, denouncing them as mercenaries, but it has since toned down this rhetoric, as PMCs have proven indispensable in UN peacekeeping efforts. Supplementing the debate over PMCs is a wealth of legislation and documentation by governing and international bodies which deal specifically with mercenaries and modern PMCs. The most comprehensive treatise on mercenary activity is the General Assembly Resolution 44/34, drafted at the International Convention Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing, and Training of Mercenaries. The convention was also known as the Ad Hoc UN Mercenary Convention, and the resolution identifies traits which are recognized as inherent to mercenaries. PMCs and their employees almost certainly meet some of the criteria, which include having been recruited specifically for an international conflict, having an interest in private gain with regards to warfare, not being a member of a nation's regular armed forces, and having no residential or ethnic ties to either party involved in the war. The resolution went into effect in October 2001, but was not adopted by any permanent Security Council nations. Attempts have since been made to link PMCs to the definition of mercenaries in order to discourage their use.

The other significant UN decision regarding mercenaries is General Assembly Resolution 47/84, which states that the "use of mercenaries is a threat to international peace and security," denouncing any state that "persists in, permits or tolerates the recruitment of mercenaries." Under this resolution, mercenaries are not guaranteed "the right to be a combatant or prisoner of war." In addition to these strongly worded resolutions, a UN Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries was established in 2005 to monitor the human rights impact of PMCs.

Independent experts within the panel have recommended more regulation and oversight of PMCs, citing a general lack of accountability. Their July 2010 report relayed claims that PMCs were promoting instability by supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and Somali warlords.

In 1972, the Organization for African Unity organized a Convention for the Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa. Additionally, the Council of Europe's Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights expressed concern over the growing trend of PMCs assuming responsibilities traditionally associated with state militaries, saying that it "undermines the position of a state as the only actor allowed to legitimately and lawfully use force."

### **Conclusion**

The involvement of PMCs in modern warfare is a complex issue with significant international implications. PMCs have come to occupy a place in the conduct of war which is difficult to classify or regulate. They are huge sources of employment, providing security for persons whose lives are endangered by violence and war. They also fund combat training and humanitarian aid for unstable nations. Perhaps most importantly, PMCs streamline the bureaucratic element of nations' militaries and take some of the fiscal and logistical burden off of the state.

However, the growing political and military power of PMCs is a major concern, particularly for underdeveloped nations. Their unprecedented level of involvement in international affairs has brought to light troubling legal and ethical inconsistencies which lead to an international stigma. However, even as UN opposition to PMCs has been mollified in light of their utility, issues remain that still need to be resolved. Existing definitions of terms like "mercenary" and "lawful combatant" have proved insufficient in giving PMCs a clear status in war and under international law. Their unchecked growth with little governmental

oversight has also led to concerns that the size of their private armies gives them a power to wage war rivaling that of established nations. Furthermore, the use of these contractors can arguably marginalize public opinion of war in democratic societies. The goal of this committee is to attempt to reach a workable consensus regarding how to reconcile the perceived operational necessity of PMCs with concerns about the legal status of their soldiers, accusations of ethics violations, and accountability under international law.

### **Questions to Consider**

- Should legal concerns regarding PMCs outweigh their purpose of peacekeeping and security and their success in maintaining stability? Is there a justification for revoking PMC contracts?
- Where is the line dividing military roles suitable for private firms and those suitable for the state-sponsored army?
- What steps could be taken to increase transparency and governmental oversight of PMCs?
- Does the legitimate corporate aspect of PMCs shield them and their employees from anti-mercenary resolutions and legislation?
- How could the definitions of “mercenary,” “lawful combatant,” and/or “unlawful combatant,” be amended to clarify the status of PMCs?
- What types of standards for contract negotiations between PMCs and state governments can be adopted which would prevent overbilling and other forms of exploitation?
- How can insufficiencies in state and international law be fixed so as to ensure that PMCs can be held accountable for their actions under the law?

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