



**DISEC: Privately Developed Weapons**

**Emory National Model United Nations Conference 2021**

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## Welcome Letter

Dear delegates,

My name is Nicole Kassabian, and it is my honor to welcome you to the DISEC: Privately Developed Weapons general assembly committee. I am a junior at Emory University who is double majoring in English and Sociology. I was born and raised in New York (but I am not from the city!). In addition to Model UN, I enjoy swimming, playing video games, reading, and traveling! Although this is my first time as a Crisis Director, I have previously worked in a backroom as a crisis staffer for MUNE last year. Model UN is something I have learned in college and become very passionate about, so I am excited to be your Crisis Director!

I chose to do a committee on private military companies and weapons development because I loved seeing previous committees surrounding the topic of Avengers. While that may seem unrelated, I wanted to do a committee that discusses regulations on contracts for our military and their ability to buy weapons (much like the contracts Mr. Stark had with the U.S. before becoming Iron Man). Specifically, I have always wondered what makes certain countries more powerful than others and how these factors impact global wars. One of the main factors I could think of was access to weapons, so I am fascinated to see how you all approach this great imbalance globally.

My intentions are to have a fun committee in which we all learn something and hopefully make a change in the world. I do want to emphasize that topics like this can be difficult, so if you have any questions I am available to help answer any questions or clarify any points. If you have questions on anything please feel free to email me at [nkassab@emory.edu](mailto:nkassab@emory.edu). I am looking forward to meeting you all and seeing your ideas and solutions!

Best,

Nicole Kassabian

## **Committee And Topic Introduction**

The committee focuses on our world's weapons and their development, sale, and use. Since the committee and its history is centered around weapons, discussions tend to jump towards the threat of war. While that is a crucial part of this committee, I urge delegates to explore the other ways in which weapons development impacts each delegate's role socially, politically, and economically. While it is easy to form our own opinions on the topic, I just want to remind delegates to accept their role's perspective, even if it differs from their beliefs. The ongoing use of private military companies to develop weapons will challenge delegates to lead and preserve their government, resources, and peoples. The assembled delegates will have the ability to impact the global weapons market.

This committee will be a simulation of DISEC. DISEC stands for Disarmament and International Security Committee and it is the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. DISEC focuses on maintaining international peace by regulating arms. They try to strengthen international stability by encouraging disarmament. In this simulation delegates will act as members of DISEC to address topics surrounding privately developed weapons. Specifically, delegates will approach the committee issues with the intention of addressing the sustainable development goal (SDG) of reduced inequalities. While this SDG does not specifically mention weapons, the contracts many private military companies and defense contractors hold with governments impact global equality in multiple ways. One of the most prominent impacts of these contracts is that it does not ensure every country has equal access to the weapons they may need. Part of the SDG is ensuring enhanced representation during decision making for countries that are still being developed with the hopes of having more effective and accountable institutions. In this committee, I urge you to approach reducing global inequalities through the topic of privately developed weapons.

## **History and Context**

### **Defense Contractors vs. Private Military Companies**

Private military companies (PMCs) are the organizations which supply people to train or supplement existing armed forces. Defense contractors are organizations which provide products to the military intelligence departments of a government. Defense contractors do not generally support direct military operations but are meant to generally support military efficiency and effectiveness as a whole. If PMCs are hired by a government, their mercenaries will potentially have access to weapons provided by defense contractors.

Private contractors for military purposes have always been a widely debated and controversial topic in the U.N. When private contractors are hired by the U.N., a rapporteur must monitor the contractors, and in the past they have filed extremely negative reports about their use. The U.N. General Assembly has previously passed a resolution which encourages a more precautionary hiring system. One example of the U.N. hiring a private military company was in Afghanistan when the U.N. had a contract with IDG Security Ltd. to provide Gurkhas to supplement security on the U.N. mission.

### **Information About Significant Companies**

Some of the largest weapons manufacturing companies are Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and Northrop Gruman. The countries with the largest arms exports are the United States, Russia, and France. Three countries with the largest arms imports are India, Saudi Arabia, and Australia.

For a list of the largest weapons manufacturers, arms exporters, and arms importers, see this link: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms\\_industry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arms_industry)

For a list of the top 10 defense contractors in 2019, see this link:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/10/top-10-defense-contractors-in-the-world.html>

One of the largest private military companies today is the Wagner Group. Their employees are hired/recruited from a variety of countries. To many private military companies, profitability is the main concern. These private militaries supply people as much as they do weapons to their contractors. Many private military companies use unconventional fighting tactics which causes typical war strategies being used against them to fail. Many private military employees are former soldiers who struggled to transition back to civilian life.

### **History of the Arms Industry and Arms Control**

The arms industry developed in the late nineteenth century when smaller countries could no longer make high-end military products with their resources. Consequently they began to make contracts with companies, even some foreign firms, who could manufacture the equipment they needed. One of the earliest examples of privately developed weapons under a government contract was in 1854 when the British government hired Elswick Ordnance Company, a British company, to supply the government with loading rifled artillery pieces. The company's owner became one of the first international arms dealers as he sold his weapon to governments across the globe. In 1885 France removed their ban on weapon export as they wished to capitalize on the form of trade that was emerging. Although this was a very lucrative system to



many companies and governments internationally, after World War I arms dealers developed the nickname “merchants of death.” Even though arms trade had a negative connotation after World War I the industry still continued to grow and trade extremely increased during the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The value in these trades became a political tool as were seen during the cold war when both the United States and the USSR distributed weapons to their proxy territories. Weapons were used as a political tool in that a country’s access to such weapons was meant to instill fear in their enemies. Such tactics are still relevant today as when major political decisions are made, potential weaponized repercussions are always considered.

Arms control is when there are international regulations on the development, storage, and use of weapons ranging from small arms to weapons of mass destruction. Many of the privately developed weapons are traded to third world countries that may not have the facilities to make the weapons themselves or hire a contractor. Although arms control is continuously being improved, many weapons do go to organized crime, terrorists, or rebel forces.

### **Geneva Protocol**

The Geneva Protocol became effective in 1925 and prohibits the use of chemical weapons in international conflicts. Although there are regulations that are outlined in the Geneva protocol, not all countries abide by the protocol. In 1930 Japan violated the Geneva Protocol by using chemical weapons against Taiwan. Five years later, Italy deployed mustard gas on troops from Abyssinia. Iraq used chemical weapons against Iran in the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s. The UN confirmed in 2013 that chemical weapons were used in the Syrian Civil War but because the use was within Syrian borders it does not technically violate the Geneva Protocol. While those are specific instances where the Geneva Protocol was violated, the protocol does not limit

production of chemical weapons but rather only regulates the use. For example, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany all developed chemical weapons which they never ended up using in World War II. One more example of development of chemical weapons that did not violate the Geneva Protocol was during the Cold War, both the U.S. and the Soviet Union were developing chemical weapons.

### **Biological Weapons Convention**

A biological weapon is a fungus, bacteria, virus, or parasite that is weaponized. The Biological Weapons Convention prevents the development, stockpiling, transfer, or use of biological weapons. The treaty became effective in 1975. Today there are no countries claiming to have biological weapons. Also, no member state is claiming that the use of biological weapons in war should be allowed. This is arguably one of the most important treaties regarding global arms control.

### **Missile Technology Control Regime**

While the Geneva Protocol and Biological Weapons Convention are formal, the Missile Technology Control Regime is an informal agreement among 35 member states which controls exports for specific items which could be used to create and consequently increase the number of weapons of mass destruction. The MTCR is informal in that it is voluntary for member states to act upon issues identified by the regime. It is up to each member state to control their exports. Germany, France, Canada, Italy, the United States of American, Japan, and the United Kingdom all established this agreement in 1987 so as to limit the number of nuclear weapons that would have unmanned delivery systems. Although there are 35 members, China, Israel, Romania, and

Slovakia are not members. These countries are significant, however, as they do not wish to be official members but continue to follow suggestions put out by the MCTR. China has agreed to follow the 1987 version's guidelines but not to the revisions that have been installed since. Israel, Romania, and Slovakia are not members but have agreed to follow the export guidelines anyway.

### **Chemical Weapons Convention**

A chemical weapon is a chemical intentionally used to harm someone due to its toxicity. A chemical weapon may also refer to any device meant to weaponize the toxic chemicals. This treaty became effective in 1997 and states that member states shall not develop, stockpile, trade, or use chemical weapons unless for extenuating circumstances such as research or medical



purposes. Not only does this treaty focus on preventing more weapons from being created, but it also works on destroying all existing chemical weapons. Destruction of such weapons, however, must occur under

specific supervision and be verified. The Chemical Weapons Convention currently has 193 member states. Notably, Egypt, North Korea, and South Sudan have not signed or agreed to the conditions of the treaty. At the beginning of 2021, only 1.61% of the world's chemical weapons still exist, the rest of the stockpiles have been destroyed.

### **Ottawa Treaty**

The Ottawa treaty became effective in 1999 and states that member states shall not develop, stockpile, trade, or use anti-personnel mines. An anti-personnel mine is a landmine

meant to be used on humans in comparison to other mines which may be targeting things such as tanks. Although there are 164 member states, some notable countries which have not agreed to the treaty are China, Russia, and the United States.

### **New START**

START stands for Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. New START was a treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation which meant to limit the number of nuclear weapons. This treaty went into effect in 2011, replacing the Strategic Offensive Reductions

Treaty (SORT). SORT was a treaty in which both parties agreed to have no more than 2,200 active nuclear warheads each. New START limited the number of active nuclear warheads even more stating that neither the United States or the Russian Federation could have more than 1,500.



Although the treaty is meant to regulate the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers, it does not place a limit on the number of inactive nuclear warheads. The treaty was set to expire and be re-evaluated in 2021, but Biden and Putin agreed to extend the treaty for another 5 years.

### **Arms Trade Treaty**

This treaty went into effect in 2014 and focuses on regulation of international arms trade. The main goal of this treaty is to limit the ability for arms to enter dangerous, war-ridden territories. This treaty was developed to reduce human suffering and increase international peace.

It also was formed in a way to promote transparency regarding armed action by states. The treaty mandates that countries monitor their arms exports, know the destination of exported arms, and standardize the regulations of imports and exports of arms with U.N. assistance. When a vote to adopt the treaty occurred, North Korea, Iran, and Syria voted in opposition. China, Russia, India, Indonesia, and Sudan were among 23 countries that abstained. 110 states ratified this treaty and 32 other states signed it without ratification. It is important to note that this treaty does not impact domestic arms commerce. Meaning that people still have the right to bear arms if their country permits it.

# Topics

## A Note For This Committee

Although defense contractors and private military companies focus on various forms of military involvement and security, for the purpose of this committee, stay away from in-depth discussions of aerospace. While it is something that the UN discussed last year, it is still a fairly new issue and I would like for delegates to focus on the land and naval weapons being developed as those currently have more regulations surrounding them.

## TOPIC A: The Production of Privately Developed Weapons

There are many defense contractors. One of the most profitable companies is Lockheed Martin. In 2008 they received \$36 billion in government contracts, working with more than 24 government agencies. Most notably, they were pursuing a \$2.2 billion contract with the United States Air Force in 2013.

In 2013, Lockheed paid \$19.5 million to settle a securities fraud class-action suit as shareholders were deceived by the company regarding their information technology.

Not all countries have access to defense contractors, consequently placing them at a disadvantage to those who can. Each delegate will have a different perspective regarding the placement of regulations, if any, on access to such companies and weapons. However, the purpose of this committee is to protect international security and encourage overall disarmament. The issue delegates should attempt to solve is the issue of reducing inequalities through access to defense contractors, and therefore privately developed weapons.

Some questions to consider when forming resolutions may be: Who should have access to defense contractors? If they have access to defense contractors, what limits should be placed

on privately developed weapons? Should countries be able to stockpile weapons? What types of weapons should be allowed for private development? How do countries come together to encourage disarmament and international security by addressing the production of privately developed weapons?

### **TOPIC B: The Sale/Use of Privately Developed Weapons**

In the 1991 Gulf war, the ratio of military soldiers to defense contractors was 50 to 1. In the first four years of the Iraq War, there were more contractors than the total American military present.

From 2010 to 2014 international trade of major weapons was 16% higher than from 2005 to 2009, with the largest exporters being the United States, Russia, China, Germany, and France. India, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, China, and Pakistan were the five largest importers of major weapons from 2010 to 2014.

From 2014 to 2018, 67 countries were exporting major weapons with the top five being responsible for 75% of all arms exports. During this time period, the United States, France, and Germany all experienced major increases in their arms exports. Russia's exports decreased from 2014 to 2018. Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia, and Algeria accounted for 35% of all arms imports during this time period.

In 2012, Lockheed Martin settled allegations by the U.S. Justice Department which said the defense contractor had overcharged them for certain tools on multiple contracts.

Given the current systems in place by the UN and individual countries, how can equality be achieved involving the sale of privately developed weapons? Delegates should consider not only how the sale of weapons contributes to disarmament, or lack thereof but also how it feeds

into the SDG of reducing inequalities. The issue delegates should address within this topic is how the sale of privately developed weapons either supports or harms the intentions of the first committee in trying to protect national security and disarmament.

Some questions to consider when forming resolutions are: Once weapons are privately developed how does the UN account for their sale? If they are sold, how do countries account for their use? Should there be limits on the sale and use of privately developed weapons? If so, what should those limits be? At what global cost do these defense companies profit? How do countries come together to promote disarmament and international security through the sale and use of privately developed weapons?

## Character List

Spain	United States of America	Pakistan
Egypt	China	Argentina
Philippines	Russian Federation	Sudan
Romania	France	Netherlands
Guatemala	United Kingdom	Norway
Portugal	New Zealand	Mali
Latvia	Afghanistan	Switzerland
Hungary	Syria	Mexico
Indonesia	Canada	Japan
Iran	Australia	Columbia
Poland	South Africa	Sierra Leone
Trinidad and Tobago	Sri Lanka	Iran
Germany	Belarus	Indonesia
India	Nigeria	

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