

# BANGALORE MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2017

FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY: DISARMAMENT AND  
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE  
(DISEC)



Chairperson: Ayush Kiran  
Vice-Chairperson: Ankit Mallya  
Rapporteur: Avantika Chandak

## Letter from the Executive Board

*Delegates of Bangalore Model United Nations 2017, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the Disarmament and International Security Committee. Being the first General Assembly, it deals with some of the most important matters pertaining to international peace within the scope of the Charter of the United Nations with emphasis on the mechanisms and subjects responsible for threatening human population in a certain region or the world as a whole and has proved to be effective in terms of passing resolutions for the regulation of arms trade and research and development of newer weaponry.*

*This year, we bring the substantive and controversial topics of the illicit or illegal arms trade taking place in both governmental militia as well as transnational crime groups and rebel groups and the issue of cyber terrorism and cyber security including information leakage and identity theft, illegal online transactions and of course, the damage caused by hacking. Just like every Model UN, we expect you as a delegate to DISECT the topic into three main parts: background, impact and solutions, each of which can be done in depth. Your research can be divided into different parts according to how much time you have but essentially, we expect you to have enough knowledge about the country you are representing, its relations with other countries, its stance on the agenda at hand, the actions it has taken both within the country and internationally with respect to the problem as well as the solutions and resources it is willing to provide. This, in addition to other pertinent details, would qualify as your country research.*

*With regard to your agenda research, the essence of it is covered in the detailed background guide that follows. It covers the most important parts of the agenda and outlines the discussion we expect from the committee. However, firstly, the executive board will not direct flow of debate in the committee and will purely moderate it; secondly, your research must not be limited to the background guide but must cover all aspects of the problem as far as possible. The more you teach the committee and the Executive Board; the more impressed we will be with your research*

*Being primarily from the Bangalore circuit, we are no strangers to heated debate and would appreciate a few rhetorical questions and points-of-orders fired across the hall but we here at BMUN give a load of importance to diplomacy and discipline; the breaching of which will lead to a penalty. We also expect you to be furnished with exact figures when it comes to statistics that can not be debated upon. That being said, we wish you the best of luck for your research and for the much-awaited conference! In the meantime, please do not violate any laws while killing it...*

## Brief of the Committee

The Disarmament and International Security Committee was formed by the United Nations in 1993 with one goal in mind: to prevent a third World War. Since then, DISEC, as it is known, has grown to become one of the first lines of defence against any force that is threatening the security and peace of the world. The committee works discreetly from the strongholds of the United Nations to ensure that mankind is safe and has a better future free of narrow-minded and baseless violence. This, coupled with the gravitas of the issues discussed in committee makes the DISEC one of the most important bodies of the United Nations and its actions and decisions, beyond reproach.

The Disarmament and International Security Committee operates under chapter IV of the Charter of the United Nations, being a General Assembly, with representatives of almost every UN Member state in the committee. Its mandate is to deliberate and act on the principles governing the regulation of armaments and provision of a safe environment for society in terms of peacekeeping, counterinsurgency and counter-violence. The DISEC reports directly to the Security Council.



Being the central body in the United Nations Organizations, it includes all member nations of the UNO and any new member states joining automatically are a part of the DISEC. Any document that is laced before the committee needs a simple majority to pass and all member nations have an equal vote on the passing of the document. The committee cannot by itself indulge in specific actions such as embargoes and sanctions, but it can however recommend the Security Council to implement these actions.

## Agenda 1

### **Violations of the Arms Trade Treaty: The threat of small arms and weapons to security.**

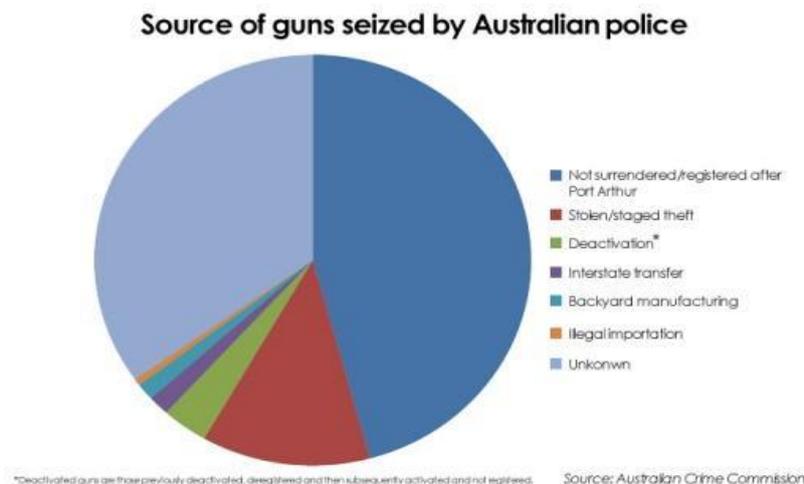
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#### Background

According to the Small Arms Survey of 2008, there are approximately eight hundred and seventy five million firearms currently at use in the world today. The distribution of these arms can be split into government owned stockpiles and civilian small arms. Government owned stockpiles consists of the light weaponry used by the military, armed forces and Special Forces as well as law enforcement agencies. This accounts for around 25% of the total firearms. However, seventy five million of these weapons are deemed surplus and are stored away. National military gun to soldier ratio ranges from 1.2 to 8.9 small arms or light weaponry per soldier.

The remaining accounted stockpiles belong to civilian inventories, both purchased legally or by illegal means. The Small Arms Survey estimates that gang and street members own about two million to ten million small armaments, private security companies possess two to four million and other non-state groups which are not armed own around one million. The rate of civilian ownership varies from country to country with some being as low as 1 firearm for every 100 individuals to 90 firearms for every individual.

All countries along with many non-state actors procure firearms from one source or another. The Small Arms Survey of 2008 estimates that the overall small firearm industry could be worth more than USD \$8 million dollars. The accurate cost of the industry cannot be determined as many legally procured firearms are sent into the illegal markets through sale of the firearm to an illegal dealer, corruption or theft of a legally procured firearm. These activities are rarely checked thus helping in the perpetration of these crimes.



*I. A graph showing the sources of guns that were seized by the Australian police*

## Definition of Small Arms and Light Weapons

There is no definition of small arms that is globally accepted and as such each country has its own legal definition as to what constitutes a small arm. Generally, small arms include smaller, lighter armaments that can be easily transported, stored or used. Most of these require manual aiming and firing and the more advanced machine guns and combat shotguns require prior experience and training for effective usage. Examples of these small arms include pistols such as the Glock-17, pump action handguns as in the shotgun, the MAUSER and assault rifles such as the AK-47. Light weaponry can also be discussed alongside small arms and the two are often abbreviated as SALW (Small Arms and Light Weaponry). These kinds of weaponry include light anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons.



*II. A Glock-17 self-arming pistol*



*III. A soldier using a MANPADS-SA7*

## Current Situation

At present, the situation of the trafficking of small arms is extremely dire. In the year 2004, the total trade of small arms and light weapons was estimated to be around eleven billion dollars. Out of this figure, the illicit arms trade is estimated to be at least ten to twenty percent, which is approximately seven billion dollars, a staggering amount. Compared to this, the reports and statistics on legal sales that were submitted to the UNO delineated only four billion dollars' worth of arms, a miniscule amount when compared to the illegal trade.

Though the illicit trafficking of weapons takes place through the world it is by far most prevalent in the areas that are affected by war and organized crime. These activities fuel the conflict further and ensure that the coffers of the cartels and other non-state actors remain full.

Black Markets usually operate on a regional or local level in many nations. Publicly available data shows that only a small percentage of the annual trade is accounted for, therefore the problem does not lie in the multi-ton cargo shipments that are brought into nations by organized smugglers, the problem lies primarily in the unauthorized dealers who operate on a much smaller scale. The most common method for these smugglers is known as the "ant trade." Here small quantities of a commodity are bought legally before being sold in the black market or being smuggled into another country. Data from the Small Arms Survey in 2013 shows that a majority of the guns used in Mexican drug cartels can be traced back to the United States of America. These weapons are usually bought at small gun shops then taken into Mexico, therefore though small quantities are bought, but the number of guns smuggled in totality is large.

The illicit trade of guns is in no way endemic; the gun trade, which makes millions of dollars each year by illegally procuring and selling arms, affects every single nation. Given below are some examples of how Illicit trafficking of small arms is affecting nations:

- In Africa, there are Ethiopian smugglers who bring in small arms to the Somali pirates thus violating the Arms embargoes that were placed on Somalia by the United Nations in 1992.
- In the year 2007, the country of Venezuela ordered a hundred thousand AK-103s, which incidentally has been the guns used by Colombian Guerrilla groups such as the FARC. Though not confirmed, the general consensus is that the leftovers from Venezuela were smuggled into Colombia to aid these groups.
- Darra Adamkhel, a city in Pakistan, has the largest black market for arms in the world. Here, for about USD \$50 anyone can purchase a fully functioning replica of the AK-47 which was given to the Mujahedeen's during the 1980s. After the end of the war between the USSR and Afghan Forces, this market has been the supplier for many non-state groups including the Taliban, the Irish Republican Army, the non-state actors in Kashmir and many groups in the Middle East.
- In 2013, the Small Arms Survey estimated that out of the four hundred thousand odd guns in Nepal; only fifty thousand were registered and sold legally. Despite some relief in the form of

the comprehensive peace accord in 2006, there is still crime and insecurity rife in the country which is due to the proliferation of small arms in the hands of the armed groups in Nepal. Many of these weapons are smuggled in from the relatively relaxed border of India rather than the strict border of China, by small traders or by individuals.

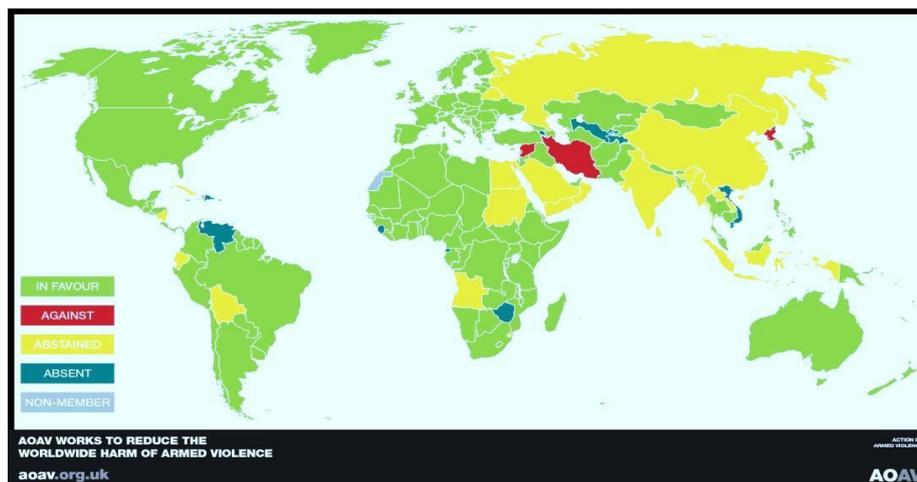
- **Pilferage:** Pilferage of various arms and ammunition is also highly common in many countries. Pilferage is when an employee takes arms or ammunition for himself or for resale into the black market. In the May of 2010, four police officers from Uttar Pradesh, India were arrested for their involvement in pilferage of cartridges from weapon stores of various reserve police lines. Many such cases have been reported throughout the world and though they are usually small amounts soon the pilfered goods join a much larger stream adding to the sum total of all black marketed weapons.

## Past Actions

At present the most vocal actor in the prevention of small arms trafficking has been the United Nations Organization. Along with all its member nations the UNO has passed several resolutions, from different committees, all attempting to cutting down the illicit trade of arms. The main resolutions passed on these matters are elaborated below.

### 1. The Arms Trade Treaty

The Arms Trade Treaty or the ATT is a document that was formed by the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs to regulate the trade of conventional weapons around the world. As of now, it has been signed by 41 states and ratified by 92. The discussions of the treaty took place in multiple rounds of consultation, the preliminary discussions taking place in Mexico City, Mexico and the final round of deliberations being held at Vienna, Austria after which it entered into force on 24th December 2014, having been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in April, 2013. The object of the treaty is to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade in conventional arms and prevent their diversion. The treaty prohibits any transfer of arms that can allow or be an accessory to a gross violation of any humanitarian or international human rights law or if the trade of arms has been prohibited by a trade or arms embargo to that nation. It also provides for increased military transparency, cooperation, coordination and responsible action among states.



*IV. Bloc formation in regards to the Arms Trade Treaty.*

## **2. Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking of Firearms (Firearms Protocol)**

Also introduced by the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs, the firearms protocol deals with the majority of the normal weapons including Small Arms and Light Weaponry. It was introduced to supplement the United Nations Convention against transnational crime. The purpose of this protocol was to eradicate the manufacturing and trade of illicit firearms, their parts and ammunition. It directs nations to legislative and any other actions seen fit to make the manufacturing and trading of any forms of illicit firearms illegal. It tightens the noose around the neck of the perpetrators by suggesting that a seal or brand of the company manufacturing the firearm be inscribed on each and every product that is manufactured by the company to ensure that there are no spurious products being manufactured. The protocol also gives directions for the disposal, trade and record keeping of the firearms being produced by a country.

## **3. General Assembly Resolution 71/24**

This resolution was adopted on the fifth of December 2016 and deals with the illicit trade of all forms of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The resolution reaffirms the problem of the illegal brokering of Small Arms as a pressing issue and that dire action must be taken to ensure its eradication as soon as possible. It emphasizes the need of the member states to continue their support of the International Tracing Instrument for small arms and light weapons. It brings into the light the new problems for marking and record keeping due to the different priorities and situations of the member states.

## **4. International Tracing Instrument**

The International Tracing Instrument was passed by the UNODA in 2005 to aid the tracing of the firearms produced by nations. The instrument requests the states to ensure that all the firearms produced are marked properly with an insignia of the company and records of each

and every firearm produced by the companies is kept by the state. Furthermore, it gives the states, the United Nations and the Interpol the right to request any state to aid in the tracing of any firearm along with the responses that the state can give to the organization that requests for aid to trace a firearm.

## **5. International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 replaced the Millennium Development goals (2000-2015) with a set of 17 goals and 169 targets to tackle the factors hindering development and peace. The 16th goal associated positive development to peace and security and explicitly defined that reduction of illicit arms trade will lead to a decrease in violence worldwide. The International Small Arms Control Standard or ISACS is a comprehensive and practical set of rules which act as guidance for the reduction of illicit arms trade and sets standards for regulation across the world. The standards deal with Small arms and Light weapons control with respect to armed violence, security sector reforms and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

### **Questions a Resolution Must Answer**

1. What is the fitting definition of a small arm and a light weapon? What are the requirements for a weapon to be considered an SALW?
2. What are the actions to be taken against the different types of perpetrators (i.e. ant smugglers, multinational cartels, etc.) who black market weapons?
3. What are the actions that must be taken against various Non-state actors receiving illicit weapons from other States and Smugglers?
4. What are the duties of a state in ensuring that shops in that nation do not sell illicit weapons?
5. Has the Arms trade treaty been implemented properly? Are the clauses transparent enough to ensure efficient implementation of the treaty?
6. What are the measures that must be taken against the smuggling of arms, ammunition and weapon parts across nations?
7. What must be done to ensure that traders do not give away their products to black marketers?
8. What are the measures that must be taken to eradicate the threat of spurious weapons?
9. How must the state ensure that there are no products being pilfered from private companies?
10. What can be done to ensure that weapons are not being transported into the hands of non-state actors?

## Agenda 2

### **The threat of cyber-terrorism and cybercrime to privacy, property and security.**

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#### Background

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are permeating and transforming every aspect of our lives in the 21st century. Today, the number of global web users, stands at an estimated of just over one third of the world's total population. Over 60% of all internet users are in developing countries, with 45% of all internet users below the age of 25. It is estimated that by the year 2020, the number of networked devices (the 'internet of things') will outnumber people by six to one, thereby transforming current conceptions of the internet. As societies transform into information societies, we have witnessed widespread system interconnection, and increased dependence of individuals, organizations and countries on digital technologies and information infrastructures.

While cyberspace has presented significant opportunities, our accelerating dependence on ICTs also comes with increasing security threats and risks. A 2011 Norton Study estimates that threats to cyberspace have increased dramatically over the past year, afflicting 431 million adult victims globally – or 14 adult victims every second, one million cyber-crime victims every day. Cyber terrorism affects millions of individuals and countless businesses and governments worldwide. The challenge lies in the fact that countries are not easily able to close their borders to incoming cyber threats, nor can they contain those cyber threats coming from within owing to the vastness and endless capabilities of cyberspace.

Cyber security is thus a complex transnational issue that requires global cooperation and solutions which are harmonized across borders in order to ensure a safe internet for all. As the increasing proliferation of ICTs has far outpaced national and international regulations governing them, international cooperation is required, at the government level, as well as with industry, non-governmental and international organizations. Individuals, organizations and countries must take steps to adopt measures and procedures, and acquire tools to improve the way that technological and cyber-risks are managed. An appropriate legal framework is necessary in order to address a range of issues including the protection of privacy and property rights, as well as the territorial nature of the Internet.

#### Cyber Crime

A Cyber-crime can be said to have occurred when a computer or network is deemed to be the source of criminal activity which has affected an individual, community or society, the target usually being a computer too. It basically exploits the properties of the internet to store humongous amounts of data, form an intricate network between all telecommunication devices and the recent dependence of operations and facilities on the vast platform provided by the Internet. A report from McAfee, a leading cyber security and intelligence software

development firm, estimates the annual damage to the global economy owing to cyber-crime to be 445 Billion USD.

## Cyber Terrorism

Though there has been no official definition for cyber terrorism by the United Nations Organization, plenty of other organizations have tried to define the term cyber terrorism. Being a significant division under cybercrime, the most commonly used definition is from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which defines cyber terrorism as "The use of computer network tools to shut down critical national infrastructures (e.g., energy, transportation, government operations) or to coerce or intimidate a government or civilian population. "The CSIS definition, though most common, is not holistic in nature as cyber terrorism isn't only to shut down critical infrastructures but also includes the spread of propaganda and the recruitment of individuals into a non-state group. Thus, in reality, it is the use of the internet and cyberspace as a medium to intimidate, threaten, coerce, terrorise or exploit governments, individuals or groups in furtherance of political propaganda or social objectives.

## Current Situation

There have been instances of Cyber terrorism attacks since the dawn of the internet, i.e. the late 1980's. Though in those times sporadic, the threat of these attacks have come more and more into the limelight after the attacks on the World Trade Centre in the September of 2001.

### 1. 2007 Cyber Attacks on Estonia

A perfect example of a recent cyber-attack that affected the civilians is the Estonia attacks in 2007. These attacks came after the Estonian government decided to remove a Russian World War II memorial from the central park at the capital city of Tallinn. The Denial of Service (DOS) attack brought down most of the country's major services. The attack in its entirety claimed virtually all of Estonian government ministry websites, two principal banks and several government run media websites. Not only was it a considerable electronic disruption causing massive network damage and panic in the country; but it was also implemented after a political move was made by the Estonian government. These attacks and many others like this have made life a nightmare for certain demographics of people who live in constant fear of their accounts being hacked or their websites being taken down and all their personal data being available on the public domain and there for everyone to see.

### 2. The Sony Pictures hack, 2014

A prime example of this is the Sony studios hack in late November of 2014. During this hack, the hackers got away with terabytes of data stored on Sony's corporate network. They deleted the original copies of a number of upcoming projects from the studio and posted messages

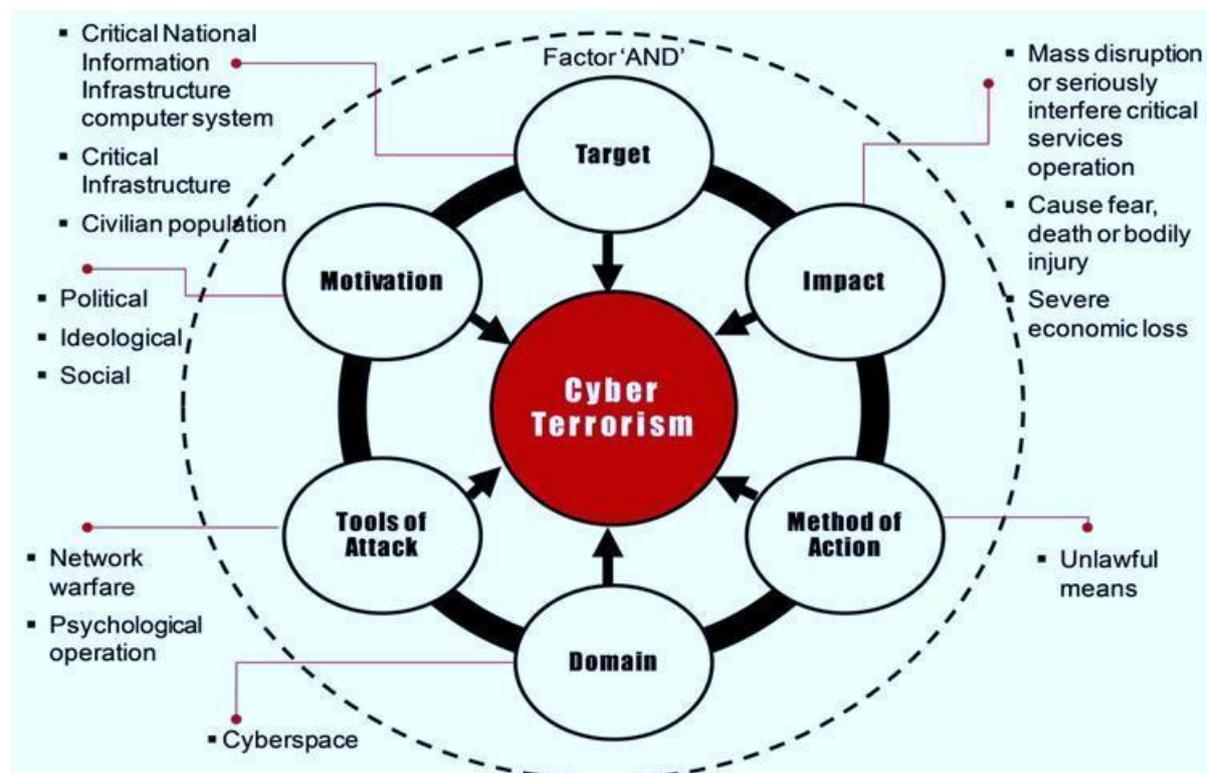
threatening to release the data if Sony didn't comply with their demands one of which was the recalling of the satire comedy movie- "The Interview". After Sony didn't comply with the hacker's demands, the hackers began to wreak havoc onto the company. They began by releasing waves of files that had been taken from the Sony Computers. They released four unreleased movies from Sony to file sharing sites. The salaries and performances of many employees along with their personal information were also released onto the public domain. The hackers also sent many files to journalists who were covering the story.

In recent times, there has risen the threat of hacktivist groups who have propagated their ideologies through their elaborate hacks and pranks they play on companies that dare cross their paths. The most well-known examples are Anonymous and Lulzsec. Both the groups were started on the media sharing site 4chan.org, and they regularly hack for a cause they, in their ideology, believe is wrong. An example of this is in the year 2010, when Anonymous began its 'Operation Payback is a Bitch' campaign to protest against certain companies which had attacked the torrent hosting site thepiratebay.se. This operation and its subsequent offshoot "Operation Avenge Assange" cost companies in the billions to repair. According to certain sources, PayPal which was hacked in the wake of the 'Operation Payback is a Bitch' lost an estimate of USD \$5.5 million. Due to the anonymity of the members in these hacktivist groups, it is extremely hard to keep a check on them. This could pose a major threat to governments, institutions and companies world over as they will not see these hackers hacking into their databases just because of a remark made by the company's secretary.

Another issue that is pressing the world at large is the recent surge in the popularity of the darknet or the deep web. This is a part of the internet which allows for absolute privacy to the user. Many individuals have taken advantage of this and have started a large number of crime syndicates each having their own blogs and website on the darknet. This has led to individuals who can access the deep web to hire hackers or assassins to either kill people they do not like or to obtain compromising information about them. There are numerous stories about people coming forward and telling their experiences to the world. The Darknet is extremely alarming as with enough knowledge a simple person could take down an entire government by just paying a group a small amount of money in Bitcoins, which makes him extremely hard to trace back since Bitcoins use a private key to transfer money across two or more hosts. This coupled with the facts that Bitcoins don't provide receipts (until version 0.9) and are not a physical commodity, makes perpetrators extremely hard to track down.

Another major threat to the common public is the risk of identity theft. Identity theft by the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act, 1998 which was passed by the United States National Congress is as follows "knowingly transferring or using, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person with the intent to commit, or to aid or abet, any unlawful activity that constitutes a violation of Federal law, or that constitutes a felony under any applicable State or local law." This type of crime is prevalent through Spam emails with malware embedded into the code of the email, which triggers when the email is opened. Another method is by sending emails and promising prizes or other such offers and requesting the victim to fill in personal details to claim their prize. The attacker then uses the information he has gain through these methods to his personal benefit, such as transferring the victim's

earnings into his hands or applying for a loan in the name of the victim but pocketing the money for himself. This information can also be used to blackmail the victim or, in the case of public figures, reveal their personal information to the public such as aliases, addresses, personal messages to other people, etc.



V. A diagram summing up cyber terrorism.

## Past Actions

### 1. Group of Governmental Experts (GGE)

In 2013 did the United Nations begin a war on cyber terrorism with a year of negotiations among a group of governmental experts on cyber terrorism. The report they published is called “On the Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.” These laws ensure the restriction of the use of force in the cyberspace. They also suggest that states come together to form confidence bonds with each other and be completely transparent with the data they have collected from the internet. It also suggests that a universal framework be made to deal with the different types of cyber terrorism threats that occur through the world.

### 2. Salvador Declaration

This declaration passed by the United Nations in Salvador, is one of the main tools used by the member nations to ensure the fight to root out cybercrime. It encourages nations to strengthen their security and criminal legislation to keep up with the changing times. It also invites nations to come together and share with the each other the best practices and methods to do so, along with technical assistance. It also encourages nations to take any legislative means necessary to ensure the elimination of economic fraud over the internet and continue to support the work of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in this matter. It calls upon nations to strengthen and build appropriate central authorities to combat this issue.

### 3. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

This resolution passed by the general assembly in 2010 deals with counter terrorist operations in all its forms. The strategy reiterates the UN’s condemnation for terrorism and states that terrorism constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. It calls upon the Nations involved in supporting counter-terrorism efforts to continue to facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights. Though the strategy deals in the area of general terrorism, the task force has done a lot in order to eliminate cyber terrorism in any form. The task force has ensured that countries are assisted in the aftermath of an attack and helps third world nations in ensuring that they are safe from the threats of a cyber-attack.

## Questions a Resolution Must Answer

1. What is defined as a Cyber Terrorist attack? Is it confined only to bring down websites that are important to a government or does it encompass a wider scope?
2. What are the boundaries that must put in place to ensure the privacy of the data of individuals?
3. What are the ways in which non state hacktivists groups must be combated in the event they break the laws of a country?
4. What are the ways in which a nation can protect itself from international terror attacks from the cyberspace?
5. What are the measures to ensure that civilian data is not taken over in the event of a hack on a governmental website?
6. What are the pros and cons of using ethical hacking as a source of fighting the rise of cyber terrorism?
7. How can the data of companies be protected against hacks? What are the duties of a state in ensuring that they are digitally safe?
8. How can the world act in unison against to fight terror digitally?
9. What can be done to protect the countries that are at a high risk of being attacked by non-state groups but cannot protect themselves?
10. How can groups like anonymous be regulated by the governments to ensure the privacy of the people?

## Guide to Country Research

Research is not complete without an opinion on the agenda. By carefully examining and assessing the situation at hand, you must be able to formulate an opinion as to why the problem has arisen or how it can be effectively controlled. In this case, it would be in the interests of the country you are representing in the committee. For example, If you were representing a Muslim nation such as Saudi Arabia in a committee discussing rights of women or freedom of speech, you would have to look at it from the perspective of your country's government and not your personal view on the topic. In this case, compliance with Sharia Law would be your government's biggest concern, regardless of whether you personally think women's rights and freedom of speech must be upheld, enforced and respected.

Your country research can start with the basics such as your country's geography, politics such as the people holding key positions in the government, demographics, economy and current affairs etc. You can then move on to linking your country with the agenda such as researching on the relevance of the problem in your country. For example, if you were the delegate of Netherlands and the agenda was legalisation of recreational drugs, then you would need to know about the usage of drugs in your country and Netherlands being one of the few countries to legalise marijuana, you would be expected to research and know why such a decision was made by the government and how it has affected the country, be it in a positive or negative way. In case your country is involved in the agenda at hand in any way, we at the executive board expect you to know in what way and to what extent.

You can then move on to what your country may be doing to curb the situation at hand. They may have passed some laws or employed a group of experts specialising in the problem in a bid to curb it, if not solve it. If your country has not done anything in that regard, just shrug and move on. As a whole, your country research must help you get an idea of what your country's stance on the agenda is: whether it wants it to continue or whether it wants it to stop; whether it believes it is for the betterment of the world or for the worse. Essentially, this must represent the government and the people of your country.

Another part of your research would be for effective bloc formation. This would involve finding out the stances of other countries on the agenda and whether their outlooks on the problem are the same, in case of which the resolution you draft would comply with their foreign policies too. Ensure that you do not miss out in this respect.

## Sample Position Paper

COMMITTEE: World Social Forum

ORGANISATION: Medecins sans Frontieres

NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE: Batman



Topic Area: NGO Humanitarian Aid for States in Transition

*“Humanitarian action is more than simple generosity, simple charity. It aims to build spaces of normalcy in the midst of what is abnormal.”*

– Dr. James Orbinski, ex-President of Medecins sans Frontieres, with a quote that perfectly defines the motive behind all humanitarian efforts, and principles on whose foundation the Organization of Medecins sans Frontieres was built. One of the largest, most effective, efficient and popular Non-Governmental Organizations of the world, Medecins sans Frontieres has played an integral role in peaceful humanitarian aid, especially medical aid to war-torn regions and disease-plagued developing countries.

Since its inception in 1971, Medecins sans Frontieres has embedded the motto of *“independence and impartiality”* into every one of the 30,000 medical personnel who have voluntarily taken part in our life-saving missions in countries such as Sri Lanka, Libya, Sudan, Rwanda and Cambodia; and have successfully provided effective medical treatment and assistance to over 400 thousand people. Our activities have mainly been focused on regions of political and economic instability as well as regions hit by dangerous and life-threatening sporadics, pandemics, epidemics and endemics, the goal being to eradicate illness and instil a state of physical, mental and social well-being among all people of that community or region.

Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) has, over the years, evolved into one of the biggest independent non-governmental organizations operating on a budget of US\$ 1.6 billion per annum. We have successfully undertaken the following notable missions in post-conflict and conflict zones as well as endemic-hit developing countries:

1. Long term Relief centres and Refugee camps for victims of massacres in Thailand during the 1979 Khmer Rouge feud in Cambodia and Vietnam;
2. Aid to Christian and Muslim soldiers during the Lebanese Civil War;
3. Medical assistance and tending to victims of the Rwandan genocide as well as setting up of refugee camps in Tanzania during the Great Lakes Refugee crisis due to the genocide;
4. Mental health care centres and hospitals under MSF in Libya during the 2011 civil war and 400 doctors in Yemen during the drone strikes conducted by the US-Saudi Coalition.

In addition to these activities, Medecins Sans Frontieres has also set up long-term medical centres in Cambodia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Congo to tackle the various deadly diseases encountered by the sub-Saharan and Asians such as HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Typhoid as well as illnesses caused by lack of nutrition and hydration.

Medecins sans Frontieres has taken full notice of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa and strongly condemns the atrocities being committed by the participants of the conflict in the region including the inhumane drone strikes and chemical warfare which have led to 268,000 casualties and a humongous number injured in the Middle East alone, including some of our own volunteer doctors; as well as severe mental consequences beyond the scope of rehabilitation. The situation, which began after the Arab Spring, has deteriorated since, to involve countries surrounding the warzone. The political and economic instability of the countries of Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen due to the Civil Wars has only taken a toll on the living conditions of the region, causing people to live in perpetual fear, owing to the fact that there is no guarantee of their lives. The turmoil in the region has attracted social stigma from all communities around the world; however, keeping in terms with our impartiality doctrine, Medecins sans Frontieres has provided unconditional treatment to all wounded militants and civilians, irrespective of the belief or principle that they are fighting for including but not limited to the following ways:

1. Setting up of ad-hoc inflatable field hospitals in and around the conflict zone, staffed adequately for medical treatment;
2. Replenishing the medical supplies, disposable instruments and rations in hospitals in Bahrain and Egypt for treating the wounded victims of war in addition to sending medical personnel to and financially supporting private hospitals in Iraq, Syria and Yemen;
3. Setting up of tents seven kilometres inland in protected areas of Tunisia for Libyan refugees awaiting repatriation and resettlement;
4. Providing free healthcare and medical and humanitarian assistance to all vulnerable residents of towns in turmoil.

Medecins Sans Frontieres, taking full cognizance of the situation, fails to see the trajectory in the ongoing Humanitarian Operations underway in the war zone. In an ideal situation under normal protocol, the medical personnel would be given a special non-militant status and would not be harmed in the war in accordance with customary International Humanitarian Law elaborated in the Geneva Conventions. However this has not been the case as we have already seen the loss of 121 volunteers' lives to carpet bombings and drone strikes in war zones. We strongly condemn such cowardly acts of narrow-mindedness on innocent doctors and assistants. In addition, the economic stability of the war-torn regions has been less than satisfactory for more than a decade, causing the residents to be reeling under poverty. There is a lack of infrastructure for the medical personnel to work with and lack of sterile equipment to work on the 13.5 million injured people of the Middle East.

After examining the situation at hand, Medecins sans Frontieres concludes that there must be a set framework within which the entire Medical and Humanitarian NGO's working in the Middle East and North Africa must coordinate to ensure further progress in the region. Coordination would improve the doctors to patient ratio considerably to ensure effective medical treatment and assistance in the conflict zones and would reduce the workload of the doctors in addition to other benefits. We also encourage an increase in the number of Muslim-oriented Humanitarian groups in the region. We look forward to working with other Non-profit organizations to save every life possible and accounting for the health of each and every citizen on this Earth and hope to come to the most feasible and fruitful solutions in accordance with our principles, International law and the United Nations.