

## ASMUN CONFERENCE 2018

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*"New problems create new opportunities:  
7.6 billion people together towards a better future"*



## United Nations General Assembly 1st

*"Paving the way to a world without  
a nuclear threat"*

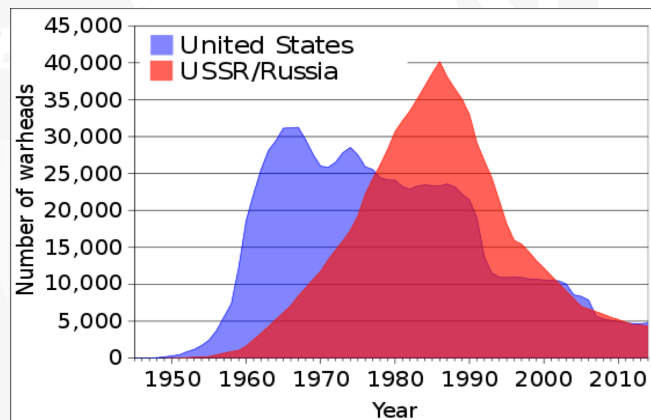
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## Introduction and scope

During the Manhattan Project (1942-1946), a project led by the nuclear physicist Robert Oppenheimer, the first nuclear weapons were produced. This project was led by the United States of America and supported by the United Kingdom and Canada. Towards the end of the Second World War, after Nazi Germany had already capitulated, the Allied Forces were still at war with Japan. Japan refused to accept the Allies' demands for unconditional surrender, which led to the surrender of Nazi Germany, and therefore the war in Asia continued. By ignoring these demands, the Allied Forces decided to bomb the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear bombs. These bombs caused over 129,000 casualties, and finally, after having seen this disaster, the Empire of Japan capitulated.

During the Cold War, both the USSR and the USA increased the production levels of their nuclear warheads. As a response to this, the Soviet Union, the USA and the United Kingdom ratified the "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", a resolution not only containing measures to dismantle nuclear weapons, but also to discourage sharing nuclear weapons or any knowledge on nuclear weapons with



other states, which effectively also diminished the likeliness of a proxy-war. It is important to note that the treaty does not prohibit peaceful usages of nuclear technology: The articles mentioned above do not apply to nuclear energy as a power source for example. Even though the treaty was put into place in 1970, the amount of nuclear weapons were still increasing: just before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and thus the end of the Cold War, the amount of warheads rose to over 60,000. In the era before and after the fall of the USSR, DISEC passed multiple resolutions on decreasing the operational readiness of the nuclear weapons.

## General information on the committee

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is a committee that 'deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.' (General Assembly of the United Nations). This committee is also known as the 'First Committee', one of the six committees of the UN General Assembly, and all 193 UN member states can attend. Following the disastrous events in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the First Committee drafted its first resolution in 1946 to address international concerns for the 'Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy'. Ever since this discovery had led to this nuclear disaster following World War II, DISEC's main purpose has been to encourage the disarmament of nuclear weapons for all member states, in order to secure international peace. As DISEC is one of the GA's (General Assembly's) six committees, DISEC's mandate is mentioned as follows in Article 11 of Chapter IV of the UN Charter: 'The General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armament.' In the past, DISEC has shown great effort with regard to the disarmament of nuclear weapons, and that battle is not yet over.



## DISEC's involvement in past nuclear conflicts

An example of DISEC's involvement in a nuclear conflict, is the conflict in Iraq, lasting from the 1980s until 2003. Iraq was supposedly working on a very extensive biological, chemical and nuclear weapon program, making the country a very dangerous nuclear power in the region, but it also made Iran a dangerous power to the rest of the world. Especially in the Iran-Iraq war, also in the 1980s, Iraq has used its offensive weapon program to Iran and to Kurdish civilians. In the decade following the Gulf War, the 1990s, the United Nations took serious actions in order to locate and destroy vast quantities of these extremely dangerous weapons. At first, the Iraqi cooperation in these projects varied in degree, but this diminished very evidently in 1998. The USA continued to put a lot of pressure on Iraq by demanding it to allow inspection teams to its facilities. The

pressure reached its top in 2002 and 2003, when US President George W. Bush demanded a complete end to what was, at least in the eyes of the UN, Iraq's production of weapons of mass destruction. Again, Iraq's compliance to this demanded remained very small, and this caused the USA to threaten to use military force against the Iraqi government unless Iraq would get rid of all the weapons of mass destruction it



supposedly had in its possession, willingly. In March 2003, the USA government reported that 'diplomacy has failed', and, in spite of the fact that the demand of the United States government to end the supposed Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction met resistance in both the United Nations and the USA and other European countries itself, the 2003 invasion of Iraq took place just a few days later.

A military superpower like the USA can, as can be seen from this example, exert quite a lot of pressure not only on the country discussed, which was Iraq in this case, but also on its fellow member states of the United Nations. This makes the discussion of conflicts that involve a member state's (supposed) possession of weapons of mass destruction not extremely easy. A committee like the GA's First Committee, i.e. DISEC, will always provide a very interesting discussion, because it will always experience conflicting interests among the member states, which will contribute to the difficulty of providing solutions to similar conflicts that will be reasonably acceptable for every single member state. However, this is also very challenging and it gives a great opportunity for next-level diplomacy, which is very useful in coming up with solutions in a committee like DISEC.

## ***Democratic People's Republic of Korea***

A more recent event regarding nuclear weapons is the rising threat of North Korea. Even though this has gained more attention recently, North Korea already withdrew from the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2003, and performed its first nuclear test in 2006. These tests continue to this day, and with each test, the weapons become more advanced. In 2017, North Korea launched two ICBMs. One of these two long-range missiles had the capabilities to reach the United States of America. This also means that most of the states are within reach of said ICBMs. This fact, in combination with the rapidly rising level of advancement of the Nuclear Program of North Korea results in rising tension between states all over the world. This tension resulted in a



coalition between South Korea, Japan, The United States of America and Australia against North Korea. These rising tensions should be considered as a danger to humankind as a whole, and should be in the back of your minds during committee sessions.

Yet the reason for these committee sessions is not to stop North Korea, or any state for that matter. The reason for these committee sessions is to prevent a global nuclear war. Our goal is not only to disarm currently existing nuclear weapons, but also to prevent the further development of nuclear weapons. Being a committee in the General Assembly, DISEC has proven to provide an excellent stage for international discussions since the committee recognizes the equal sovereignty of every single member state, with no regard to their size, military strength, financial power or any single characteristic for that matter. In order to be able to understand the purpose and goal of this committee, it is important to realise that DISEC is not fundamentally opposed to all forms of nuclear energy, as it can also be used as a harmless power source, as mentioned in article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT): "Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes..."



## Bloc positions

### *The United States of America and its allies*

The United States of America is one of the most powerful and influential member states in this committee, leading a block of allies (French Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Japan, Commonwealth of Australia, Republic of Iraq) while also gaining support from former allies (Islamic Republic of Pakistan). The United States of America has an interest in preserving a reserve of nuclear weapons as a means of defense against other member states that also possess nuclear weapons.

### *The anti-intervention states*

The Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China lead a bloc with similar goals. Followed by their allies (Republic of Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of India and Syrian Arab Republic). Whilst acknowledging the benefits of nuclear disarmament, this bloc also reaffirms that nuclear weapons are also a means of self-defense.

### *The intervention states*

In the committee, the Federal Republic of Germany leads a bloc together with the Republic of Korea, Ukraine, State of Israel and the Republic of Belarus. These member states are generally in favor of the disarmament of nuclear weapons, but are skeptical of the practical aspects: disarmament can only achieve its full potential, when all member states participate, which is an unlikely scenario according to this bloc.

### *The moderate states*

The last bloc consists of countries who are in favor of nuclear disarmament for one reason or another (Republic of Poland, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Republic of Finland, Kingdom of Belgium, Italian Republic, Republic of South Korea, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Cameroon). These member states generally are relatively small in military strength, thus seeing the full advantages of nuclear disarmament.

Keep in mind that bloc positions are not set in stone, and that it is always possible to find unconventional allies.

## Countries present

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- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. United States of America                             | 14. Republic of South Africa       |
| 2. Russian Federation                                   | 15. Syrian Arab Republic           |
| 3. French Republic                                      | 16. Republic of Iraq               |
| 4. People's Republic of China                           | 17. Islamic Republic of Iran       |
| 5. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | 18. Republic of Korea              |
| 6. Republic of India                                    | 19. Japan                          |
| 7. Islamic Republic of Pakistan                         | 20. Ukraine                        |
| 8. Democratic People's Republic of Korea                | 21. Republic of Belarus            |
| 9. State of Israel                                      | 22. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia        |
| 10. Federal Republic of Germany                         | 23. Republic of Kazakhstan         |
| 11. Kingdom of Belgium                                  | 24. Republic of Finland            |
| 12. Italian Republic                                    | 25. Republic of Cameroon           |
| 13. Republic of Turkey                                  | 26. Plurinational State of Bolivia |
|   | 27. Republic of Poland             |
|   | 28. Commonwealth of Australia      |

## Questions a resolution must address (QARMA's)

- Under what circumstances does the right to nuclear development extend and how should the international community engage to protect that right?
- What actions can be taken to better enforce the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons?
- How can verification measures be strengthened to ensure peaceful uses of nuclear material?
- How can safety and security concerns be balanced against the right to increased access to nuclear technology?



## Further research

- History of the General Assembly First Committee, [osgoodcenter.org](http://osgoodcenter.org)
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt>
- Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, [http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/test\\_ban](http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/test_ban) - Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/ctbt>
- A PROHIBITION ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS - A guide to the issues, <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/a-prohibition-on-nuclear-weapons-a-guide-to-the-issues-en-647.pdf>

