

# **BALMUN'25**

## **GA1: DISEC**

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# **STUDY GUIDE**

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## Letter from the Co-Secretaries General

It is our utmost pleasure to be able to serve this year's BALMUN Conference, a gathering where we unite to shape the world through democracy and collective ideas, as the Co-Secretaries General. We are more than prepared to provide you with the best 3 days journey of all your MUN experiences. With our excellent academic team, we greet you with 8 committees in total: 2 of them being General Assembly, 4 of them being Special and 2 of them as Crisis Committees. Let this conference serve as a reminder that leadership is not measured by the volume of one's voice, but by the integrity of people's ideas and the willingness to listen, adapt, and inspire the change.

Sincerely,  
Alin Asel Mordeniz & Ceylin Umay Köylü  
Secretaries General

## Letter from the Under Secretary General

Hello, Distinguished Delegates of BALMUN'25!

I am Haktan Efe Özgür, a sophomore student at Florya Tevfik Ercan Anatolian High School, and I am pleased to serve as the Under Secretary General of GA:1 DISEC.

Before we proceed, I would like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to our esteemed Co-Secretary Generals, Ceylin Umay Köylü and Alin Asel Mordeniz, for granting me the opportunity to serve as the Under Secretary General of this distinguished committee. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my Academic Assistant, Burak Durgut, for his dedication and hard work.

However, a special note of appreciation goes to one of my Co-Chairs, Ela Çakır, whose support has been invaluable. She has been one of my closest friends since the start of my MUN journey, and I'm glad we haven't grown apart ever since. She slayed fr fr.

Many of you are attending this conference as your first MUN conference, so we have aimed to make this Study Guide as accessible as possible. I know being in an MUN conference can be very intimidating at first, but in actuality, it's not as intimidating as many make it out to be. This is your chance to expand your social circle and improve your communication skills. I believe that we will have three amazing days within our committee and in general.

Furthermore, I would like to remind you that there are still many other sources beyond this study guide, so I encourage you to research more. If you have any questions regarding the study guide or any questions in general, feel free to reach me at [haktanefeozygur240@gmail.com](mailto:haktanefeozygur240@gmail.com).

Best Regards,

Haktan Efe Özgür, Under Secretary General of GA:1 DISEC

## Letter from the Academic Assistant

Esteemed delegates,

I'm Burak Durgut, a prep student at Bahçelievler Anatolian High School, and I'm thrilled to welcome you as your Academic Assistant for GA:1 DISEC at BALMUN'25.

Our USG and I put a lot of effort into creating this study guide to give you a solid resource for your debates and solutions. But we encourage that all of you came with further research in order to increase your knowledge about the agenda item.

Before we proceed with the study guide I have to express my sincere appreciation to our Co-Secretary Generals, Ceylin Umay Koylu and Alin Asel Mordeniz for giving me a position in BALMUN'25. Ever since I began my MUN career, serving in this role was a dream of mine and without them it wouldn't be possible. A special thanks goes to Haktan, our USG, whose inspired me to continue in my MUN career. And his contributions to this study guide were out of this world, like how do you do it bro?

Finally as a representative of Bahçelievler Anatolian High School, I hope BALMUN'25 provides you with unforgettable experiences and whether you're a first-timer or an experienced delegate, please engage in the best way you can. I thank you all for attending BALMUN'25.

Best regards,

Burak Durgut, the Academic Assistant of GA:1 DISEC

## Introduction to the Committee

The General Assembly First Committee, also known as “GA:1 DISEC” (Disarmament and International Security Committee), stands among the six key committees within the United Nations' General Assembly. It carries out responsibilities associated with worldwide peace and security issues, like disarmament, the regularization of conventional and non-conventional weapons, and boosting international cooperation to maintain peaceful conditions. Being a platform open to all 193 member countries of the UN makes GA:1 DISEC accommodating, where every country, irrespective of their size or power, can express concerns and suggest answers to some intensive global security threats that the world faces today.



GA:1 DISEC works based on the UN Charter rules and has strong cooperation with groups like the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). Even though it does not have the authority to impose its resolutions, it carries significant influence in creating worldwide standards, achieving consensus, and promoting diplomacy involving multiple countries. Common debates within this committee include topics such as nuclear disarmament measures, stopping armed conflicts, restricting space military operations, along regulating small guns and light weaponry.

In Model United Nations (MUN), GA:1 DISEC is recognized for its energetic and crucial debates. It requires delegates to possess a good knowledge of international law, security strategies, and geopolitical matters. In GA:1 DISEC, participants have to manage intricate alliances and delicate subjects while keeping their country's position harmonized with the comprehensive aim of world stability. This committee plays an important role for people who are interested in maintaining peace, controlling global weapons armament, as well as merging diplomacy with security policy.

# **Agenda Item: The Global Challenge of Illicit Arms Trade and Small Arms Proliferation**

## **Introduction to Agenda Item**

Illicit trading of small arms and light weapons represents one of the global issues of utmost importance regarding security challenges facing the international community today. These weapons, clarified as portable lethal weapons for individual use, have become a substantial factor regarding the initiation, sustainment, and provocation of armed conflict, violence, and crime worldwide, with approximately 500,000 people passing away every year due to armed violence, with the majority of these casualties happening due to the trade of such weapons.

The complexity in addressing this issue stems from the fact that every illicit weapon that is being traded within these markets is that every one of them used to be a legitimate weapon. These weapons find their way to the illegal market through different methods, like robbery and improper transfers. The problem gets more complex due to the long-lasting nature of these weapons; they can work for many years, keeping up a risk even after wars have stopped. This continuous use of weapons in different places creates constant safety problems that cross national boundaries and requires a collaborative global effort.

This problem is global, so a comprehensive response is required. Numerous companies around the world manufacture small arms, and their trade value exceeds \$100 billion each year. To address this issue, we need ongoing international cooperation and commitment. This problem affects nearly all regions; however, it has a more severe impact in conflict zones. In these areas, these weapons remain accessible even after the conflict ends, making them potential catalysts for future violence.

New developments underline the immediate need and possibility for improvements in tackling this issue. In Africa only, from 2000 till now, conflicts have taken place in 27 countries due to the rampant spread of weapons, which caused considerable destruction. But successful efforts like the "Silencing the Guns" campaign by the African Union exhibit that joint action can bring favorable outcomes; more than 22,000 arms have been gathered and destroyed across various nations. These illustrations show the large scale of the problem and the possible significant advancement that can be achieved through consistent global collaboration and dedication to regulating the illegal arms trade.



## Key Terms and Definitions

- **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)**

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) are firearms intended for use by individuals or small groups. Small arms include hand-held weapons like pistols, rifles, and light machine guns, operated by one person. Light weapons include heavier arms such as heavy machine guns, mortars, and portable anti-tank systems, which require a team to operate. Due to their easy transportability and simple operation, SALW are heavily used in modern conflicts and criminal activities, especially in densely populated areas.

- **Illicit Trade**

Illicit trade refers to the unauthorized manufacturing, selling, stealing, diverting, or smuggling of weapons, often supported by forged documentation and misleading transactions. It significantly harms global security, as illegal weapons frequently end up with criminal organizations, insurgent groups, or corrupt officials. Illicit networks often use seemingly legitimate methods to conceal illegal operations.

- **Stockpile Management**

Stockpile management focuses on the safe and secure storage, transportation, and monitoring of weapon stockpiles. This includes strong physical security, regular inventory checks, and strict access controls. Proper management helps prevent theft or diversion, and is especially important in conflict zones or areas with high crime rates where lost weapons can lead to serious consequences.

- **End-User Certificate**

An End-User Certificate is an official document used to verify the recipient of arms, specifying their identity, the intended purpose, the destination, and the types and quantities of weapons. Certified by recognized authorities, it ensures that weapons are not diverted to unintended users. These certificates play a crucial role in monitoring arms throughout their entire life cycle.

- **Marking and Tracing**

Marking and tracing involve putting unique serial numbers and manufacturer information on weapons, along with proper documentation for imports, exports, and shipments. If a weapon is found in illegal hands, tracing can reveal where it was diverted. International cooperation is key to strengthening tracing efforts and cracking down on arms trafficking.

- **Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS)**

MANPADS are lightweight, shoulder-fired missiles designed to shoot down aircraft. Due to their destructive potential and ease of use, they require very strict control measures.

MANPADS are a significant security concern because they can be used to target civilian aviation if mishandled or diverted.

- **Brokering**

Brokering refers to arranging deals for the buying and selling of weapons, including offering transport, financing, or paperwork services. Brokers must operate transparently and under strict regulations. However, with only around 40 countries having clear laws on arms brokering, oversight remains a major global challenge.

- **Diversion**

Diversion happens when weapons intended for legal recipients are stolen, smuggled, or otherwise redirected to unauthorized groups. This can happen at any point from production to final delivery and is often aided by corruption or weak regulations. Effective tracking and international cooperation are critical to stopping diversion.

- **Transfer Controls**

Transfer controls are the rules and processes that regulate how weapons move across borders. These include setting eligibility standards, verifying end-use, securing transportation, and monitoring post-delivery use. Strong transfer controls are necessary to balance legitimate trade needs with the need to prevent unauthorized arms flows, and must be applied consistently across all types of transactions.

## **Background and Historical Context**

### **Cold War Origins**

The current scene of illegal arms trade has its roots mostly in the policies from Cold War times. During this time, great powers provided weapons to different allies and proxy forces all over the world. This era experienced an unmatched spread of various weapon systems across many areas, creating networks and trends that still affect modern-day trafficking of arms. The aftermath of these transfers made during the Cold War is clear even now, as many conflict regions are using weapons produced at that time.

During this time, major powers set up wide networks for distributing weapons. They often backed certain groups or governments that shared their ideological beliefs. The early patterns of spreading these weapons have contributed to the formation of today's intricate trafficking systems. Weapons are now commonly moved across many borders before they arrive at their final point.

During the time of the Cold War, there was also a rise in advanced weapons production and delivery systems, especially among the big powers. These systems were first made for military operations at the country level, but as global relationships shifted and ways of conflict changed, these became channels for illegal arms trade later on.

### **Post-Cold War Developments**

In 2001, a big change happened with the United Nations Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. This important agreement started the first complete international plan for dealing with the spread, even if putting it into practice still faces many difficulties. The PoA changed from only national methods to countries working together on arms control.

In 1999, the UN Security Council started to deal with small arms as a separate agenda item. This showed that they were giving more importance to this issue in terms of international security. The change was seen because there was an increasing understanding about how much the spreading of weapons affected regional stability and humanitarian conditions all over the world.

Lately, there have been some changes that brought additional complications to the historical story. Actors who are not representing any state are becoming more notable in obtaining and distributing weapons, which poses a challenge to traditional methods of arms control focused on states alone. This growth has compelled international organizations to adjust their approaches and create new systems for dealing with the spread of weapons beyond usual state-to-state exchanges.

## Contemporary Era

Lately, there have been some changes that make the historical story more complex. More and more often, we see groups or individuals who are not connected to any government getting hold of and spreading weapons. This challenges the usual way states try to control arms. Because of this shift, international organizations must change their approaches, too. They need to come up with new ways of dealing with the spread of weapons beyond just traditional state-to-state exchanges.

The growth of digital platforms has changed the patterns in weapons trafficking. This is because dark web marketplaces have appeared, creating new ways for distributing weapons. Modern technologies offer both chances and challenges when it comes to fighting against illegal arms trade. It demands constant adjustment of control methods and enforcement plans.

Today, the landscape of weapons trafficking is defined by unclear distinctions between state and non-state actors. They use more advanced methods for obtaining and distributing weapons. International organizations are constantly changing their strategies to handle these new challenges, understanding that successful control measures need to match technological progress and shifting global security dynamics.

## **Current Global Situation and Statistics**

### **Current Global Situation**

The illicit trade of small arms and light weapons (SALW) keeps creating big problems all over the world. These kinds of weapons are a major factor in fights, violence, and crime everywhere. The issue remains even with global efforts to stop it, touching different areas in various ways. Too many small arms and light weapons are being gathered up, spread around wrongly, or used without permission, which is still causing conflicts that involve fighting as well as criminal activities on an international scale.

This worldwide problem needs joint effort from countries around the world, which we can see through different UN organizations getting involved. The Human Rights Council often discusses how transferring weapons and civilians owning or using firearms affect human rights. Within the United Nations, Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) acts as an internal coordination tool for the whole UN system. It gathers 24 partners within the UN who have various knowledge areas such as economic and social development, human rights issues, disarmament procedures related to organized crime and terrorism prevention of conflicts, along with peacekeeping operations, including public health matters, environmental concerns, gender equality initiatives, and children's welfare programs.

The UN Security Council keeps a close watch on the problems related to small arms, dealing with matters that range from Security Sector Reform and arms embargoes to counter-terrorism and maintaining peace. In 2019, they passed a resolution devoted to "Silencing the Guns in Africa", which is the African Union's major project. This underscores how important it is to handle illegal weaponry to achieve stability in this region. The latest Security Council resolution 2616 was about preventing illicit transfer of weapons as well as their excessive accumulation or diversion, undermining stability, especially when these activities violate previously imposed embargoes by the council regarding armaments.

## **Recent Statistics and Achievements**

Specific programs have shown advancement, with more than 22,000 weapons gathered and eliminated across 13 African nations via the UN-AU joint project. The smashing of over 225,000 captured and outdated guns, bullets, and explosives in Liberia alone shows big wins for disarmament attempts. These figures reveal a definite triumph in shrinking the worldwide weapon inventory as well as tackling the illegal spread.

The project, which is a collaboration between the UN and AU, has accomplished significant outcomes in various nations. The countries getting support include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Niger Uganda Liberia Tanzania and Togo. Every state that benefits from this develops activities specifically planned to deal with its national and regional situations, ensuring customized solutions for local problems.

These programs' triumphs have resulted in refreshed backing from global partners, with Germany offering ongoing financial support for expansion into new areas. The Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) continues to serve as an executing partner, encouraging regional and national ownership through National Focal Points and National Commissions on small arms control. These accomplishments show the success of coordinated international attempts to tackle the illegal proliferation of weapons.

## **Current Initiatives and Progress**

The Africa Amnesty Month program has recently been implemented in many countries and is now spreading to new areas like Djibouti, Rwanda, and the Central African Republic. The start of the SALIENT (Saving Lives Entity) funding facility has improved cooperation in this region through partnerships between the UN and the AU. These efforts show that the international community is increasingly dedicated to tackling this problem, especially where illegal arms are most prevalent.

The United Nations offers the Modular Small-Arms Control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), a resource that provides practical advice to policymakers and decision-makers on various issues related to small arms control. Recently, UNODA has created instructions within MOSAIC on how to establish and sustain areas free of guns. These detailed guidelines are available for national governments, local councils, and international development bodies.

The states that benefit from these have arranged wide campaigns to inform people about the dangers and risks of owning guns illegally, as well as the illicit movement of small arms and light weapons. These efforts merge raising awareness with practical implementation by improving abilities in managing stockpiles and policing based on community needs.

## **Impact on International Peace and Security**

The illicit trade and spread of small arms pose a significant risk to global peace and stability, emerging through various interconnected pathways. The United Nations states that these weapons are now the second leading cause of civilian deaths related to conflict, resulting in around 250,000 fatalities each year. The consequences extend beyond immediate deaths, as the misuse, illicit distribution, and perilous accumulation of small arms and light weapons threaten peace and security at national, regional, and global levels. This distribution particularly affects vulnerable populations in conflict zones, where poorly controlled weapon stockpiles pose significant humanitarian threats and serve as readily available resources for arms trafficking.

The impact of illegal arms trafficking on the economy and development is just as destructive. The easy access to weapons results in human misery, political oppression, crime, and fear among civilians, and reckless arms transfers can destabilize whole regions. Moreover, countries plagued by high violence levels face discouraged investment and disrupted development, complicating their efforts to meet globally recognized development objectives. The impact is particularly noticeable in regions with insufficient legal structures and poor governance, where economic marginalization often results in dangerous armed conflicts. In these situations, the illicit arms trade drives ongoing conflict that obstructs sustainable development initiatives.

A particularly concerning aspect of modern weapon proliferation pertains to emerging challenges and developments. The rising prevalence of darknet platforms for acquiring weapons has complicated detection and law enforcement investigations. Additionally, emerging technologies such as 3D printing and the illegal modification of decommissioned weapons are fueling the destabilizing buildup. These changes require an immediate adjustment of control measures to ensure their ongoing effectiveness in preventing weapons trafficking. Moreover, the rising threat of gender-based violence, with 70 to 90 percent of sexual violence connected to conflict involving small arms, underscores the need for gender-sensitive approaches in addressing arms proliferation.

To successfully tackle these issues, global collaboration and comprehensive structures are vital. The Arms Trade Treaty serves as an essential tool in creating uniform standards for global arms trading and eliminating illegal weapon transfers. Efficient tools encompass strong transfer regulations, border security measures, reliable stockpile management, and thorough marking, tracking, and documentation systems. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs plays an essential coordinating role, fostering synergies among different initiatives and offering capacity-building assistance via regional centers globally. Achieving success in tackling weapons proliferation necessitates ongoing global dedication and the execution of thorough prevention strategies that target both supply-side regulations and the root causes of armed violence.

## **Major Sources and Routes of Illicit Arms**

### **Illicit Manufacturing Sources**

#### **Artisan Workshops**

Traditional blacksmith operations in West Africa and well-developed cottage industries in Ghana produce various weapons, including pistols and shotguns. Extensive artisan production facilities in Pakistan manufacture a wide range of inexpensive weapons, including revolvers and shotguns.

#### **Home Fabrication**

Improved workshop operations throughout South America, particularly in Brazil, demonstrate upgraded capabilities. Significantly, an analysis of over 14,488 firearms seized in São Paulo between 2011 and 2012 revealed that 48% of submachine guns were made by individuals, underscoring the prevalence of amateur production.

#### **Clandestine Factories**

Global operations have been recognized, with locations in Australia manufacturing .22 rifle replicas and a facility in the Philippines creating .22 caliber pen guns. These factories operate outside legal limits while having sophisticated production capabilities.

#### **Modern Manufacturing Methods**

Recent advancements include 3D printing activities, such as the site in Queensland, Australia, which manufactured advanced weapons, including Uzi-type submachine guns and suppressors. These activities illustrate the changing characteristics of illegal production techniques.

### **Theft and Diversion Sources**

#### **Stockpile Diversion**

Civilian storage facilities and military/government arsenals are targeted for weapons theft. Transit shipment interception occurs during transportation, while depot pilferage operations involve stealing directly from storage facilities. These diversions often involve the manipulation of shipping documentation.

#### **Documentation Fraud**

Illegal brokers enable transactions by utilizing counterfeit export permits and modified shipping documents. They alter documentation to modify approved destinations and fabricate deceptive paper trails for weapon transfers. This technique enables the redirection of legally produced weapons into illegal pathways.



## **Conversion, Recycling, and Reactivation**

### **Parts Conversion**

Operations focus on modifying civilian items into functional weapons and assembling firearms from trafficked components. Manufacturers create functional weapons from parts not originally designed for firearms, adapting various materials for weapon construction.

### **Weapon Modification**

Operations emphasize transforming civilian goods into operational weapons and constructing firearms from smuggled parts. Producers turn non-firearm components into effective weapons, utilizing different materials to construct these arms.

### **Reactivation Programs**

Specialized operations reactivate nonfunctional weapons, fix damaged firearms, and reintroduce decommissioned weapons into service. These initiatives prolong the lifespan of current weaponry and reintegrate previously unserviceable arms into use.

## **Major Trafficking Routes and Methods**

### **Border Crossings**

Operations employ various entry points, such as land border crossings, airports, and seaports. Recorded seizures demonstrate varying trafficking trends across different areas, with traffickers adjusting their routes in response to law enforcement efforts.

### **Transport Methods**

Smugglers employ concealment techniques within legitimate cargo shipments and utilize false documentation. Multiple transit points obscure weapon origins, while free trade zones are exploited to facilitate movement. This complex routing system makes tracking difficult.

### **Monitoring Challenges**

The absence of comprehensive international databases comparable to UN Comtrade creates significant tracking difficulties. Limited reliable statistics and fragmented reporting systems force reliance on seizure data and anecdotal evidence, making it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about trafficking patterns in particular regions.

## **Legal Frameworks and Treaties**

### **UN Programme of Action (PoA)**

The UN Programme of Action (PoA) is a significant global effort that was set up in 2001 to fight against the illegal trading of small arms and light weapons. This wide-ranging structure came from the shared understanding among member countries of the United Nations about how much damage can be done to world peace, stability, and safety for people when there is no control over the trafficking of these kinds of weapons. Through this initiative, nations all around the globe pledged they would put into practice real actions designed to stop, battle with, and finally wipe out completely any form or instance where trade in small arms and light weapons happens illegally.

At the basic level, PoA sets up three main pillars of action that make up its implementation strategy. Initially, it demands enhancements in national laws related to small arms so that nations can set solid legal structures for controlling weapons within their borders. Secondly, import/export controls are fortified by creating uniform procedures for monitoring and tracing weapon transfers between countries. In the end, it talks about managing stockpiles, giving instructions for safekeeping and upkeep of weapon inventories to stop them from going into unlawful markets. These linked parts cooperate to form a thorough system of control and supervision.

One big accomplishment of the PoA is creating its supporting tools, especially the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), which was accepted in 2005. This extra structure asks countries to use standard marking systems for weapons and keep thorough logs of their movement. The ITI acts as an important tool to track illegal weapon transfers, helping nations find out where weapons used in conflict areas or taken during law enforcement actions come from. Remarkably, this part of the PoA has now been included in the wider United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This points out its crucial role in reaching peace and security goals around the world.

The working of the PoA functions on various tiers of governance, forming an ordered system of duty and activity. On the level of nations, countries are anticipated to set up specific procedures for executing PoA promises. This includes appointing national contacts and forming units that focus specifically on tracking and controlling weapons. Regionally, states work together via pre-established structures to exchange successful practices, manage border controls collaboratively, and carry out combined operations against networks trafficking arms. On a global scale, the UN offers technical support, promotes the sharing of information, and manages worldwide reactions to new issues in controlling small arms.

The success of the PoA is monitored using a complex reporting system. This system mixes frequent national evaluations with occasional international review meetings. Countries give comprehensive reports that describe their implementation advancement, difficulties they have encountered, and insights gained. These reports are examined together during the Biennial Meetings of States (BMS) and Review Conferences (RevCon). Here, the nations taking part evaluate general progress, tackle new problems, and decide on future priorities for putting into practice. This methodical way leads to ongoing betterment and adjustment of the program according to changing situations in the small arms control area.

The Programme of Action shows special importance in dealing with the human suffering caused by the spread of small arms. In areas affected by conflict, an uncontrolled circulation of weapons usually increases violence and weakens efforts for peace. The PoA sets clear rules for managing and transferring weapons, which helps decrease their availability, which could intensify conflicts. Moreover, its attention on the security of stockpiles and measures for border control straightaway aids in lessening armed violence in communities hit by conflict. This way it backs wider humanitarian aims and goals for sustainable development.

In the future, the PoA will continue to grow to meet new difficulties in weapons technology and trafficking. Current advancements like 3D printing and digital technologies create more intricacies that need creative answers within the present structure. The program's ability to adjust and be flexible is very important for it to keep its importance in today's quickly altering safety environment. By continuous checking procedures and frequent revisions to execution instructions, the PoA continues to be an important tool in worldwide endeavors for fighting illegal trade of weapons and fostering global tranquility and safety.

The PoA's success in the end relies on continuous dedication from its member countries and efficient teamwork among different stakeholders. Although a lot of advancement has happened since it was accepted, ongoing issues show the necessity for increased cooperation and distribution of resources. The merging of this program with wider UN efforts, especially the Sustainable Development Goals, highlights how vital it is to achieve complete global security goals. The global community is dealing with changing difficulties in controlling weapons and preventing conflicts. In this context, the PoA serves as an essential structure for harmonized efforts to combat illegal arms trade. It functions both as a usable instrument for putting plans into action and a representation of shared dedication towards decreasing armed violence across the globe.

## Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is known as the first legally binding instrument ever made inside the United Nations that sets common rules for the international trade of conventional weapons. The idea of forming shared international standards for arms trading has been around for a long time, it can even be traced back to the League of Nations, which made a draft convention on the arms trade that never ended up being adopted. While international law during the Cold War focused a lot on stopping the spread of weapons like chemical, biological, and nuclear ones, there wasn't any major progress when it came to conventional weapons. After the Cold War ended, the international community started paying more attention to the impact of widespread armed violence, especially in places dealing with poverty and deep inequality. In the early and mid-1990s, to try and control the spread of conventional arms, different sets of rules or guidelines started appearing among some of the major arms-exporting countries. From 1993 to 1997, the biggest arms suppliers were the Permanent Five (P5) members of the UN Security Council, along with Germany.

A lot of supplier countries started to follow stricter arms transfer policies, especially when there was a high risk of human rights violations in the receiving country. The United States recognized that the issue of arms proliferation was global, and called on the P5 to meet and discuss making transfer guidelines. Even though the P5 had agreed in 1991 to come up with a set of "Guidelines for Conventional Arms Transfers", disagreements made the process collapse by 1992. In that same year, 1991, the UN established the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which was supposed to be a key international tool to bring more predictability and transparency to the global arms trade.

Then, in 1997, a group of Nobel Peace Prize laureates, led by Dr. Oscar Arias, who was the former president of Costa Rica, launched an International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers. And by 1998, the European Union became the first regional group to accept its own Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, since Western Europe was the second biggest arms exporting region at the time. Illicit arms trafficking started to become a bigger problem, especially in regions like Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, and Southeast Asia. A study done by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1999 showed that the uncontrolled availability of weapons was one of the main causes of civilian suffering during and after armed conflicts. It led to more casualties and made it harder to provide humanitarian and development aid. In 2003, the Small Arms Survey reported that countries like Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands suffered from things like forced displacement, human rights abuses, economic collapse, and civilian deaths could all be linked to the easy access to conventional weapons.

Progress at the UN level first happened in the area of small arms and light weapons, since they were seen as the main weapons used in modern internal conflicts and violence. A big breakthrough came in 2001 at the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, where countries agreed on a non-binding programme called the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. By 2006, the global focus started shifting back to conventional arms in general. Many States began pointing out that the global banana trade was more regulated than the arms trade, which highlighted the gap in international law.

That same year, seven governments- Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya, and the United Kingdom, who were known as the “co-authors”, supported by a civil society campaign and Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, brought the first UN General Assembly resolution on creating an Arms Trade Treaty. The resolution said that not having shared standards on arms transfers was making conflict, terrorism, crime, and displacement worse, and that it was also harming peace, stability, security, and development.

From 2006 to 2013, the path to adopting the ATT wasn't easy. States came into the negotiations with very different goals. Exporting countries saw the ATT as a way to help their defense industries operate more openly in the global market. They wanted fair competition and standard rules. Transit and trans-shipment countries didn't want to be burdened with too many new regulations. On the other side, importing countries wanted to protect their right to choose weapons for self-defense. Some countries were heavily impacted by violence and instability due to illicit arms flows. These countries saw real benefits for their national and local security if the ATT was strong and enforced properly. Others pushed for strong humanitarian outcomes from the treaty. Regional organizations also played an important role since many already had some level of control or regulation over arms transfers at a regional level.

It's also important to mention that political agreement on the ATT was never guaranteed. The UN had not successfully negotiated a multilateral arms control treaty since the 1990s. So, when the ATT was adopted by a huge majority in the General Assembly in 2013, it became a major milestone not just for arms regulation but also for the idea of multilateral cooperation through the United Nations.

## Firearms Protocol (UNTOC)

The Firearms Protocol is a crucial international treaty that supplements the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). Adopted to address the growing threat of illegal weapons trafficking worldwide, this protocol establishes comprehensive guidelines for controlling the manufacture, transfer, and possession of firearms, their parts, and ammunition. Its primary objective is to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, while promoting international cooperation among states to address this serious challenge to global security.

The protocol establishes clear definitions and standards for implementation. It defines a firearm as "any portable barrelled weapon that expels, is designed to expel or may be readily converted to expel a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive," explicitly excluding antique firearms manufactured before 1899. It also gives detailed criteria for what counts as illicit manufacturing and trafficking, including production without proper authorization, unmarked weapons, and unauthorized cross-border movements. These definitions are the foundation for putting the protocol's different control mechanisms into practice.

To effectively put these actions into control, the procedure asks participating states to set up a few important systems. First, it asks for complete record maintenance for at least ten years, and that includes details about producers, importers, and exporters, as well as movement tracking information for weapons. Secondly, it means that countries have to bring in strong marking schemes for firearms, so that each one has unique identifiers showing the maker's name or mark, the country where it was made, and serial numbers. In the end, it sets up severe rules for export and import licenses. This makes sure that every international shipment is correctly approved and recorded.

The protocol encourages global teamwork through various ways. The countries involved need to share important details about organized criminal groups that deal with weapon trafficking, how to detect them, and the successful ways of stopping them. They should also work together in tracking weapons that might have been illegally made or transported, and give mutual support in investigations and legal proceedings. Moreover, the agreement motivates nations to offer education and technical support for enhancing their ability to put these actions into practice. Through such collaborative plans, a structure is formed by the protocol for synchronized international steps against the trafficking of weapons while acknowledging national independence and existing legal structures.

## Questions to be Answered

- What are the main causes behind the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW)?
- In what ways has the illegal arms trade developed in the last twenty years, and which areas are most impacted?
- What distinguishes legal arms trade from illicit arms trade, and what are the commonalities between them?
- What are the main gaps in existing international frameworks (e.g., ATT, UNPoA) that enable the continuation of the illegal arms trade?
- What areas or pathways are the most susceptible to arms trafficking, and what actions might be implemented to enhance border security?
- How can the dual-purpose aspect of weapons be improved to lessen diversion from legitimate markets?
- In what ways can current treaties (like the Arms Trade Treaty) be improved or revised to address enforcement gaps?
- What part can the UN, GA:1 DISEC, and regional organizations play in improving intelligence sharing across borders and coordinating joint enforcement efforts?
- Which disarmament and reintegration initiatives have been effective in post-conflict areas, and how might they be modified or expanded?

## Requirements for BALMUN'25 GA:1 DISEC

For BALMUN'25, this committee requires you to draft a position paper. This document will be sent to the academic members of the GA:1 DISEC Committee.

Please send your completed position papers to:

- **Under Secretary General:** [haktanefeozyur240@gmail.com](mailto:haktanefeozyur240@gmail.com)
- **Academic Assistant:** [durgutburak37@gmail.com](mailto:durgutburak37@gmail.com)

During the first session of BALMUN'25, each committee shall begin with opening speeches, which will be limited to one minute in duration.

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