



# BACKGROUND GUIDE



## DISEC

**DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY COMMITTEE**

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**SMIS MUN '25**

**IMAGINE · INSPIRE · INNOVATE**



# LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD



Honorable Delegates,

We, Rohith, Sathvik, and Aditya, in the name of the entire team, welcome you to the 6th edition of Sancta Maria International School Model United Nations (**SMIS-MUN**) in Hyderabad. We will be your Executive Board for the committee **UNGA-DISEC**. Please consider that the aim of this guide, as the name suggests, is to provide you with the background of the agenda solely and is by no means exhaustive. Your real research lies beyond this guide, and we hope to see strong content and debate in the conference. This background guide would serve as a starting point for your research.

The agenda at hand is a highly sensitive and relevant issue, and a successful discussion on it would entail the collective participation of all of you. Our objective, as the Executive Board of the committee, will be to facilitate debate to developing a common understanding of how this issue impacts and affects millions of lives. It's simple if you open Google and are determined to make notes about any terminology or anything that is new to you.

We are not looking for existing solutions, or strategies that would be a copy paste of what countries you are representing have already stated; instead, we seek an out-of-the-box solution from you, while knowing and understanding your impending practical and ideological limitations.





The delegates are advised to not limit their research only to the contents present in the guide and to acquire their research from other sources too. The Executive Board strongly recommends delegates, particularly first-timers, to thoroughly analyze your country's position on the agenda and come up with substantive proposals while keeping your country's foreign policy in mind.

Lastly, put your best foot forward as you research into the varied aspects of the agenda and display the best of your diplomatic courtesy. Feel free to revert to the executive board for any queries or any form of assistance that you may require during the three days of the conference.

Wishing you luck for the conference!

Sincerely,

Rohith Katta (Chairperson)

Sathvik Vadari (Vice-Chairperson)

Aditya Saxena (Rapporteur)





# **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The United Nations General Assembly is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and the only one in which all Member Nations have equal representation. The General Assembly (GA) is the main deliberative, policy making and representative organ of the UN. The Assembly meets in regular sessions from September to December each year and has the power to convene Emergency Sessions if required. UNGA meetings have specific Agenda items and sub-items for the same which they discuss and then through a voting system, adopt resolutions, sometimes without a vote as well. The functions and powers of the General Assembly are outlined in Chapter 4 of the UN Charter and include overseeing the budget of the United Nations, appointing the non-permanent members to the Security Council, receiving reports from other parts of the United Nations and making recommendations in the form of General Assembly Resolutions. It has also established a wide number of subsidiary organs. The General Assembly subsidiary organs are divided into the following categories: committees (30 total, six main), commissions (six), boards (seven), councils and panels (five), working groups, and others





# **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The main committees are ordinally numbered, 1–6:

- The First Committee: Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)
- The Second Committee: Economic and Financial (ECOFIN)
- The Third Committee: Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian (SOCHUM)
- The Fourth Committee: Special Political and Decolonization (SPECPOL)
- The Fifth Committee: Administrative and Budgetary
- The Sixth Committee: Legal



# **DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE (FIRST COMMITTEE)**



In the frequently context addressed of global security and disarmament, the General Assembly has issues related to the buildup of nuclear and conventional weapons. Although General Assembly resolutions are non binding, they can shape international norms, influence state behavior, and contribute to the development of Customary International law . (CIL) For example, resolutions concerning nuclear disarmament and the regulation of conventional weapons are part of broader international efforts to control the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and reduce the risk of global conflict.

The UNGA has played an essential role in the disarmament debate, including the adoption of key documents such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the more recent Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament and international security, regularly adopts resolutions urging member states to reduce their nuclear arsenals and abide by disarmament agreements. While these resolutions are not enforceable under international law, they serve as a platform for shaping global opinion and encouraging diplomatic negotiations.





In addition, the UNGA has made efforts to address the dangers posed by the buildup of conventional arms, such as through the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which seeks to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons and prevent their illicit transfer. The Assembly has expressed concern over the destabilizing effects of excessive armaments, particularly in regions experiencing armed conflict, and has called for confidence-building measures, transparency, and the responsible management of military resources.

Although the General Assembly's resolutions on nuclear and conventional weapons are largely advisory, their impact is evident in the subsequent legally binding treaties and agreements that often follow from these resolutions. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), while not legally binding, provided a foundation for the development of binding human rights treaties. Similarly, resolutions on disarmament have paved the way for binding instruments such as NPT and ATT.



# MANDATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE



The First Committee deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions in the international security regime.

(Basically, DISEC is a forum where countries come together to discuss and agree on ways to make the world safer by reducing the number of weapons, particularly those that could cause massive destruction. Its role is to promote peace by encouraging countries to limit their armaments, find solutions to global security challenges, and prevent the escalation of military conflicts. While DISEC can't force countries to disarm, it can propose ideas and resolutions that influence international law and encourage countries to work together to make the world a safer place.)

Technically, the DISEC works closely with other UN bodies like the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. These partnerships help the committee focus on the technical aspects of disarmament, such as monitoring arms treaties and setting standards for arms control.





In practice, DISEC reviews global arms treaties, proposes new guidelines for reducing weapon stockpiles, and encourages cooperation between countries to ensure that weapons do not fall into the hands of those who might misuse them. While the committee does not have direct enforcement powers, its recommendations and resolutions serve as a framework for binding treaties and international agreements.

It considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any other organ of the United Nations; the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments.

The Committee works in close cooperation with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament. It is the only Main Committee of the General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage.

The First Committee sessions are structured into three distinctive stages:

1. General debate
2. Thematic discussions
3. Action on drafts





# **AGENDA: DISCUSSION ON THE CONTROL AND REGULATIONS ON THE USE OF UNLICENSED SMALL ARMS & LIGHT WEAPONS BY NSAS ACROSS THE MENA REGION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Before diving into complexities, let us first understand the terms used in the agenda.

Non-State Actors (NSAs):

Non-state actors are individuals or organizations that have powerful economic, political or social power and can influence at a national and sometimes international level but do not belong to or allied themselves to any country or state.

According to Pearlman and Cunningham, non-state actors are defined as — an organized political actor not directly connected to the state but pursuing aims that affect vital state interest.

Other than having characteristics such as having power and the ability to influence, non-state actors have a base or headquarter in a certain state, but their activities will not only be operating in the state itself but will also be operating beyond the borders of the state.





## Types of Non-State Actors and their Roles:

### ⇒ Sub State Actors:

Sub-state actors are groups of people or individuals with similar interests not beyond the states that are able to affect the state's foreign policy. They are also known as domestic actors. They are politically assembled to influence policies through interest groups, lobbying, donating to political candidates or parties, swaying public opinion on certain issues, and other means.

### ⇒ Political Groups that Advocate Violence:

Political groups that advocate violence might not call themselves NGOs, but they operate in the same manner by interacting both with states and with relevant populations and institutions through violence and planning attacks.

These groups hold great power and can influence international relations between states. A group that is currently active now is Al-Qaeda.

The incidence of the spectacularly destructive attack of September 11, 2001, by members of Al-Qaeda, has demonstrated the increasing power that technology gives terrorists as non-state actors. Other than that, the Al Qaeda also placed suicide bombers in U.S. cities, coordinate their operations and finances through Internet and global banking system, and reach a global audience with the videotaped exhortations of Osama bin Laden.





### ⇒ International Criminal Groups:

These actors are considered as transnational actors, but they act in an illegitimate manner. Most of these groups have a great capacity of financial resources and thus, are able to influence the state's policies. Some of them are even capable to threaten the state's security. Most operated secretly which makes it hard for the authorities to track them down. Most of these groups are involved in drugs, prostitution, human trafficking, firearms and many other crimes. Some examples of international criminal groups would be the Yakuza in Japan, the Sicilian Mafia in Italy and Triads in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and in countries with significant Chinese population. Non-State Actors also include corporations, private financial institutions, and NGOs, as well as paramilitary and armed resistance groups.

### A Few Prominent Violent Non-State Actors across the MENA Region:

The MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region has long been a hotspot for the operations of Violent Non-State Actors (VNSAs), many of whom benefit from the widespread availability of unlicensed small arms and light weapons (SALWs). These groups often fill power vacuums created by state collapse or civil unrest and pose severe threats to regional and international security through acts of terrorism, insurgency, and proxy warfare.





Below are some of the most prominent VNSAs in the region today:

### ⇒ Al-Qaeda and its Affiliates

Al-Qaeda, founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden, remains active in the region through decentralized affiliates despite the death of its founder and multiple setbacks. Groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen and Jabhat al-Nusra (now Hayat Tahrir al-Sham) in Syria continue to carry out attacks, using SALWs smuggled through vast desert and coastal routes. These groups still espouse a Salafist-jihadist ideology, aiming to expel Western influence and establish a caliphate governed by strict sharia law. Their operations now rely more heavily on regional franchises and local fighters than centralized command, making arms control a greater challenge.

### ⇒ Islamic State (ISIS)

Though its territorial caliphate was dismantled in Iraq and Syria, ISIS has mutated into a transnational insurgency. Sleeper cells remain active in Syria (especially Deir ez-Zor and Homs), Iraq (Kirkuk, Diyala), and the Sinai Peninsula. It has also expanded to Libya, where it exploits arms from post-Gaddafi stockpiles. ISIS has claimed responsibility for several recent attacks, including prison breaks and bombings, and continues to obtain SALWs through regional black markets and tribal smuggling routes.





The group's ideology remains rooted in sectarianism, ultraviolence, and opposition to both Western states and Shia populations.

#### ⇒ Hamas

A Palestinian Islamist political and militant group, Hamas has governed the Gaza Strip since 2007. It is classified as a terrorist organization by the US, EU, and others. Hamas maintains a powerful paramilitary wing—the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades—which frequently uses small arms, rocket systems, and improvised devices in its conflict with Israel. During the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel, Hamas fighters employed smuggled rifles, drones, and anti-tank weaponry, much of which is believed to be sourced from Iranian or regional illicit supply networks. The group continues to pose a major challenge to SALW control and arms embargo enforcement.

#### ⇒ Hezbollah

Based in Lebanon and supported heavily by Iran, Hezbollah operates as both a political party and a paramilitary organization. It has fought in Syria alongside the Assad regime and maintains stockpiles of SALWs and heavy weaponry in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. Its operations against Israel and its influence over Lebanese security dynamics make it a central actor in regional instability.





Hezbollah's sophisticated logistics networks allow it to procure and stockpile weapons discreetly, including precision-guided munitions and small arms, often transported overland from Syria.

#### ⇒ Houthis (Ansar Allah)

Emerging from Yemen's northern Saada province, the Houthis have been engaged in a protracted conflict with the internationally recognized Yemeni government since 2014. Backed militarily and ideologically by Iran, the Houthis have used small arms, drones, ballistic missiles, and more in their insurgency. They frequently attack targets in Saudi Arabia and the UAE and have been linked to arms shipments intercepted by international coalitions in the Gulf of Aden. Their rise demonstrates how state collapse and porous maritime borders fuel arms proliferation.

#### ⇒ Libyan Militias & Wagner Group Proxies

Post-2011 Libya has become a fractured landscape of competing armed factions, including the Libyan National Army (LNA), Government of National Unity (GNU)-aligned militias, tribal groups, and extremist elements. These factions continue to use and trade SALWs with impunity. Notably, Russian Wagner Group mercenaries, who had a strong presence in Libya and Sudan, have been involved in trafficking arms to and from regional warzones.





This unchecked proliferation contributes to insecurity across North and West Africa, and potentially supplies arms to other NSAs like ISIS and AQIM affiliates.

## **WHAT IS ARMS TRAFFICKING?**

Arms trafficking, also known as gun running, is the illegal trade or smuggling of contraband weapons or ammunition. The legal parameters surrounding the trade of firearms differ widely across jurisdictions, but arms trafficking generally refers to transfers that occur without proper authorization or in violation of national or international laws.

Currently, there is no universally accepted definition of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs). However, the 1997 Report of the UN Panel of Governmental Experts offers a widely referenced classification:

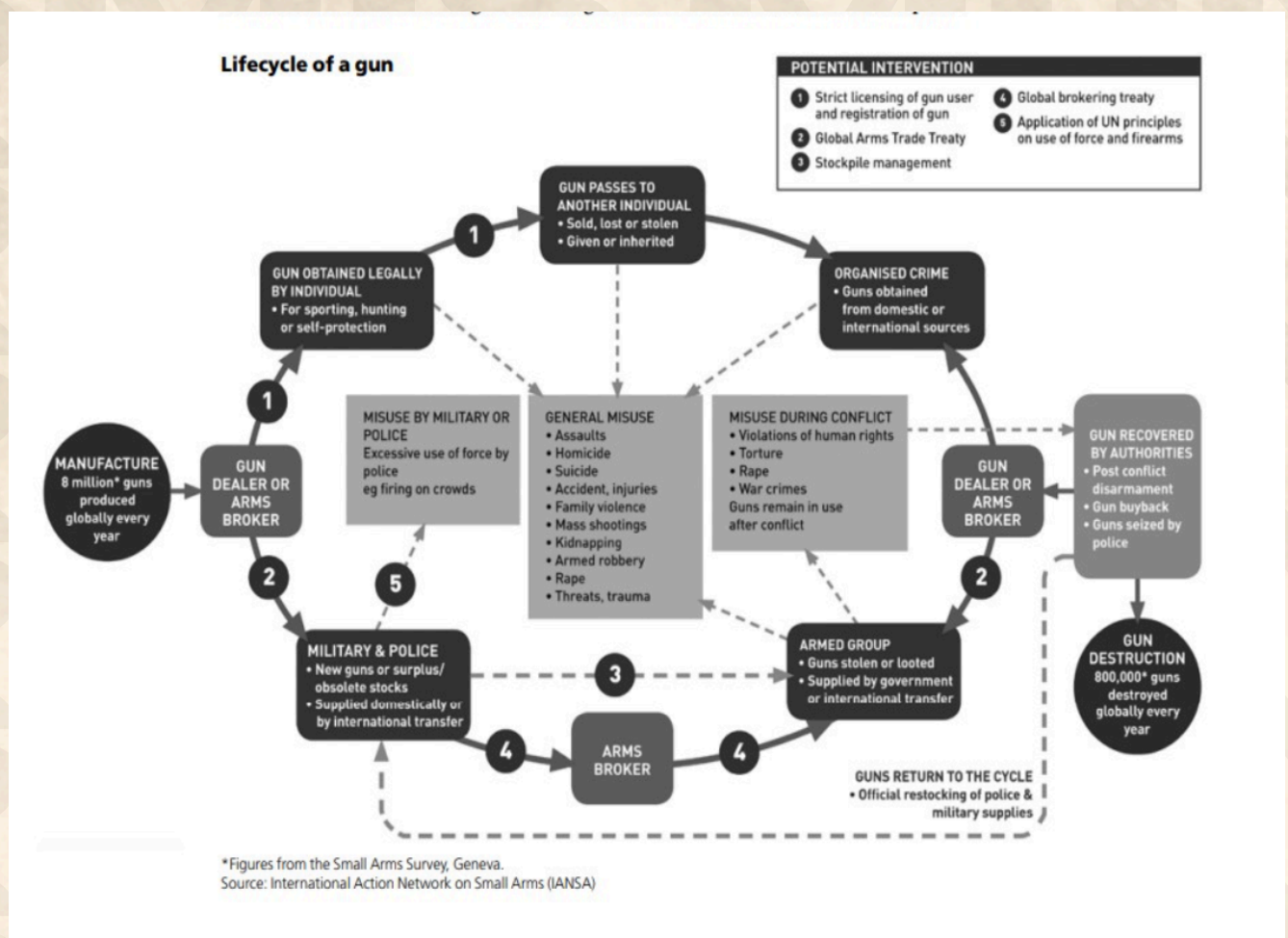
- **Small Arms:** Designed for personal use by individuals. Examples include revolvers, self-loading pistols, rifles, carbines, submachine guns, assault rifles, and light machine guns.
- **Light Weapons:** Intended for use by a small crew. These include heavy machine guns, under-barrel/mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars under 100 mm calibre.
- **Ammunition and Explosives:** These are considered integral to the use and trafficking of SALWs.



# WHY IS THIS AN ISSUE?

SALWs are not just tools of war—they play a central role in organized crime, terrorism, insurgency, and domestic violence worldwide. Hundreds of thousands of people die annually from weapons that fall under this category.

The illegal arms trade thrives on blurred lines between what is legal and illegal. Weak international norms and inconsistent enforcement allow weapons—often intended for state militaries—to fall into the hands of terrorist groups, violent non-state actors, and criminal syndicates.

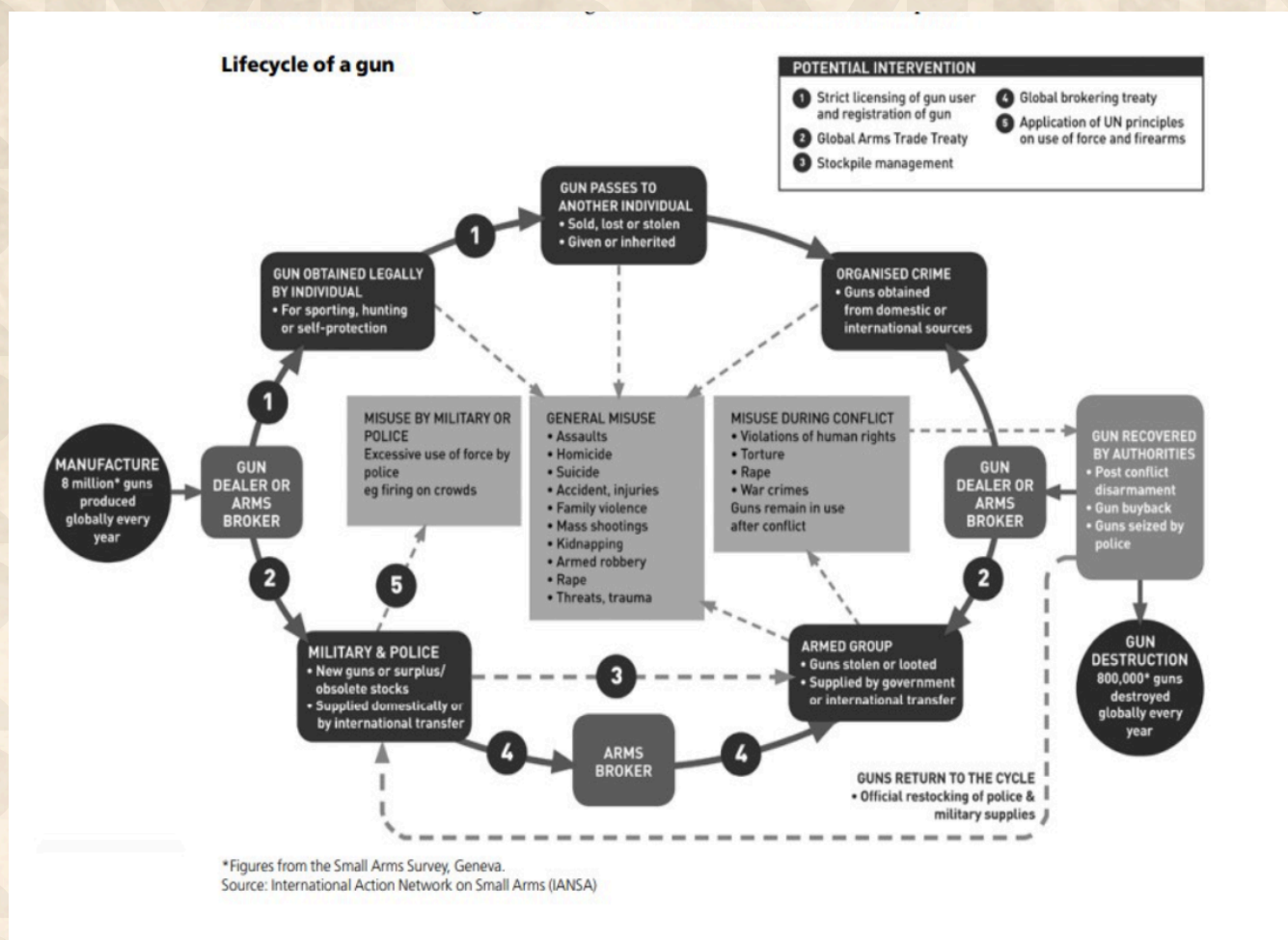




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Key concerns include:

- Lack of effective controls: Arms meant for national defence are diverted through corruption, theft, or fraudulent paperwork.
- Weak state capacity: In conflict zones, national militaries may collapse, leaving armories open for looting (e.g., Iraq 2003, Libya 2011).
- Proliferation: One illegal shipment can arm hundreds of fighters and destabilize entire regions, prolonging conflict and enabling atrocity crimes.

Arms trafficking is directly linked to forced displacement, food insecurity, and the collapse of basic state functions—undermining human security and development.





# THE MIDDLE EAST

## ⇒ Post-Arab Spring Collapse and Proliferation

The Arab Spring uprisings (2010–2012) severely weakened state institutions in countries like Libya, Syria, Egypt, and Yemen, allowing military arsenals to fall into the hands of militias, extremist factions, and arms traffickers. The disbanding of national armies and lack of border security opened routes for weapons to spread across the region.

- In Libya, unsecured Gaddafi-era stockpiles were looted and trafficked to armed groups across North and West Africa.
- In Syria, both regime forces and opposition groups have used imported and smuggled weapons. Foreign backing and porous borders with Turkey, Iraq, and Lebanon have made Syria a central node in regional weapons trafficking.
- In Yemen, the Houthi rebels have acquired Iranian weaponry, including SALWs and drones, in defiance of UN arms embargoes.

## ⇒ Legal vs Illicit Trade

The Middle East is also a major consumer of legal arms sales, with the United States, France, Germany, and the UK exporting billions of dollars' worth of weapons annually to states like Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the UAE.





# THE MIDDLE EAST

At the same time:

- Russia and China remain key arms suppliers to regimes like Syria and Iran.
- Iran, in turn, provides weapons to Hezbollah, the Houthis, and groups in Gaza—often via smuggling routes that evade international surveillance.

The Flemish Peace Institute and SIPRI have both raised alarms about how legally sold weapons often go unaccounted for and may be diverted into black markets or militant groups. Weapons have also been traced from state contracts to extremist hands, through theft, corruption, or battlefield capture.

⇒ The Human Cost

This uncontrolled circulation of arms has:

- Empowered extremist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda affiliates
- Fuelled sectarian violence, civil war, and civilian casualties
- Obstructed humanitarian efforts and destabilized neighbouring states



# **ARMS FLOWS FUELLING NSAS – THE CASE OF ISIS AND BEYOND**



⇒ Key Sources of ISIS's Arsenal:

- Captured Iraqi Army stockpiles during their rapid 2014 advance, including U.S.-supplied weapons.
- Seized Syrian regime bases, which included Russian-made AK rifles and RPGs.
- Acquisitions through black markets, private arms dealers, and even trades with rival rebel groups.
- Weapons diverted through the Turkish border, including dual-use goods and U.S. private contractor imports that ended up in local markets.

⇒ Common weapon types included:

- Russian and Chinese variants of the AK family
- U.S.-made M16 and Bushmaster carbines
- Belgian FN FALs, Austrian Glock pistols, and Chinese-manufactured explosives

Many of these weapons were decades old, yet remained combat-effective. Others were modern imports—underscoring how poor end-use verification by exporting countries contributed directly to ISIS's firepower.



# **ARMS FLOWS FUELLING NSAS – THE CASE OF ISIS AND BEYOND**



⇒ Key Sources of ISIS's Arsenal:

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⇒ Similar Patterns in Other Conflicts

ISIS is not unique. Other groups across MENA have gained arms through the same loopholes:

- The Houthis in Yemen have received advanced Iranian-made weapons and retrofitted drones via smuggling networks in the Gulf of Aden.
- Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza use smuggled rifles, rockets, and components delivered via tunnels or maritime drops.
- In Sudan, the current civil conflict has seen both the army and RSF lose control of arsenals now appearing on the streets.
- The lack of oversight, combined with arms trade loopholes and regional smuggling routes, ensures that SALWs continue to flow into the hands of NSAs—even as states claim compliance with international treaties.



# **PROBLEMS IN PREVENTING ARMS TRAFFICKING<sup>?</sup>**



## **Problems in Preventing Arms Trafficking**

### **⇒ Lack Of Accountability and Financial Transparency**

There is no Operative Provision in the Code to address the massive risks posed by the spread of LPO (Licensed Production Overseas), where a company in one country allows a second company in another country to manufacture its products under license. There is a lack of reporting and regulation on military, security and policing training provided by various military and security companies. There is a lack of monitoring of end-use certificates. As Control Arms noted further above, certificates are sometimes faked, or there is inadequate resources to follow up. Transparency and reporting are poor. Information that is vital to enable parliamentarians and the public to hold governments to account is poor. While some countries have improved in this area, (often only after public pressure), very few governments provide sufficient details on products licensed for export, the quantities of weapons exported, who the end user is, etc.



# **PROBLEMS IN PREVENTING ARMS TRAFFICKING?**



## **⇒ Privatization of Security**

There is a marked increase in the last decade in the use of private security or military companies by governments, companies and inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and even non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide security training, logistics support, armed security and, in some cases, armed combatants. The types of companies in this “privatization of security” include Mercenaries, Private Military Companies and Private Security Companies. On private security companies, while services provided vary enormously, there are several cases where they have directly and indirectly contributed to human rights abuses. The general concern about all three groups is lack of full accountability and transparency.

## **⇒ Loopholes In Arms Control Laws**

Legal loopholes allow dealers to easily bypass controls. Those loopholes include: By-passing end-use limitations and By-passing national laws by manufacturing in another country. The Arms Trade Treaty: The General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), a landmark in dealing with and regulating the international trade in conventional arms, from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships. The Arms Trade Treaty obligates member states to monitor arms exports and ensure that weapons don't cross existing arms embargoes or end up being used for human-rights abuses, including terrorism.





Member states, with the assistance of the U.N., will put into place enforceable, standardized arms import and export regulations and be expected to track the destination of exports to ensure they don't end up in the wrong hands. Ideally, that means limiting the inflow of deadly weapons into places like Syria.

## **PARTIES INVOLVED**

⇒ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

UNODA was established in January 1998 as the Department for Disarmament Affairs which was part of the Secretary-General's program for reform in accordance with his report to the General Assembly (A/51/950). The Office promotes the following assets:

Nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, strengthening of the disarmament regimes in respect to other weapons of mass destruction, and chemical and biological weapons, Disarmament efforts in conventional weapons, especially landmines and small arms, which are the weapons of choice in contemporary conflicts. The United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs has repeatedly pressed for increased legislation to prevent illicit arms trade, where it also examined the weapon stockpiles states have. Its recent moves are according with the ratification & update of the Arms Trade Treaty-common aims being enabling weapon allocation tracking and curbing diversion of weapons.





## ⇒ International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is an intergovernmental organization facilitating international police cooperation. It was established in 1923 and adopted its telegraphic address as its common name in 1956. INTERPOL predominantly focuses on matters of public safety such as battling terrorism, crimes against humanity, war crimes, organized crime, and illicit drug production, drug trafficking, weapons smuggling and related civic security questions. INTERPOL with its strict working force has aided United Nations member states with access on shared databases regarding illicit arms trade, allowing an international cooperation between states and organizations to prevent arms trafficking. The organization also provided states with the necessary utensils to monitor and track the movement of arms.

## ⇒ Arab League

The Arab League established the League of Arab States (LAS, also known as Arab League) Regional Focal Point on Small Arms in 2004. After the Arms Trade Treaty was put on force, the organization declared international cooperation and information sharing regarding the problem. following are key articles from the Arab Convention on Terrorism (1999) which reflects the position of Arab League regarding the illicit arms trade.





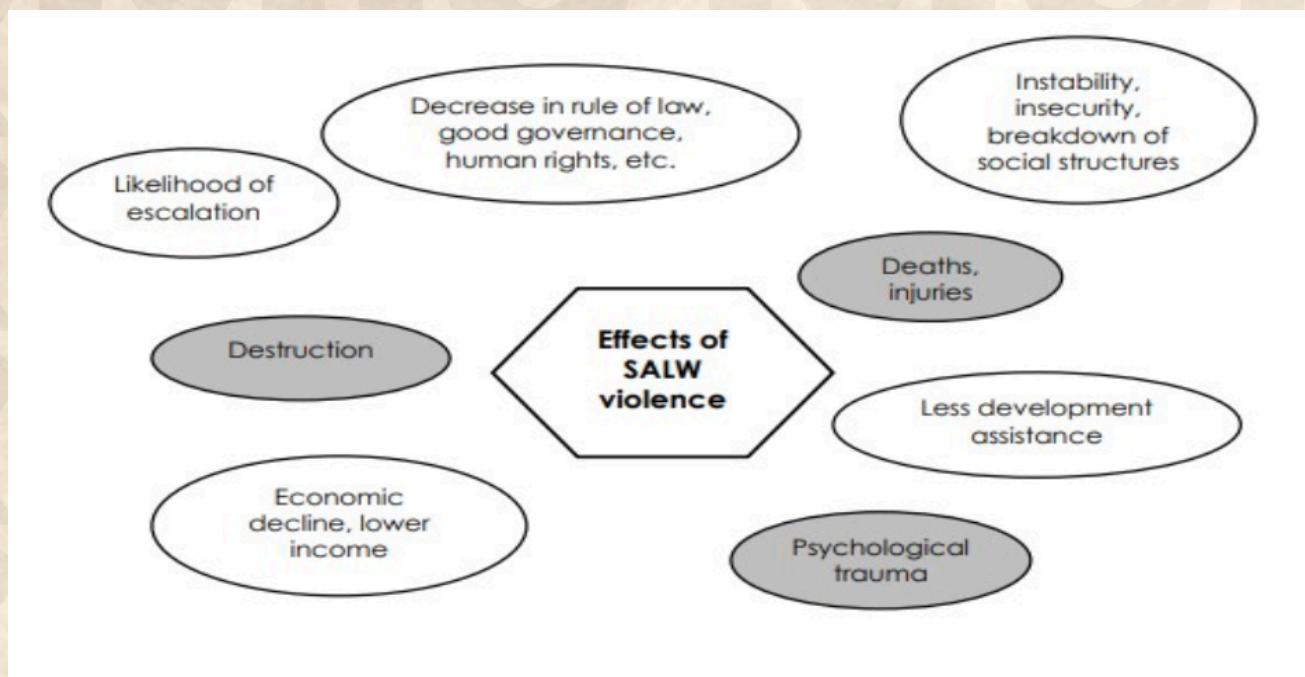
# **GENERAL OVERVIEW ON SMALL WEAPONS**

There is no international definition recognized by the UN for small arms however small arms can be viewed as - Small arms are any firearm that can be carried by an individual, typically including rifles, pistols and portable machine guns, as well as other small or handheld devices such as landmines and grenades. The acquisition of small arms by non-state actors actively fuels conflict and post conflict zones. In places without conflict it gives fuel to violence and crimes. Thus we can say small weapons undermine the security and the rule of law. They are often major causes of forced displacements of civilians and major human rights violations. These weapons can have destabilizing effects on democratic, social and economic growth and can pose significant challenges to regional and national security. Such weapons may begin from varied sources. The aggregate destabilizing power of such trade for instance, as equipment of Foreign terrorist fighters, privateers, armed militias or organized crime syndicates isn't to be thought of and measures must be taken by member states to battle this danger. Locally, small arms and ammo regularly enter unlawful courses through burglary, resale and defilement. Preoccupation of small arms and light weapons and their ammo is a huge issue of crucial importance in numerous parts of the world.





Those experiencing most the unlawful trade of small arms and light weapons are non-military personnel populaces caught in circumstances of equipped brutality in settings of both wrongdoing and struggle, frequently in states of neediness, hardship and extraordinary disparity.



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## **EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UN**

- UNCTOC: The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime 2000 (the Convention) instruments operate in tandem to “promote, facilitate and strengthen cooperation” against illicit activities. States are required to review and implement domestic legislation consistent with the framework. The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms: the Protocol establishes the international framework specific to the transnational trafficking of small arms. Common definitions are established for firearms and associated parts. It also emphasizes on Implementing offenses to include the “organization, directing, aiding and abetting, facilitating or counseling” elements of trafficking ensure the entire chain of offenses can be prosecuted.



## **EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UN**



- **ATT (Arms trade treaty):** The Arms Trade Treaty was the United Nations' effort to conclude a binding treaty controlling the small arms trade. It was hoped common standards for the transfers of small arms and other conventional weapons could be negotiated. However, the negotiations for this treaty failed to reach a final consensus during the diplomatic conference that was convened in July 2012. The diplomatic conference ended with no agreement for the next step in the regulation of the trade in small arms. As most of the international framework has gone unimplemented by Pacific states, any further action would need to establish strong regional cooperation mechanisms and international assistance for small states.
- **CTBT:** CTBT aims at eliminating nuclear weapons by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of new types of nuclear weapons. It plays a crucial role in the prevention of nuclear proliferation and in nuclear disarmament. The 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms: It forms an international political declaration for action on small arms. The Programme falls short of any more legal obligations, but also offers a basis for dialogue. The goal is to facilitate the integration of national legislation and to establish a framework for multilateral activities.



## **EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UN**



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- Resolution 2457: In a meeting last year that occurred on 27 February 2019, the Security Council adopted a resolution that outlines steps leading towards the goal of ending conflict in Africa through enhanced international cooperation and partnership as well as robust support for peace operations led by the African Union. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 2457 (2019) and welcomed the African Union's determination to rid the continent of conflict through its "Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020" initiative and expressed its readiness to contribute to that goal. How member nations have lived up to such promises is interesting to dig into.



## **EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UN**



- African-led International Support Mission in Mali: Foreign troops—including French troops and those under the banner of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) and a UN peacekeeping operation, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)—were present in Mali since 2013 to thwart the actions of Islamist fighters and maintain security while the country recovered from the 2012 coup and prepared for fresh elections. In the Central African Republic, French and African Union soldiers – backed by American airlift and support – are working to stem violence and create space for dialogue, reconciliation and swift progress to transitional elections. The U.N. Security Council voted last month to continue its peacekeeping mission in the country and to authorize the use of force by European Union troops there. United Nations-African Union Partnership: The African Union and 42 African Member States endorsed the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. The partnership is already making a difference in the Central African Republic, by providing mediation and technical support to the African Initiative-led peace process, and in South Sudan, by working closely with the African Union and with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). These operations are contributing to global security and deserve multilateral support.



## **EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UN**



- 2004 Counter-Terrorism Protocol: The 2004 Protocol seeks to give effect to article 3(d) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union 2002 (adopted 9 July 2002, entered into force 26 December 2003) namely to further the objective of "co-ordinat[ing] and harmoniz[ing] continental efforts in the prevention and combating of international terrorism in all its aspects". It is one of the most notable initiatives taken to counter terrorism and end violence in Africa. It is also worth noting that not many African states have ratified the protocol, which adds up to the reasons for today's condition.



## **SALW IN SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN: A CASE STUDY**



Sudan and South Sudan both serve as important channels for the flow of small arms and light weapons (SALW) from around the world to other African countries, such as Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Uganda. For many years, there has been a well-established arms supply route connecting Somalia, Ethiopia, and Sudan, which has supplied weapons to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and civilians. In Eastern Equatoria, both the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other militias supported by Khartoum received most of their weapons from the government-controlled Torit area.

Nimule, although under SPLA control at the time, remained a major black market trading center for weapons from Uganda, many of which appeared to have been taken up by civilians. The supply routes just east of Nimule became increasingly difficult to navigate due to the presence of the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF). More recently, there has been a rise in arms trafficking from Kenya and Somalia to Uganda, reflecting the unstable situation in Somalia and the growing sense of insecurity throughout the region, which affects the South Sudanese living along those routes.



## **SALW IN SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN: A CASE STUDY**



By late 2009, an estimated 2.7 million weapons were circulating in Sudan. Just under 20% were held by the Government of National Unity, while less than 10% were possessed by the then Government of Southern Sudan. The remainder was held by current and former armed groups, civilians, and foreign forces in Sudanese territory, such that the United Nations mission and the UPDF.

Although Sudan produces some SALW, it spent about \$70 million importing weapons from at least 34 countries between 1992 and 2005. More than 90% of these imports came from China and Iran. However, these figures could be higher if both legal and illegal trade values were fully accounted for.

In 2009, estimates suggested that the SPLA had around 200,000 firearms. However, civilians and armed groups are believed to hold many more weapons than the combined total of the Sudanese state security forces and the SPLA. At that time, it was estimated that civilian gun ownership in the ten Southern states was twice that of the fifteen Northern states, with a weighted average of just under five weapons for every hundred people across the country. With a population of about forty million, civilian holdings were estimated at roughly two million weapons, with only a small percentage registered with the authorities.



## **SALW IN SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN: A CASE STUDY**



The rearmament of Southern pastoralist groups following arms recovery initiatives by the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) and the SPLA indicates that weapons remain readily available. Ongoing cycles of violent clashes among ethnic groups in the South demonstrate that there is no shortage of weapons or ammunition.

## **BOTTOM'S UP DISARMAMENT: SOMALILAND!**

In the early 1990s, after the Somali National Movement (SNM) came to power, Somaliland faced rampant violence from clan militias and criminal gangs, known as deydey. The fledgling SNM government struggled to restore order, prompting civil society to act. A coalition of traders, traditional leaders, religious figures, and women launched the "No Gun" campaign to combat armed violence. This grassroots initiative shunned armed men in public, creating social stigma against gun possession. Poets and musicians supported the cause with performances condemning violence, while religious leaders preached against carrying weapons. Within weeks, the campaign significantly reduced the visible presence of firearms and pressured clan militias to disarm and integrate into national security forces. While Somaliland has not formally collected all weapons, the campaign fostered a cultural shift that recognizes police and military as the only legitimate bearers of arms. This is an example as to how civil society can drive disarmament through political pressure and community engagement, proving that grassroots movements can play a pivotal role in fostering peace and stability.





# QARMA

QARMA stands for Questions A Resolution Must Answer. When delegates decide on making a Draft Resolution or deciding the flow of the committee please keep in mind the following questions: ⇒ How can MENA countries collaborate to combat the illicit trade of SALW, and what mechanisms can facilitate information sharing? What resources or training are needed to enhance monitoring and enforcement capabilities? ⇒ What mechanisms will monitor compliance with the resolution, and how will violations be addressed? ⇒ Which international legal instruments currently regulate SALW, and how can they be strengthened? What responsibilities should member states have to control SALW flows to NSAs, and what concrete measures should they implement? ⇒ What obligations should member states assume to control the flow of SALW to NSAs? What concrete measures—such as stricter border controls, enhanced licensing processes, and improved tracking systems—should be mandated at the national level? ⇒ How should the international community respond to the increasing use of imported and improvised weapons by NSAs in ongoing conflicts like Gaza, Sudan, and Syria? Can joint embargo enforcement or on-ground UN arms-monitoring missions be considered in such zones? ⇒ With drone warfare and digital arms (like remote-detonation systems) becoming more common among NSAs, how should existing arms control treaties be adapted to include non-traditional weapons systems?



# LINKS FOR FURTHER STUDY



The following links should only be the starting point for research and do not limit yourself to this Background Guide. Try to understand the current scenario and expand the horizon of study.

- <https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14098.doc.htm>
- <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/salw/>
- <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/why-can-t-united-nations-bring-peace-to-yemen/>
- [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2340604](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2340604)
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC139041/>
- <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-018-0162-0>
- <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/1998-08/press-releases/small-arms-and-light-weapons-controlling-real-instruments-war>
- <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>
- <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Firearms-trafficking/iARMS>
- <https://www.conflictarm.com/>