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Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)

Topic: Efforts to contain the proliferation of illegal weapons production worldwide

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I. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Proliferation: Rapid increase in the number or amount of something.

Disarmament: The reduction or withdrawal of weapons.

Nuclear disarmament: The process of reducing or completely eliminating a country's nuclear weapons.

Arms control: is a term for international restrictions upon the development, production, stockpiling, proliferation and usage of small arms, conventional weapons, and weapons of mass destruction.

Arms trafficking: arms trafficking, also known as gunrunning, is the trafficking of contraband weapons and ammunition.

SALW: is a term used in arms control protocols to refer to two main classes of weapons: Small Arms and Light Weapons

NBC weapon: (weapons of mass destruction) weapon that can cause widespread destruction or kill large numbers of people, especially a nuclear, chemical, or biological weapon.

II. INTRODUCTION

Today, increased attention is being paid to the proliferation of illegal weapons in various parts of the world, which continues to pose a systematic and pervasive menace to the long-term social, environmental and economic development of many nations, particularly in small developing

countries. Undoubtedly, it is considered one of the principal causes of unnecessary and aggravated devastation and suffering of civilians' lives. The dangers are posed by the illicit trade of Small And Light Weapons (SALW) and nuclear weapons, which continue to spread worldwide.

Nowadays, the illicit proliferation and misuse of SALW are considered one of the most pressing threats. The licit and illicit traffic in small arms is closely intertwined, as a result, more and more legally exported arms fall into illegal circulation. This phenomenon afflicts the area where armed conflict, violence, and organized crime are most widespread. The lack of political legitimacy causes the inability of states to cope and prevent this vicious circle with practical and effective measures.

Small arms and light weapons, due to their accessibility and practicality, are not only used by civilians with no military training during local conflicts but also by criminals, rebels and extremist groups, which can seriously compromise the lives of a substantial number of civilians and lead to genocide.

Black markets play a fundamental role in exporting a significant amount of munitions and SALW from illicit sources to satisfy the needs of local and international dealers. The illegal black-market trafficking has largely spread throughout the world facilitated by corrupt public authorities, the absence of measures taken to monitor and regulate the export and import flows and the inefficiency of border controls.

The products of local firearms market, especially in the Central American regions, China and The Philippines, can leak from licit civilian, military and police use to illicit use, without knowing their exact number. The production and the trade of regional weapons are facilitated firstly because police rarely succeed in identifying the transactions and secondly, because there is a great demand from local rebel groups.

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Preventing illicit arms transfers requires the adoption of policies, procedures and practices implemented in order to control their import, export, transit and use. Alarmed by the constant growth of illegal weapons production, members of regional and international institutions have adopted several new multilateral agreements and have expressed their support for the creation of new agreements in order to achieve more satisfactory results in limiting and controlling the unauthorized production.

Although critically important, many of these agreements have not led up to the initial intentions in the last decades. The lack of effective monitoring, documentation, measures and the shortage of trained personnel and equipment have caused a gradual spread of illegal weapon trade across all the countries. For this reason, since tracking illicit weapons flow is very complicated especially when merchandises find their way into black-markets and dealers, we can partially rely on technological innovations (one example is MAD) developed in the last few years. These devices consist of reporting transactions, negotiations, the volume and the value of arms, which can help to resolve a deficit of multilateral agreements.

Furthermore, municipal authorities and NGOs represent an important point of departure to capture the interest of world's media thanks to various initiatives and campaigns against the circulation of illegal weapons at a local level.

For what concerns nuclear weapons, a number of bilateral and plurilateral treaties and arrangements have the aim of reducing or eliminating certain categories and preventing their proliferation. One example of many other initiatives are the numerous treaties between the United States of America and The Russian Federation. In addition, in 2017 122 nations voted to approve a historic global agreement to prohibit nuclear weapons, officially known as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

IV. MAJOR COUNTRIES INVOLVED

Most illegal weapons production were revealed in Middle East, North Africa and Central America areas, such as:

- Costa Rica
- Panama
- Honduras
- Guatemala
- El Salvador
- The Philippines
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Ukraine
- Libya
- Pakistan
- Sudan
- Liberia
- Lebanon
- Egypt
- China
- North Korea
- Colombia
- Palestine

Signatory States of the Arm Tread Treaty (130) and the States Parties (93) are considered the countries fighting against the illicit proliferation of weapons.

V. UN INVOLVEMENT

Through the years, the United Nations has significantly enhanced the global achievement to combat the proliferation of SALW.

In 1952, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) was established by the General Assembly (resolution 502 (IV) of January 1952) with the purpose of supervising, limiting and reducing all armed forces and all armaments, especially banning all weapons of mass destruction.

Since 1991, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) has represented the key to international official transparency on arms transfer. In fact, it was created to promote stability, ease tensions and prevent the excessive accumulation of arms in order to improve regional and international peace and security. Therefore, UNROCA is directed by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and all UN members states are required to provide all sorts of information on their holdings and acquisitions from domestic production of major conventional weapons, as well as imports and exports of small arms and light weapons.

In 1998 the United Nations established the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). Its goals are to encourage nuclear, chemical and biological weapons disarmament and non-proliferation. It also promotes disarmament efforts in the area of any armament used in contemporary crimes, conflicts and wars, especially landmines and small arms. In 2001 the UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) was adopted by all UN member states. Since then, the UN has worked in order to sustain the implementation of the UNPoA at national, regional, and international levels with the aim of preventing, combating and eradicating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

With the inception of the international treaty, in 2014 the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the UN has reached the highest international standards with a total of 93 States Parties and 130 Signatory States.

For what concerns Nuclear Weapons, the UN has the aim of eliminating such weapons ever since its establishment. For this reason multilateral treaties, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), have been created in order to prevent nuclear proliferation, while promoting progress in disarmament of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, the UN has encouraged governments to tighten controls on manufacturing, marketing, tracing, brokering, exporting and stockpiling small arms and to cooperate to reduce illicit circulation, particularly to areas in constant armed conflict.

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