

• Study Guide •



CCBMUN XI
Do more than just watch!

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Colegio Colombo Británico

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1.Welcoming letter.

“It’s not so much what we have in this life that matters. It’s what we do with what we have.”

-Fred Rogers.

Dear delegates,

We are convinced that Models of United Nations bring opportunities that allow each one of the participants to be aware of the situations that we normally omit that are happening worldwide. These spaces also allow us to be more conscious about what we can do in order to act in a way that our actions impact society.

That's why, we, Jeronimo Calle Serna and Maria Jose Ceballos Morales, in the 11th version of CCBMUN have designed, through the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) of the UN General Assembly, an agenda in which we expect from you as delegates to be fully committed, objective, and more importantly, to accept the challenge to debate two topics that have never been discussed among the international community.

As humans, we have created objects that have the power to destroy entire communities, be extremely harmful and have massive collateral effects in their usage. It's our responsibility to create measures to regulate, or given the case, to ban these objects that represent an enormous threat to international peace, security, and integrity.

If you have any questions or have any inquiry about the commission, please feel welcome to contact us. We will be at your disposal in order to ensure that CCBMUN XI will be an experience that will last in your memory for years to come.

Finally, we encourage you to look at CCBMUN as an opportunity, much more than a school event, and as an experience to plan the way you want to change the present from the past and do more than just watch.

sincerely ,

Jerónimo Calle Serna.

Maria Jose Ceballos Morales.

Chair of DISEC.

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2. Introduction to the committee.

2.1 History

The General Assembly (GA) was established under the IV chapter of the United Nations Charter, and it's its main organ. Said General Assembly is made up of six committees, DISEC being the first one of them.

The first resolution made by DISEC was in 1946, in light of the events of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, to address “Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy.” as an international concern.

The committee meets every year in October, for a 4-5 week session, and the 193 members of the General Assembly are entitled to attend.

2.2 Functions and powers

Taking into consideration the resolution 48/87 of the UN General Assembly, the Disarmament and International Security Committee must look for the solution by creating plans and strategies, and recommending other organs of the UN on topics and problematics such as:

- Nuclear weapons
- Massive destruction weapons
- Conventional weapons
- Regional disarmament and security,
- Disarmament in outer space.
- Disarmament mechanisms.

The First Committee of the UN General Assembly examines all disarmament and international security concerns within the Charter's jurisdiction, which are relevant to the powers and functions of any other UN entities. The committee uses basic principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles regulating disarmament and armament regulation, and promotion of cooperative arrangements and actions.

2.3 Tools

DISEC, as member of the UN General Assembly has the duty to work under the conditions established in Chapter IV of the UN Charter, specifically in the article 11, “The

General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments [...].

The First Committee of the UN General Assembly is the only main committee that has verbatim records coverage.

The Disarmament and International Security Committee has 4 subsidiary bodies:

- The Conference of Disarmament, that is a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.
- The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), which provides substantive and organizational support to Member States in the area of disarmament through the work of the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament, and other bodies. It fosters preventive disarmament measures, such as dialogue, transparency, and confidence-building on military matters, and encourages regional disarmament efforts. It also provides information on UN disarmament efforts.
- The Disarmament Commission: its work is usually divided into two groups, in which topics on the range of disarmament issues are discussed and must include nuclear disarmament.
- The expert groups established based on a recommendation. DISEC has the possibility to establish groups conformed by experts about a topic that concern the committee, to give advice or recommendation.

2.4 Ground documents

- United Nations Charter
- Rules of procedure
- Status of documentation of the first committee
- Programme of work, action, and timetable (according to the session being held)



3. Topic 1: Disarmament and eradication of the production of laser-directed energy weapons.

3.1. Introduction

To understand what lasers are and how these work, it's important to know that "laser" means Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. What makes lasers different from any other light source is that they emit coherent light, which is a property that allows stationary interference and makes the frequency and waveform identical.

A laser is created when the electrons of the atoms in special glasses, crystals, or gases, absorb the energy that comes from the electrical current and move from a lower energy orbit to a higher energy orbit. The light is directional and generates a tight beam that stays focused for vast distances. Lasers are classified into 3 types based on the medium they use:

- Solid-state laser: glass or crystalline materials are used, and light is used as pumping force.
- Gas laser: the laser light is produced and discharged through a gas inside the laser medium. It converts electrical energy into light energy.
- Liquid laser: uses liquid as a laser medium to which light is provided.

Laser weapons are directed-energy weapons based on lasers, which are weapons that damage their target with focused energy and there are three main types:

- Electrolaser: it's an electroshock weapon that can be considered as the high-energy, long-distance version of the Taser. It uses a laser-induced plasma channel, which emits a laser beam into the air and ionizes the surrounding gases to form a plasma using rapid heat.
- Pulsed energy projectile: the purpose of this weapon is to create an expanding plasma at the target, which creates sound, sound and electromagnetic waves that may cause pain and temporary paralysis. It is currently under development and may or may not be a lethal weapon.
- Dazzlers: its purpose is to disorient or temporarily blind the target with intense directed radiation. They emit infrared (invisible) light, and visible light against humans, but are intended to cause no long-term damage to the human eye.

It's also important to understand the danger these weapons represent, and that they are meant to cause either permanent or temporary damage, such as blindness. A powerful laser

weapon could cut through the retina, and burn through a person's brain tissue, if it was meant and focused to do so.

3.2. Background

The first laser was developed on May 16th of 1960 at the Hughes Research Laboratory in California. This first laser used a ruby which had its atoms excited through a powerful energy source. The first actual application of the laser appeared in 1971, when the laser printer was invented. Later, in 1974, the bar code scanners started being used.

Regarding laser weapons, the first laser and energy weapon was the ZEUS-HLONS, and it is still used for neutralizing mines and unexploded territories.

The newest laser weapon is the iron beam anti-missile weapon, which was announced in 2014 and developed in 2020. There have been a lot of versions of these kinds of weapons, but also a lot of them have been discontinued, canceled, or never went past the experimental stage, because high performance effective laser weapons seem very hard to achieve.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons of the United Nations has the purpose of banning or restricting the use of specific types of weapons that may be considered by the international community as unnecessary, or that cause unjustifiable suffering to combatants and affect civilians indiscriminately. It is important to note that the only directed energy weapons regulated are the dazzlers, in the 4th protocol of the convention mentioned above.

Directed-energy weapons are getting more recognized and used with time, but there hasn't been any kind of statement among the international community, and that's the reason why it is important to know all the dangers these type of weapons represent, and what could happen if they are not regulated and considered as an actual concern.

3.3. Current Situation

Nowadays, the laser weapons that are functional are characterized for having low voltages, approximately 10kW to 100kW, for that reason, this kind of directed-energy weapons can produce temporary or permanent vision loss on humans. On the weaponry field, the current developed laser weapons can overthrow small unmanned aerial vehicles, motorboats, or small helicopters, as happened on august 4th, 2019 during the Libyan Civil War, when Turkish-

supported Libyan government forces used the laser weapon to shoot down a Chinese drone supplied by the United Arab Emirates to a rebel group called Libyan National Army.¹

Also, it is important to take into account that the original idea of developing laser weapons wasn't only creating a weapon able to shoot down small drones or create blindness in humans. Instead, the idea was to create weapons capable of shooting down huge warships, aircrafts, and tanks; for this it would be necessary to develop a weapon with a voltage higher than 150kW. An armament with a high voltage could have extreme consequences in human health. For example, if a person is attacked with one of this directed-energy weapons, in best cases can cause brain damage, third degree burns, evaporate the body's water, or almost destroy an organ; in worst cases it can cause death.

Additionally, the laser directed-energy weapons bring several operational advantages that are very likeable by the different armies around the world. The first one is that they can be adapted to the different platforms that an army needs, in other words, the laser weapons can be adapted to different types of warships, helicopters, war aircrafts, unmanned aerial vehicles, and war cars. Second, unlike the traditional weaponry, it doesn't generate any sound, the gravity doesn't affect the trajectory (this makes the laser weapon one of the most precise weapons that exists), they travel at the speed of light and have an infinite range (this allows its future use in outer space wars), and they don't need ammunition - only enough energy to work, so they eradicate lots of logistical issues. Nevertheless, the performance laser directed-energy weapons could be affected by atmospheric thermal blooming, which is a topic that hasn't been solved, and must be solved to allow the daily implementation of this kind of weapons.

The laser directed-energy weapons not only affect the weaponry scope, as it was mentioned above, but they can represent an enormous issue to international security, peace, and politics. This is mainly because there are no international and national regulations about the use, the production, the trade, and the commercialization of this kind of weapons.

In the International Community there are some countries that currently have programs developing laser weapons, some of them are already using them and others are in a testing stage.

- United States of America

Since 2014, the US has been developing directed-energy weapons, each one of them with different features, some of them able to destroy drones, improvised rockets, vehicles, and

¹ <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/did-turkish-combat-laser-shoot-down-chinese-drone-77286>

small boats. Also, there is the possibility that these weapons can be added to army vessels, airplanes, and tanks. Currently, the US is developing a laser weapon able to destroy huge war devices like vessels and planes, the most important in this list is The Tactical Ultrashort Pulsed Laser for Army Platforms.²

- Russia

The Russian programme is one of the most advanced in the world, it started working in 2017, and in the last two years the programme has expanded in a significant way. according to Russian Defense Minister Yuri Borisov, the country has developed several types of laser weaponry, and the Russian armed forces are in the process of adopting laser-based weapons systems. Nowadays, the Russian programme is focused on developing an airborne laser weapon.

- China

The Chinese programme started in 2014, and the first weapons were shown to the world through a promotional video broadcast by state-owned channel CCTV; these weapons can be used both in land and sea. This programme is developed as a response to the maritime primacy of the government, with the purpose of keeping their enemies' naval power at bay; and to address the insufficiency declared by the Chinese Communist Party of creating laws with claims and threatening other countries in an "old-fashioned way". Currently, the programme is mainly working on a new airborne laser attack pod, which depending on the level of power, could be used to defend a friendly aircraft from incoming missile threats, or destroy enemy aircraft and ground targets.

- United Kingdom

The UK laser weapon programme is called Dragonfire, which was launched in 2017 by the Defense, Science and Technology Laboratory on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, with a budget that overpasses the £30 M. The main objective of the programme is to create a laser weapon capable of striking a tiny target from miles away. In March 2021, The British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, reaffirmed the interest that this nation has in developing laser directed energy weapons. Currently, the programme is focused on creating lighter and smaller laser weapons, so they can be installed on airborne domains.

- Germany

² <https://www.sbir.gov/node/1654485>

Since 2019, Germany has shown interest in developing this kind of weapons, and in the beginning of 2021, the country decided to begin the production of maritime laser weapons and adapt them to German Navy frigate F124, German companies MBDA and Rheinmetall.

- Turkey

The Turkish Programme started a decade ago, in which they have focused on developing all types of laser weapons. In 2019, this country became the first country to attack who? using laser weapons, attacking a Chinese armed-drone during the Libyan Civil War. Since that attack, laser weapons have become a key priority to the government, and its main purpose is to take the maximum advantage possible in this field. One of the main objectives for the future is to start exporting direct energy weapons.

- India

India's Defense Research and Development Organization announced in September 2020, that they were going to start developing directed-energy weapons using lasers and microwaves. Nowadays, they are working on their first weapon, the DURGA II, which is going to be used in sea, land, and air.

- Israel

During the last years, Israel has focused its efforts into the laser directed-energy programme, achieving different important milestones in the programme, one of the most recent ones was in June 2021, where Israel became the first country to create the first airborne laser weapon capable of destroying drones. This weapon is a 100-kW prototype, and in the first tests was able to shoot down light aircraft rockets and drones that were 1km away.

- France

The French Programme is behind compared to the other 4 four Permanent Members of the UNSC. as a response to this situation, France decided in 2019 to announce that its programme was going to be mainly focused on the creation and development of anti-satellite laser weapons. The French government hopes that by 2025 the first testing will be made, and by 2030 the weapons are installed in their satellites.

3.4. Guide questions

1. Does your delegation have any internal regulations regarding directed-energy weapons?
2. Does your delegation consider the use of laser weapons as a threat to international peace and security?
3. Would your delegation be willing to support an international resolution meant to ban laser weapons?

4. Does your delegation have any internal control regarding arm trafficking?
5. Which type of weapon is the most commercialized in your country?

3.5. Recommendations

The United Nations has never given an official statement about the use of laser directed-energy weapons in military applications; that's why it is the responsibility of the delegates to discuss this topic for the first time. The chair recommends that the delegates are able to understand and differentiate all the types of laser weapons, especially by platform and by potential.

3.6. Useful links

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons:

<https://www.un.org/disarmament/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMx1-yaRLyQ>

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/did-turkish-combat-laser-shoot-down-chinese-drone-77286>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4FcpfNhhnQ>

3.7. Glossary

Atmospheric thermal blooming: is an atmospheric effect that results from the nonlinear interaction of laser radiation with the propagation medium, usually air, which is heated by the absorption of a fraction of the radiation.

kW: a kilowatt is a unit of power equal to 1,000 watts (which is the standard measure to electrical power).

Laser attack pod: capsule capable of protecting laser attacks, and depending on the power that it contains, it can prevent aircrafts from being intercepted with this kind of weapons or counter the attacks of other aircrafts.

Unmanned aerial vehicles: also known as “drones”, is a type of aircraft that operates without a human pilot onboard. They can be controlled by onboard electronic equipment or via control equipment from the ground.

Ammunition: material used by a weapon to work, informally said, what the weapon fires.



4. Topic 2: Establishment of mass destruction weapon free-zones in the Middle East.

4.1. Introduction

The definition of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) was given by the UN General Assembly in the resolution 32/84 of 1977 as: “Atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which might have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above.”

There are four main types of Weapons of Mass Destruction nowadays:

- Nuclear Weapons: According to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons on earth. One can destroy a whole city, potentially killing millions, and jeopardizing the natural environment and lives of future generations through its long-term catastrophic effects. The dangers from such weapons arise from their very existence.” The commitment that the United Nations has with the eradication started in 1946 with the first resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly³, in which they established a commission with deals that regards nuclear energy and its possible developments.
During the last decades there have been several multilateral treaties regarding these kinds of weapons, sticking out the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); also, the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).
- Radiological Weapons: A radiological weapon (also known as “dirty bombs”) is any weapon that is designed to spread radioactive material with the intent to damage, and cause disruption upon a city or nation. An explosion of a radiological weapon could cause significant short-and long-term health problems for those in the area and could leave billions of dollars in damage due to the costs of evacuation, relocation, and cleanup.
- Biological Weapons: According to the World Health Organization biological weapons are “microorganisms like virus, bacteria, fungi, or other toxins that are produced and released deliberately to cause disease and death in humans, animals or plants.” These weapons can be a threat to the stability of public health. Due to this, an attack with

³ [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/1\(I\)](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/1(I))

biological weapons can cause an epidemic. For example, a bioterrorist attack with the Ebola virus as the bioagent, can cause an epidemic in the attacked region.

In 1972, this kind of Mass Destruction Weapons were banned in the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), this convention is a key element in the international community's efforts to address WMD proliferation; it is ratified by 183 countries⁴ (including the P5) and signed by other 4 countries.

- Chemical Weapons: According to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) a chemical weapon is “a chemical used to cause intentional death or harm through its toxic properties. Munitions, devices and other equipment specifically designed to weaponize toxic chemicals also fall under the definition of chemical weapons.” These kinds of weapons were first used by both blocks during WWII. And in 1992, after 12 years of negotiations, it was adopted the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which has as its main objective the elimination of this entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

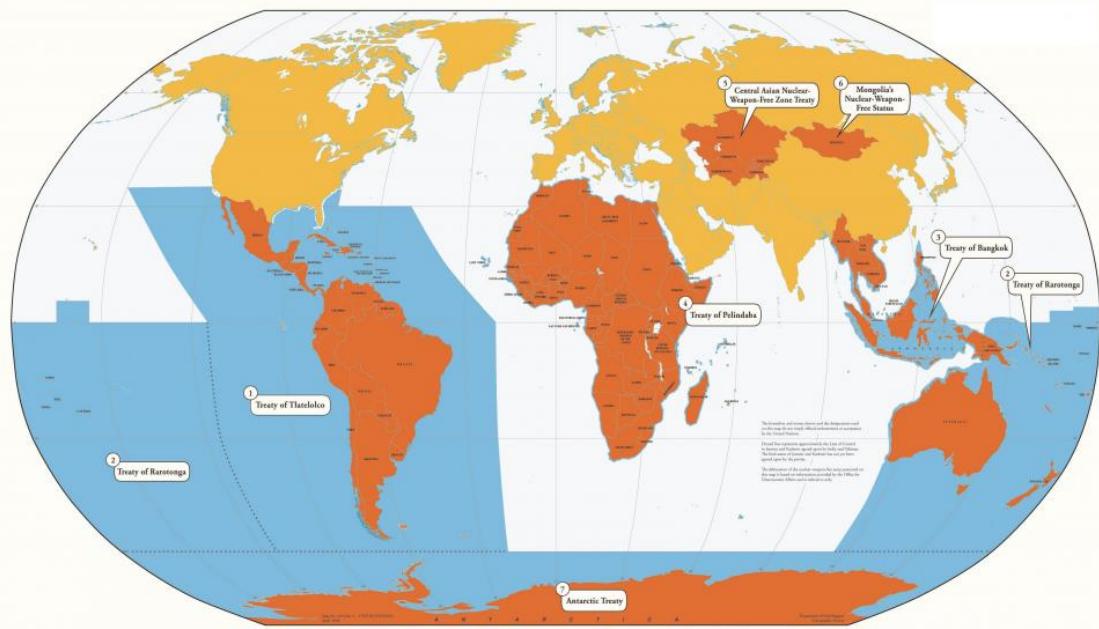
There is not an official definition given by the United Nations for mass destruction weapons-free zone, because in the last years the UN has been focused on promoting nuclear weapon-free zones, which are defined as “an agreement in which a group of states has freely established by treaty or convention that bans the development, manufacturing, control, possession, testing, stationing or transporting of nuclear weapons in a given area, that has mechanisms of verification and control to enforce its obligations, and that is recognized as such by the General Assembly of the United Nations.”

Some regions (see the map below) have already implemented this kind of agreements, which represent a commitment that these countries have with the non-proliferation of this type of mass destruction weapons.

⁴ See the Signatories and State-parties in: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/bwcsig>

NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE AREAS

Demarcation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, nuclear-weapon-free status and nuclear-weapon-free geographical regions



Taken from:

https://www.un.org/nwfz/sites/www.un.org.nwfz/files/styles/panopoly_image_full/public/general/nwfz_map_cropped2.jpg?itok=oaUslwsj

The proposal of establishing a mass destruction weapon-free zone in the Middle East is a UN proposal born in 2018, and it represents the first step and commitment that the International Community take in order to achieve a viable solution or agreement to this conflict that has jeopardized the region in discussion for many years.

4.2. Background

To understand why it is important to have a weapon free zone in the Middle East, the situation itself must be understood.

The Middle East is a loosely defined region that meets Asia, Europe, and Africa. Middle Eastern countries are Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and Iran.

There are a lot of reasons that cause conflict in this specific region, and that's why we are going to name and explain a few, bearing in mind that the main emphasis is the existence of nuclear weapon free-zones.

Several Middle Eastern countries are rich in oil, and export at competitive prices. These are affected by the divisions made by foreign powers after world wars. The French gained dominance over Lebanon and Syria- Northern region-, and England over Iraq, Jordan and Palestine-Southern Iraq and center region-. These divisions resulted in an alarming amount of civil wars, humanitarian crises, colonization, among other conflicts that have brought about the death of millions of innocent citizens.

A major reason for conflict in the Middle East is the difference and the pursuit of⁵region-dominance from ethnic groups, where we can find Arabs, Turks, Persians, Kurds, Jews, among others. This difference is the source of two different conflicts presented: the spread of Wahhabism throughout the region and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where both Jews and Palestinians claim a small part of the Middle East due to history and of course, religion.

The next conflict is between Saudi Arabia and Iran, where there has historically been a war over eastern territories that comes from different regimes, religion, and internal territorial wars. Strategic rivalry between both nations has arisen due to Iran's power-gaining during the last years. External forces and influences have intervened, the United States has fully supported Saudi Arabia during the conflicts, while Iran has had support from Syria. The last update on the conflict is that Saudi Arabia supported the withdrawal of the Iran nuclear deal, presented by the former United States president, Donald Trump.

Lastly, the American Foreign Policy has taken a significant part in all the conflicts mentioned above. For example, the non-recognition of the Israeli region from Arab nations, and how Israel and its allies (Great Britain, United States and France) have different strategies to claim different territories.

These conflicts have historically been violent among nations, where at least 801,000 people have died by direct war violence. Therefore, it's important to consider the possibility of establishing a zone where citizens will be safe, not only from the creation of these weapons, but from their use.

In addition, during the last decades different nuclear weapon free zones in the world have been created., these were established by different multilateral treaties, that can be taken as the basis of establishing a multilateral mass destruction weapon free treaty in the Middle East, which are:

⁵ Iran nuclear deal: In exchange for billions of dollars, Iran agreed to dismantle much of its nuclear program and open to more inspections. If you want to read more, go to:

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-iran-nuclear-deal>

- Treaty of Tlatelolco: Established in 1969 and was signed by all the 33 Latin America and the Caribbean countries, and prohibited the use, production, manufacture, and acquisition by any means of nuclear weapons.⁶
- Treaty of Pelindaba: Entered into force in 2009, but opened to signature in 1996, it has 41 State-parties and 51 signatory countries from the African continent. This treaty prohibited the research, development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control, or stationing of nuclear weapons, as well as the dumping of radioactive wastes.⁷
- Treaty of Semipalatinsk: also known as Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, was signed by 5 Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) in 2006 and entered into force in 2009. This was created thanks to the desire of these countries to provide security, stability, and peace in the region, address environmental concerns and create the necessary conditions for regional development and stability. It bans the production, acquisition, and deployment on their territories of nuclear weapons and their components or other nuclear explosive devices.⁸
- Treaty of Bangkok: also known as Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone was established in 1997, the Treaty obliges States Parties not to develop, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess, or have control over nuclear weapons, station or transport nuclear weapons, or test or use nuclear weapons. Also, not to discharge radioactive material or wastes at sea. State Parties: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.⁹
- Treaty of Rarotonga: also known as South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty was established in 1986, it contributes to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament by preventing the placement of nuclear weapons within the South Pacific by member states, which are Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.¹⁰

There are also some countries that have nuclear free status, such as Mongolia and Austria., in 1992 and 1997 respectively, the decisions were taken through a query to the

⁶ <https://www.un.org/nwfz/content/treaty-tlatelolco>

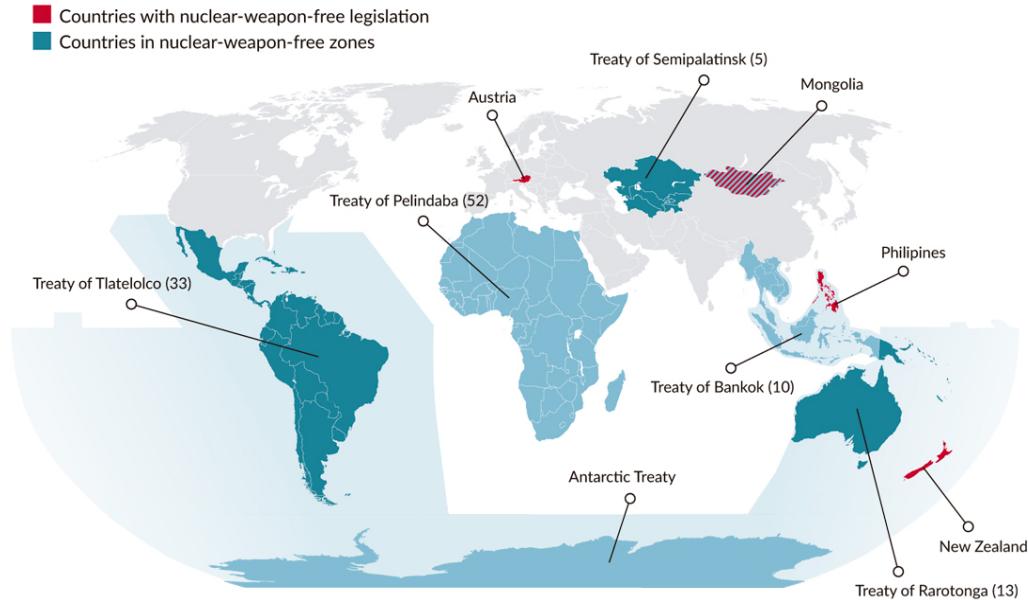
⁷ <https://www.un.org/nwfz/content/treaty-pelindaba>

⁸ <https://www.un.org/nwfz/content/treaty-nuclear-weapon-free-zone-central-asia>

⁹ <https://www.un.org/nwfz/content/treaty-bangkok>

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/nwfz/content/treaty-rarotonga>

population after a legislative initiative in their own legislative bodies, with the purpose of establishing that on those territories the production, manufacture, development and use of nuclear weapons is prohibited, as happens with the nuclear weapon free-zones.



Taken from: <https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Figure-15-NWFZ.jpg>

The presence of the weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, has represented a deterioration of the situation and stability in the region; the use of each type of the weapons will be described below.

The first time that chemical weapons were used in the Middle East was during the Yemeni War (1963-1967), where Egyptian forces used mustard gas and nerve agents to support a coup against the Yemeni monarchy, killing around 530 people. After that, during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), Iraqi forces used chemical weapons against Iran, resulting in more than 50,000 casualties. Finally, during the Gaza war (2008-2009), Israel used the controversial chemical agent white phosphorus, which can severely burn people and set fire to homes.

Regarding the use of biological weapons in the zone, some Arab countries accused that during the Arab-Israeli War (1948), the Israeli military poisoned wells with typhoid and dysentery. Also, it is well documented that Libya used Iranian-supplied mustard gas against Chad in 1987.



Finally, it is important to highlight that there is no evidence of military use of nuclear and radiological warfare in the Middle East.

4.3. Current Situation

On the other hand, it is important to highlight that the proposal of establishing a mass destruction weapon free zone in the middle east, was born in October 2019 as a three-year program of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) under the name “Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ)”. According to the Institute, the project has four main goals, which are:

- “To fill an important research gap related to how the issue of the Middle East WMDFZ has evolved over time, including lessons for current and future prospects;
- To build analytic capacity to support new thinking on regional security issues and the zone, including drawing on lessons from the establishment of other regional nuclear free zones;
- To collect ideas and develop new proposals on how to move forward on this issue;
- And to foster inclusive dialogue among experts and policymakers on regional security issues and the zone, which in turn could contribute to ongoing multilateral processes.”

Negotiations have been taking place in the last years between 22 Arab countries and Iran, but with the important negative point that Israel isn't participating. Besides, the project hasn't received the support from the United States because this country affirms that this is an effort of the members of the Arab League to dictate terms on and single out Israel, and to weaponize multilateral diplomacy.

There's another point that has deflected the negotiations, and it's that some of the Middle East countries do not recognize international treaties that regulate the Mass Destruction Weapons, such as Israel, that doesn't recognize the NPT and signs nor recognizes the CWC and the BWC. Likewise, Egypt hasn't signed the CWC and hasn't ratified the BWC. Iran and Syria demanded that Israel's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon state should be the first step toward establishing a mass destruction weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Iraq demanded that Israel join the CWC and BWC

On the other hand, the UAE said it expected that all states of the region would “join and reiterate their commitments to international treaties and conventions” related to the WMDFZ. In conclusion, solving the different points of view and disagreements about the international conventions is a point that must be addressed for establishing the zone.

As mentioned above, the use of the mass destruction weapons in the region has been involved in different sub-conflicts that have taken place; but it's important to highlight that nowadays, the military use of these artifacts still remains in the zone. the causes are:

- Israel

Regarding nuclear weapons, Israel has maintained an ambiguous official status regarding its nuclear capabilities, neither confirming nor denying possession of this kind of weapons. Most experts agree that the State of Israel possesses the most advanced and sophisticated nuclear program in the region.

In the chemical weapons scope, there is no confirmed evidence of Israeli production or stockpiling of such weapons. But there exists a suspicion about the activities of the Israeli Institute for Biological Research, after the discovery of an organic compound necessary for the production of this kind of weapons.

In the biological field, rumors and allegations persist that Israel possesses an offensive biological weapons program, most speculations center around the Institute mentioned above.

- Libya

Taking into consideration Libya's lack of material, technical and financial resources, it seems unlikely that a nuclear program has progressed.

Regarding chemical weapons, there is much evidence of Libya's active acquisition efforts and use of this kind of weapons; the US intelligence reports claim that Libya has ongoing chemical weapons production facilities in Tarnhunah and Rabta.

In the biological weapons field, there are some allegations that Libya is actively conducting research in pathogens and toxins for military uses, violating its obligations that contracted in the BWC.

- Syria

Despite the concerns of Israel and the United States about this country's nuclear ambitions, Syria lacks the infrastructure and financial capacity to pursue a nuclear weapons program. There is only one nuclear reactor in Syria, which is under IAEA inspections safeguards. Some negotiations with the purpose to expand Syria's nuclear infrastructure, with countries such as China, Argentina, and Russia, have failed.

During the last decade, this Arab country has used chemical artifacts for military purposes, specifically with approximately 350 chemical attacks, which has resulted in 1,961 deaths and

18,790 injuries. According to international journals and newsletters, such as the BBC, the use of these weapons has brought Bashar al-Assad close to victory.¹¹

Regarding biological weapons, there is limited and contradictory information; Germany and Israel insist that Syria possesses anthrax, botulinum toxin and ricin in a research phase. However, Syria's pharmaceutical infrastructure can't support a strong biological weapons program.

- Iraq

In the nuclear field, the situation in Iraq is complicated because it hasn't accomplished and followed the agreements of the NPT, which has caused the P5+1 countries to make additional agreements with Iraq, which this country isn't following. Iraq is one of the countries with the biggest stockpiles of uranium.

Regarding chemical weapons, according to its own admissions to UN inspectors, Iraq had produced more than 3,800 tons of agents, and more than 125,000 filled and unfilled "special munitions" between 1982 and 1990. In 1995, international inspectors had largely completed verification and destruction of Iraq's chemical stocks, munitions, and production equipment. However, the US believes that Iraq continues to have a significant, secret stockpile of chemical agents, especially nerve agents, and that it has largely rebuilt its chemical weapons research and production infrastructure.

In the biological weapons scope, Iraq has had a program since 1985. By 1990, it had stockpiled 25 missile warheads and 166 aerial bombs filled with weapons of this type. Also, this country has admitted to having about 20,000 liters of botulinum toxin, 8,425 liters of anthrax, and 2,200 liters of aflatoxin.

- Iran

In 1984, Iran revived its efforts to increase its nuclear capabilities; this country possesses five research reactors and two partially constructed power reactors at Bushehr. It has been actively pursuing international (most notably Russian) expertise and cooperation in completing the two Bushehr plants. There are some critics, especially of the US, that the Iranian government has diverted its efforts from peaceful nuclear energy to weapons uses, but the IAEA has not been able to confirm such accusations.

The United States affirms that Iran produced its first chemical agent in 1984, and since that time, cumulative production - like a minimum several hundred tons of blister, blood, and choking agents has been taking place. In addition to the suspected stockpiles, it is estimated

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-45586903>

that Iran can produce 1,000 metric tons of agent per year. The country strongly denies these allegations.

According to different institutions of the US government, Iran conducts research on toxins and organisms, has produced biological warfare agents, and apparently has weaponized a small quantity of those agents, possibly including mycotoxins, ricin, and the smallpox virus. Iran strongly denies producing biological weapons.

- Egypt

In the nuclear weapons scope, in the 1970s, there was some consideration given to pursuing this kind of weapons capability., however, it would appear that this goal has been abandoned. More recently, Egypt has publicly supported a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Egypt is one of the few States in the international community to have engaged in chemical warfare. It is thought that Egypt also has nerve agent and psychoactive chemical capabilities, in addition to a well-developed infrastructure, support system, and possible delivery capabilities. But this state publicly denies possessing chemical weapons.

Finally, there is no verified evidence that Egypt is actively conducting research on biological weapons. However, there are allegations from Israel that Egypt has conducted research on anthrax, plague, botulinum toxin, and Rift Valley Fever virus for military purposes, but the country strongly denies these allegations.

nuclear weapon free zones treaties and countries, conflicts it avoids, un statements about each one.

4.4. Guide questions

1. Does your delegation have any internal regulation regarding the use and development of massive destruction weapons?
2. Does your delegation have any trade agreement on massive destruction weapons with Middle East countries?
3. Is your delegation a member of any mass destruction weapon-free zone?
4. Is your delegation involved in any way (political, economical, or military) in the Middle East?
5. How would your delegation be affected by the possible establishment of a mass destruction weapon free-zone in the Middle East?
6. Does your delegation consider that the establishment of a mass destruction weapon free-zone in the Middle East could contribute to the peace in this region?

4.5. Recommendations

Considering that the United Nations has made some statements and progress regarding the topic, the Chair would like delegates to focus on considering and discussing in which points is the International Community failing to achieve the establishment of this zone, and what can be done to solve those mistakes. Also, the chair recommends that the delegates understand how politically, economically, socially, and especially military the establishment of a mass destruction free-zone can impact the region.

4.6. Useful links

Chemical Weapons Convention:

https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/CWC/CWC_en.pdf

Biological Weapons Convention:

https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.37_conv%20biological%20weapons.pdf

Non proliferation Treaty:

<https://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/pdf/text%20of%20the%20treaty.pdf>

<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-09/features/middle-eastern-wmd-free-zone-we-any-closer-now>

4.7. Glossary

Stockpiling: can be defined as the practice of storing a large supply of something for future use.

IAEA: the International Atomic Energy Agency is an international organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons.

Arab League: is a regional organization in the Arab world, which is located in Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, and Western Asia. It is composed of 22 member-states, but Syria's participation has been suspended since November 2011.

5. List of Delegations

1. Arab Republic of Egypt
2. Democratic People's Republic of Korea
3. Federative Republic of Brazil

4. Federal Republic of Germany
5. French Republic
6. Islamic Republic of Iran
7. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
8. Lebanese Republic
9. New Zealand
10. People's Republic of China
11. Philippines
12. Republic of Korea
13. Republic of India
14. Republic of Iraq
15. Republic of Turkey
16. Republic of Yemen
17. Russian Federation
18. State of Israel
19. State of Japan
20. State of Libya
21. Swiss Confederation
22. Syrian Arab Republic
23. United Arab Emirates
24. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
25. United States of America

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