

General Assembly First Committee

Introduction

The General Assembly (GA) First Committee held its 69th meeting from 6 October to 5 November 2014. The General Assembly on its 62nd plenary meeting adopted the First Committee's 57 resolutions and six decisions.¹ This update will review the outcomes of the most recent session in order to gain insight into how the General Assembly manages disarmament and international security. It will especially detail the progress made in the field of nuclear disarmament as well as security in outer space and cyberspace.² Finally, this update will explain which actors are responsible for implementing the First Committee's recommendations.

Recent Activities

During the First Committee's 69th meeting, items on the agenda included topics focusing on regional matters such as the promotion of a nuclear weapon free zone in Africa and Middle East and the maintenance of international security in Southeastern Europe. It also discussed global issues such as the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament, and the necessity to revitalize the conference on disarmament and multilateral negotiations.³

Many conferences took place to coincide with the 69th meeting on specific topics of interest to this committee. For example, the 2014 Conference on Disarmament was held from 10 to 12 September.⁴ Its work focused on its permanent agenda regarding nuclear disarmament, transparency, the limitation of weapons of mass destruction, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.⁵ The First Committee in its draft resolutions emphasized the conclusions of the Conference on Disarmament.⁶ It recognized the conference as the appropriate negotiating forum for issues disarmament, and therefore highlighted its role in establishing a working group on the matter for its next session.⁷

Also, on 17 October, the European Union Delegation to the United Nations (UN) reiterated its will to develop "an international code of conduct as a contribution to transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space."⁸ The origins of this code of conduct date back to March 2014, but the current draft is currently under discussion during rounds of consultations.⁹ Another recent example of the EU's work on this topic was the introduction of the iTrace Global Weapons Reporting System on 23 October.¹⁰ iTrace is a project funded by the European Union that develops a system of field investigations to provide decision-makers with accurate information.¹¹ Such an example highlights the diplomatic role of the European Union in trying to set regional initiatives on the international scale within the General Assembly,

Finally, the third conference Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons conference was held in Vienna, Austria, on 8-9 December 2014.¹² Following the 2013 Oslo conference held on 4-5 March and the 2014 Nayarit conference held on 13-14 February 2014, the Vienna program focused on the impact of nuclear testing and the risk of nuclear

¹ UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, *Record-Breaking Participation in Debates, Passage of 63 Drafts – Largest Number in Decade – Notes First Committee Chair as Session Draws to Close*, 2014.

² UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Allocation of agenda items to the First Committee (A/C.1/69/1)*, 2014.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Report of the Conference on Disarmament (A/69/27)*, 2014, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9-11.

⁶ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/69/L.3/Rev.1)*, 2014; UN, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *No first placement of weapons in outer space, (A/C.1/69/L.14)*, 2014.

⁷ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Prevention of an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/69/L.3/Rev.1)*, 2014; UN, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *No first placement of weapons in outer space, (A/C.1/69/L.14)*, 2014.

⁸ Reaching Critical Will, *Calendar of Events for First Committee 2014*, 2014.

⁹ European Union External Action, *Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities*.

¹⁰ Reaching Critical Will, *Calendar of Events for First Committee 2014*, 2014.

¹¹ European Union Delegation to the United Nations, *Side event: iTrace Global Weapons Reporting System, 23 October 2014*, 2014.

¹² Europe Integration Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry Republic of Austria, *Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons*, 2014.

weapons use.¹³ Participants also assessed existing international legal instruments, such as the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT) (1968), in order to raise awareness and spread a sense of urgency regarding the ban of nuclear weapons.¹⁴ This echoed the conclusion made at the General Assembly on what the 2015 Review Conference will have on the agenda.¹⁵

Recent Policy Outcomes

The thematic debate led to decisions on the importance of prevention and having a strong doctrine surrounding the use of nuclear weapons and the necessity to set up a framework around information and communication technologies to prevent cyber warfare.¹⁶

Specifically, the First Committee highlighted several points related to nuclear disarmament. One outcome stressed preventing nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists groups by ratifying the *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism* (2007).¹⁷ In addition, a report was called for from the Secretary-General, which will compile all measures that have to be implemented in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the context of a fight against terrorism.¹⁸ Member States also agreed on the necessity of decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems.¹⁹ In this regard, the committee recognized the importance the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT will play in taking further practical steps to eventually remove every nuclear weapon from high alert status.²⁰ Finally, the committee requested a review of nuclear doctrine among nuclear weapons Member States to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons, and the committee reaffirmed the diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies.²¹ Member States also took the opportunity to recognize the beginning of discussions by governmental experts around a treaty banning the production of fissile material.²²

The focus on cyber warfare in the thematic debate led to the conclusion that regulating the production of communication technologies was becoming essential.²³ As measures of regulation, confidence-building measures were at the heart of the debate.²⁴ The promotion of specific transparency measures was agreed upon, as adapted instruments both to maintain the benefits of a connected society and to transfer knowledge related to economic and social development.²⁵

Implementation of General Assembly First Committee Outcomes

The First Committee's resolutions and decisions are passed to the General Assembly Plenary, which then debates and adopts them, after which the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) implements outcomes.²⁶ UNODA works to support norm setting in the area of disarmament.²⁷ UNODA favors the development and implementation of practical measures, once they have been decided upon, and it follows up on Member States

¹³ Europe Integration Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry Republic of Austria, *Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons*, 2014.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems (A/C.1/69/L.22)*, 2014.

¹⁶ Nuclear Threat Initiative, *United Nations First Committee*, 2014.

¹⁷ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, (A/C.1/69/L.17)*, 2014.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems (A/C.1/69/L.22)*, 2014.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Reducing Nuclear Danger (A/C.1/69/L.18)*, 2014.

²² UN General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session, *Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (A/C.1/69/L.20)*, 2014.

²³ UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, *Cyber warfare, unchecked, could topple entire edifice of international security, says speaker in First Committee at conclusion of thematic debate segment*, 2014.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ UNODA, *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*.

²⁷ Ibid.

agreements and activities in this field.²⁸ As an example, UNODA created a workshop in Cambodia (18-19 November 2014) to prepare for the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December 2014 and facilitate ratification in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁹ International legal experts during these workshops assess what is needed in national legislation to comply with the treaty.³⁰ This way, they take a step towards the implementation of international instruments being debated and adopted within the First Committee and General Assembly Plenary.³¹

Conclusion

The 69th session was constructive for the First Committee in order to “revitalize the United Nations disarmament machinery” by addressing various situations around the world, nuclear disarmament, specific measures for the Middle East and South-Eastern Europe, and even cyberspace and outer space.³² The First Committee continues to play an important role in ensuring dialogue and promoting consensus on international security involving more and more technology and confidence-building measures.

²⁸ UNODA, *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*.

²⁹ UNODA, *Regional Legal Assistance Arms Trade Treaty Workshops aims at preparing governments for Cross Border Weapons transfer responsibilities*, 2014.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, *Record-Breaking Participation in Debates, Passage of 63 Drafts – Largest Number in Decade – Notes First Committee Chair as Session Draws to Close*, 2014.

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This Website gives delegate access to all the relevant information regarding the most recent conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Delegates should pay attention to the detailed program of the conference. It provides them with the main themes of discussion and also introduces them to the main speakers and influential academics and authors around the topic.

Nuclear Threat Initiative (2014). *United Nations First Committee* [Website]. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: <http://www.nti.org/treaties-and-regimes/un-first-committee/>

The Nuclear Threat Initiative is a non-profit organization providing important resources on the prevention of the spread of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in a spirit of building trust and transparency. This page summarizes recent developments and new resolutions of the First Committee for each year, which will be useful for delegates to understand the most recent session. Because this source presents these updates a timeline, it also useful for delegates to review how recent developments fit into previous work on this topic.

Reaching Critical Will. (2014). *First Committee Monitor: 2014 No. 4*. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: <http://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/FCM14/FCM-2014-No4.pdf>

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament program of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and it gathers reports on the First Committee's activities. These reports are a great primary source for delegates to analyze the work of the First Committee. There are four editions of the First Committee Monitor and each dedicates a specific section to analyzing themes debated within the First Committee. Delegates should also pay attention to the side event reports, and, especially in this edition, on the report on international peace and security in cyberspace.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session (2014). *Report of the Conference on Disarmament, A/69/27*. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/27

This report of the Conference on Disarmament is a great resource for delegates to review the work of the 2014 Conference. The Conference has three sessions: in January for 10 weeks, May for 7 weeks, and July for 7 weeks. The report is divided into various sections, depending on the agenda of the conference, and related to topics being discussed. Delegates should pay attention to the section on transparency in armaments, to review the main decisions taken related to confidence-building measures.

United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. (2 December 2014). *General Assembly adopts 63 Drafts on First Committee's Recommendations with nuclear disarmament at core of several recorded votes* [Meeting Report]. Retrieved 22 December 2014 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11593.doc.htm>

This meeting coverage highlights the fact that nuclear disarmament was at the heart of the debate of the 69th session of the First Committee. It details the various drafts that were adopted and gives an overview of the documents and the consensus they gathered within the committee. It is useful for delegates to find an assessment of all voting procedures within one resource.

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European Union External Action. (n.d.). *Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities* [Website]. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: http://eeas.europa.eu/non-proliferation-and-disarmament/outer-space-activities/index_en.htm

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United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction (A/C.1/69/L.17)* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: <http://undocs.org/A/C.1/69/L.17>

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United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *Reducing Nuclear Danger (A/C.1/69/L.18)* [Draft Resolution]. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: <http://undocs.org/A/C.1/69/L.18>

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United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. (28 October 2014). *Cyber warfare, unchecked, could topple entire edifice of international security, says speaker in First Committee at conclusion of thematic debate segment* [Meeting Report]. Retrieved 22 December 2014 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gadis3512.doc.htm>

United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. (4 November 2014). *Record-Breaking Participation in Debates, Passage of 63 Drafts – Largest Number in Decade – Notes First Committee Chair as Session Draws to Close [GA/DIS/3517]* [Meeting Report]. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gadis3517.doc.htm>

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I. Prohibiting Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

Introduction

Today's use of autonomous weapons systems challenges the regulations of air space control in the realm of international law and arms control.³³ Increasingly the use of autonomous weapons systems also calls into question international human rights law. Moreover, technical advances that allow for lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) pose new questions and issues, specifically as unmanned weapons systems have the potential to carry out attacks without warning.³⁴ Proliferation of armed drones needs to be contained in order to prevent qualitative advances towards an arms race.³⁵ Because of all of these implications, the international community has hotly debated this topic in light of the importance of safety, freedom, and sovereignty for all.³⁶ Therefore, this update will consider recent action addressing this issue by the international system.

Most recently, the issue of LAWS was addressed at the annual meeting of the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* (CCW) held from 11 to 14 November 2014 in Geneva.³⁷ This was an important meeting as delegates worked to decide, "in which framework the talks on LAWS should be continued."³⁸ Ultimately, this meeting ended in consensus to continue discussing this issue through the CCW forum with a meeting planned for 13-17 April 2015.³⁹ Concerns around the use of lethal autonomous weapons systems were also recently highlighted at the 2015 World Economic Forum in Davos, where it was the first time "world leaders from government, business, and civil society has considered the challenges posed by weapons systems that select targets and use force without further human intervention."⁴⁰ The forum also included a section on "artificial intelligence – rise of the machines" in its 2015 Global Risks report released in parallel with the conference.⁴¹

Civil society has also been particularly active recently on this issue. For example, the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots worked at the 2015 World Economic Forum in Davos, by participating in forums, and other forums to heightened visibility of this issue on the international stage.⁴² Additionally, in November the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights authored a briefing paper regarding legal dimensions on autonomous weapons that followed up on the Geneva Academy.⁴³ Finally, in November "more than 70 faith leaders of various denominations including Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa endorsed an interfaith call to action against fully autonomous weapons."⁴⁴ This shows that "[i]n these ways civil society is trying to push for states to take action where international discussions may fail."⁴⁵ In particular, considering the upcoming 2015 CCW meeting, organizations such as this are focusing on wanting to see "meaningful human control to be a subject of continued concern at the next expert meeting."⁴⁶

Recent Developments

As recent events and debate demonstrate, the international community has become increasingly concerned about the possibility that rapid advances in lethal autonomous weapons have already occurred or will quickly be possible. This was highlighted in the World Economic Forum of Global Risks 2015 Report, which indicates that "several nations are working towards the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems that can assess information, choose targets and open fire without human intervention."⁴⁷ This was discussed even more explicitly at the CCW

³³ Bieri & Dickow, *Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems: Future Challenges*, 2014.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Morley, *More Scrutiny for Autonomous Weapons*, 2014.

³⁸ Bieri & Dickow, *Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems: Future Challenges*, 2014, p. 1.

³⁹ Human Rights Watch, *UN: 'Killer Robot' Talks Go Forward, Slowly*, 2014.

⁴⁰ Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, *Davos considers killer robots*, 2015.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Wareham, *Killer Robots: Why The World Should Ban Autonomous Weapons Systems*, 2014.

⁴³ Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, *2014: A year of progress*, 2014.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.; Bieri & Dickow, *Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems: Future Challenges*, 2014.

⁴⁶ Article 36, *Need for meaningful human control over weapons highlighted by AI experts*, 2015.

⁴⁷ Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, *Davos considers killer robots*, 2015

conference in November where several countries, led by the European Union, warned of “the potential dangers of this rapidly advancing technology.” Additionally, much recent debate focused on the extent to which these new weapons systems already exist. In Geneva in 2014, “[o]ne key difference among the speakers was whether lethal autonomous systems are already in use.”⁴⁸ The delegations from Cuba and Palestine discussed the issue of autonomous systems in relation to drones, potentially suggesting that lethal autonomous systems have already been deployed.⁴⁹ Claims were specifically made on how American and Israeli drones, which are used for armed conflicts in Pakistan and the Gaza Strip, qualify as “autonomous or semiautonomous weapons.”⁵⁰ The Palestinian delegation argues that these drones are being used illegally for the targeting of their people.⁵¹ Adel Atieh, a Palestinian representative, discussed how observational towers, “are equipped with automatic gun machines with lethal autonomous capabilities.”⁵² He also highlighted the death toll of the farmers in the area that were killed by the machines.⁵³ Civil society organizations, led by Human Rights Watch, contended that only a total ban would address these issues posed by such weapons systems.⁵⁴ Given all of these concerns, many groups hope that the April 2015 discussion will have a greater “sense of urgency” and lead to either this ban or at least, as the Campaign to Ban Killer Robots has called for, the adoption of “the standard that all weapons systems must have ‘meaningful human control’ or else be prohibited.”⁵⁵

Conclusion

There is much discussion on the issues of LAWS or killer robots; however, the effort should be focused on continued diplomacy and discussion on this issue as technological advancements require further study by the international community to monitor autonomous weapons systems. Specifically, it will be important to evaluate not only their negative impacts, but also the potentially positive benefits.⁵⁶ Recent discussion has been led by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, which calls for a strict prohibition of these weapons systems.⁵⁷ However, strict prohibition is an extreme option, so other approaches may offer additional viable solutions. This includes considering the potential of such systems to record and analyze situations in which human contact can be dangerous, and the ability to maintain human control.⁵⁸ With so much to consider, debate on this topic will only become more important in the UN’s largest, most universal body dealing with international peace and security issues.

⁴⁸ Morley, *More Scrutiny for Autonomous Weapons*, 2014.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Pilkington, *Killer robots' need to be strictly monitored, nations warn at UN meeting*, 2014.

⁵⁵ Morley, *More Scrutiny for Autonomous Weapons*, 2014.

⁵⁶ Wareham, *Killer Robots: Why The World Should Ban Autonomous Weapons Systems*, 2014.

⁵⁷ Roff, *Meaningful or Meaningless Control*, 2014.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

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This article details the technical aspects that need to be handled if autonomous weapons take the airspace. Delegates will be able to consider what has to be assessed and reassessed for international law as technology advances pose another dilemma to human's role in decision-making and responsibility to ensure safety. Though written before the 2014 November meeting of the CCW, this article is also useful because it highlights the key issues that will be debated at that meeting.

Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. (2014). *2014: A year of progress*. Retrieved 26 December 2014 from: <http://www.stopkillerrobots.org/2014/12/yearofprogress/>

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots has gained much notice in social media and overall internationally. While this Website includes a donation request, it also respectably discusses the representatives' concerns towards killer robots. Specifically, this page is useful to highlight civil society's voice on this topic at the end of 2014.

Facing Finance. (2014). *Substantive Talks on Killer Robots Must Continue – Convention on Conventional Weapons decision due on 14 November*. Retrieved 26 December 2014 from: <http://www.facing-finance.org/en/2014/11/substantive-talks-on-killer-robots-must-continue-convention-on-conventional-weapons-decision-due-on-14-november-2/>

This article provides reasoning as to why autonomous weapons are harmful without human intervention. The article specifically focuses on the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots and explains the importance of discussing the ban of such weapons and highlights its accordance to the Convention on Conventional Weapons. This site also provides insightful statements directly by the Campaign and links to the interfaith statement signed in the fall of 2014.

Morley, J. (2014). *More Scrutiny for Autonomous Weapons*. Retrieved 26 December 2014 from: http://www.armscontrol.org/ACT/2014_12/News/More-Scrutiny-for-Autonomous-Weapons_1

It is important to analyze all aspects of autonomous weapons as further studies can lead to acceptable forms of existing systems. The Arms Control Association presents another argument of autonomous systems versus drones. Determining what is currently in use by various Member States and what is potentially lethal are two different aspects to this issue. Before taking drastic measures in banning such weapons, this article helps delegates in understanding the preliminary step of collecting data to further implement policies.

Wareham, M. (2014). *Killer Robots: Why The World Should Ban Autonomous Weapons Systems*. Retrieved 26 December 2014 from: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/11/28/killer-robots-why-world-should-ban-autonomous-weapons-systems>

Mary Wareham is the Advocacy Director in the Arms Division for the Human Rights Watch. She is also the global coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. In this article, she provides insight into the policy of the United States on autonomous weapons systems. She analyses the threats these autonomous weapons have upon civilians in their daily lives. This also provides delegates a scope of how NGO's are interacting with such issues on a global scale.

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II. The Control of Biological Weapons in Today's Modern Era

Introduction

There have been numerous discussions and outcomes regarding the topic of biological weapons within the past few months following the continuation of Meetings of Experts (MX) and Meetings of States Parties (MSP). This included the lead up to the 2016 Eighth Review Conference, which will formally review the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction*, also known as the *Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)*.⁵⁹ Since September 2014, one resolution was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA), there was a first committee thematic debate on weapons of mass destruction, the 2014 MSP was held, and there has been updates surrounding the Ebola outbreak. As the battle against Ebola persists, it will be wise to pay attention to the conversation around how Member States plan to handle any possible future biological outbreaks as they relate to international peace and security.

During the 69th session of the GA, the body adopted one resolution without a vote on this topic.⁶⁰ GA resolution 69/82 of 2 December 2014 seeks the promotion and the complete ratification of the BWC by all Member States.⁶¹ This document is consistent in its recommendations with previous resolutions.⁶² Further, it requests the Secretary-General to continue to render assistance to States Parties of the Convention while it also encourages reporting on the implementation of Article X of the Convention.⁶³

Recent Developments

First Committee Thematic Debate on other Weapons of Mass Destruction

On 24 October 2014, the First Committee held a thematic debate discussing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) such as chemical and biological weapons.⁶⁴ Member States spoke of the continued need to ensure that biological agents do not pose a threat because of their potential misuse due to their dual-use nature and the rapid advancements being made within the life sciences.⁶⁵ Furthermore, speakers exchanged their positions on various ways to improve the biological weapons control regime.⁶⁶ Indonesia and Suriname both agreed on the resumption of multilateral negotiations to conclude a non-discriminatory legally binding protocol.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, Norway, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, suggested focusing on strengthening the Secretary-General's investigative mechanism for alleged use of biological weapons.⁶⁸ The many different positions of Member States presented during this meeting acknowledge the significant diversity and potential challenges to consensus and creating a comprehensive BWC.⁶⁹

2014 Meeting of States Parties

The 2014 MSP of the BWC was held from 1 to 5 December 2014 and considered the work of the MX, which was held on 4 to 8 August 2014.⁷⁰ It also discussed three additional agenda items: "Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X; review of developments in the field of

⁵⁹ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁶⁰ UN Department of Public Information, *General Assembly Adopts 63 Drafts on First Committee's Recommendations with Nuclear Disarmament at Core of Several Recorded Votes*, 2014.

⁶¹ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (A/RES/69/82)*, 2014.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ UN Department of Public Information, *Mission to 'Remove and Destroy' Chemical Weapons in Syria Unprecedented, but Reports of Chlorine Gas Use Troubling, First Committee Hears*, 2014.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

science and technology (S&T) related to the Convention; and strengthening national implementation.”⁷¹ Also considered was “the biennial item of how to strengthen implementation of Article VII” of the BWC that provides assistance to States Parties in case of a possible violation to the Convention.⁷²

Members of civil society also spoke at the MSP, calling on States Parties to establish an ‘Open Ended Working Group’ (OEWG), which saw an increase of support from the 2014 MX.⁷³ The OEWG would be mandated to address the agenda item “review of developments in the field of S&T related to the Convention.”⁷⁴ This would allow for a more up-to-date review of emerging developments within S&T that is lacking due to the current inter-session agreement that contains time restrictions.⁷⁵ However, for an OEWG to be agreed upon before the 2016 Eighth Review Conference, a proposed OEWG must first contain broad support by the States Parties to the BWC.⁷⁶ Such an outcome must also provide a detailed case of the importance of discussing the review of S&T and how it will be an improvement from the current format.⁷⁷ A series of upcoming consultations organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to be held between 15 February and 15 July 2015, discussing revisions to the *Declaration on the Status of Scientific Researchers* (1974) will provide useful developments in how important and effective an OEWG would be.⁷⁸ Indeed, discussions will focus on the field of ethics and security within S&T pertinent to the above agenda item.⁷⁹

In the final report adopted by consensus at the last day of the MSP, States Parties noted with satisfaction on the previous efforts and common understandings of reports adopted from the 2014 MX providing a framework for discussion at the following MX in Geneva from 10 to 14 August 2015 and MSP in Geneva from 14 to 18 December 2015.⁸⁰ The need for universality was well broadcasted for the effective implementation of the Convention.⁸¹ On this note, Myanmar was applauded for their recent ratification, becoming the 171st country to ratify the BWC on 1 December 2014.⁸²

Ebola

The issues of prevention and preparedness remain crucial areas in the potential misuse of scientific agents as lethal weapons. In light of the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa, States Parties to the BWC discussed during the MSP the importance of strengthening Article VII of the BWC and learning lessons from combating the outbreak.⁸³ It is here where the Codes of Conduct for Scientists drafted by States Parties remain important as they establish a common set of rules and practices.⁸⁴ It is the hope that these codes will prevent accidents, such as the recent mishandling of the Ebola virus by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States.⁸⁵

⁷¹ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ United Nations Office at Geneva & King’s College London, *Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties NGO Statements*, 2014.

⁷⁴ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Statement by Professor Graham Spearson of the University of Bradford Division of Peace Studies*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁷⁵ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Statement by Professor Graham Spearson of the University of Bradford Division of Peace Studies*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁷⁶ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Statement by Professor Graham Spearson of the University of Bradford Division of Peace Studies*, 2014.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Statement of Pax Christi International to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁷⁹ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Statement of Pax Christi International to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Concludes after Reaching Common Understandings*, 2014.

⁸⁰ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Report of the Meeting of States Parties (BWC/MSP/2014/5)*, 2014.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Code of Conduct for Scientists*, 2014.

⁸⁵ United Nations Office at Geneva, *Report of the Meeting of States Parties (BWC/MSP/2014/5)*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Code of Conduct for Scientists*, 2014.

These accidents show the gaps within health and security infrastructures, which may lead to their possible exploitation for the misuse of lethal agents.⁸⁶ Relating to these concerns, a side event on 5 December 2014 during the MSP entitled “National Action Plans and sharing best practices: an innovative networking approach to mitigate biological risks” highlighted virus epidemics in relation to the threat they pose to international security and the need to move towards the harmonization of bio-safety and bio-security measures.⁸⁷ This event provided an example of how cooperation and coordination among states can successfully create strategic plans that effectively prepare for and prevent epidemics.⁸⁸ It should be further noted that as states consider the importance of national preparedness, such as establishing strong detection capabilities for disease surveillance, potential issues may still arise from the emerging technology being developed, including the use of unmanned aerial systems in order to detect chemical and biological weapons.⁸⁹

Conclusion

In the wake of current events, the potential threat of biological agents being used as weapons has resurfaced alongside many concerns, as well as fears, of the inadequacy of the international system to properly prevent and respond to such threats. This has caused a resurgence of attention towards the biological weapons control regime, sparking ways in which Member States envision a comprehensive BWC. This renewed focus was well represented during the debates of the 69th session of the GA. The December 2014 MSP also provided a timely platform for States Parties to discuss common understandings and promote the universality of the BWC. Finally, the current issue of the Ebola outbreak provides a new lens to learn how Member States can prevent and prepare for the potential spread of biological agents or weapons. These positions and outcomes discussed in this update, and the most recent and continuing events relating to the topic, will provide delegates with the needed tools in order to effectively discuss moves towards strengthening the control of biological weapons in the 21st century.

⁸⁶ Grady & McNeil Jr., *Ebola Sample is Mishandled at C.D.C. Lab in Latest Error*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Code of Conduct for Scientists*, 2014.

⁸⁷ United Nations Interregional Crime and Research Institute, *Side event at the Meeting of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention: National Action Plans and Sharing Best Practices*, 2014.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Defense Systems, *Pentagon looking for an edge in chemical, biological drone warfare*, 2014; United Nations Office at Geneva, *Report of the Meeting of States Parties*, 2014.

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Lentzos, F. & Kings College London. (2014). *Confidence & Compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention* [Report]. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/sshm/events/BWC-workshop-report-NEW-web.pdf>

A workshop organized by King's College London and the Geneva Centre on 1 December 2014 held during the MSP produced a report discussing verifiability, confidence and a legally binding mechanism in regards to the BWC. The workshop report provides a case study of how the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) was successfully able to distinguish legitimate facilities from those pursuing a weapons program that shows the possibility of a verification mechanism for the BWC. This workshop involved various stakeholders including experts and cross-Group party representatives making the discussions and conclusions worth noting on this topic. The report will offer delegates new perspectives on these three key issues that will be of great importance when discussing the control of biological weapons.

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2014, October 24). *Mission to 'Remove and Destroy' Chemical Weapons in Syria Unprecedented, but Reports of Chlorine Gas Use Troubling, First Committee Hears* [Meeting Coverage]. Retrieved 4 January 2014 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/gadis3510.doc.htm>

Every year the GA First Committee holds a thematic debate on other weapons of mass destruction discussing both biological and chemical weapons. This debate contains important Member States positions regarding these weapons and particularly on biological weapons. During this year's debate, the BWC gained momentum as Member States took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of its universality as well as speaking to the seriousness of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in relation to international peace and security. Delegates should consider the outcomes and content of this debate when formulating their common positions and recommendations for future action.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (A/RES/69/82)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the First Committee (A/69/447). Retrieved 4 January 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/82>

The General Assembly adopts a resolution regarding this topic every year. During the 69th session, special attention was paid to the outcome of the Seventh Review Conference of the BWC. However, recommendations provided by Member States have not changed considerably from previous years. Delegates should take this into consideration when developing new proposals that would tackle the control of biological weapons, as it is important to learn how the General Assembly has most recently addressed this topic.

United Nations Office at Geneva. (2014). *Meeting of States Parties (1-5 December 2014)* [Website]. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from: [http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/\(httpPages\)/E75AAA1D8234B830C1257D63002C7DEF?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/E75AAA1D8234B830C1257D63002C7DEF?OpenDocument)

The Website of the 2014 MSP of the BWC held from 1 to 5 December 2014 will provide delegates with documents and statements produced prior and during this meeting. The MSP produced documents generated by States Parties offering insight into where common understandings have been met and working papers related to each standing agenda item. Delegates will find materials regarding this meeting valuable in constructing common positions for the conference with the goal of controlling biological weapons and building a more effective and comprehensive BWC.

United Nations Office at Geneva. (2014). *Report of the Meeting of States Parties (BWC/MSP/2014/5)*. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from: [http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/F911B9513D550420C1257DB300523BB7/\\$file/BWC_MS_P_2014_5+English-1424633\(E\).pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/F911B9513D550420C1257DB300523BB7/$file/BWC_MS_P_2014_5+English-1424633(E).pdf)

The report of the 2014 MSP will offer delegates the outcomes and common understandings agreed upon that can then be used to guide the development of new proposals. Delegates are strongly encouraged to study this report in order to understand new materials included on the specific measures for each agenda item discussed during the MSP. These latest developments on the BWC

were suggested by and to States Parties to be taken into account along with the agreed upon common understandings and action relating to biological weapons. This will subsequently help to identify new possible ways States Parties to the BWC could achieve consensus.

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United Nations Office at Geneva. (2014). *Code of Conduct for Scientists* [Working Paper]. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from: [http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/97E7B931D2111DE5C1257DA2006549BD/\\$file/WP+Codi+go+de+Conducta+para+Cient%C3%ADficos+2014,+Unof.Transl.+English.pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/97E7B931D2111DE5C1257DA2006549BD/$file/WP+Codi+go+de+Conducta+para+Cient%C3%ADficos+2014,+Unof.Transl.+English.pdf)

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III. Confidence-Building Measures in a Regional and Subregional Context

Introduction

The work of the United Nations (UN) never ceases and there have been new and important developments on the topic of confidence-building measures (CBMs) since the opening of the 69th session of the General Assembly (GA) on 16 September 2014.⁹⁰ In addition to the progress made at the GA, this update will also address the activities of regional offices working on the field of disarmament as well as some of the latest publications of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). Thus, it will become clear that a regional and subregional approach to CBMs covers a wide range of topics and activities such as weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), conventional arms, the promotion and facilitation of the implementation of fundamental treaties such as the *Arms Trade Treaty* (ATT) or the *Convention on Biological Weapons* (CBW), information-sharing and cooperation on military matters among states with the assistance of UN entities, and new and emergent concerns for global security such as the peaceful use of outer space or cyber security.

Although the topic of nuclear weapons has drawn the biggest attention when mentioning CBMs, the GA First Committee has also addressed CBMs directly.⁹¹ In this regard, four resolutions, all adopted by consensus without a vote at the GA Plenary, can be cited: resolution 69/38 of 11 December 2014 on “Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities;” resolution 69/46 of 11 December 2014 on “Confidence-Building Measures in the Regional and Subregional Context”; resolution 69/64 of 11 December 2014 on “Information on Confidence-Building Measures in the Field of Conventional Arms”; and resolution 69/73 of 11 December 2014 on “Regional Confidence-Building Measures: Activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.”⁹²

Resolution 69/46 addresses the topic of regional CBMs as a whole and encourages dialogue between states to this purpose.⁹³ One of its central declarations is the reaffirmation of the *Guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security*, which were set by the UN Disarmament Commission (DC) in 1993 and remain a fundamental document in the field.⁹⁴ Far from being outdated, these guidelines encourage states to engage processes at a regional level in order to facilitate global peace.⁹⁵ Although they do not provide clear recommendations on how to shape CBMs they set the guiding principles and goals that should be the driving force of CBMs.⁹⁶ Moreover, one specific domain in which CBMs are of great importance are conventional arms.⁹⁷ Resolution 69/64 underlined the benefits of information-sharing especially via the use of the UN Report on Military Expenditures and the UN Register on Conventional Arms (UNROCA) managed by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), and gathering statistical information submitted by states on matters such as military expenditures.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the resolution stresses the need of CBMs in a regional and subregional context in the particular field of conventional arms as they create favorable conditions for a secure environment by reducing actual and perceived threats.⁹⁹ As well, other fields, where progress often tends to be more difficult such as nuclear disarmament or other WMDs, can benefit from a spillover.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, the Secretary-General was recently asked to prepare an inventory of military CBMs creating a unique set of potential measures that can be tailored to specific regional and subregional situations.¹⁰¹

⁹⁰ UN Department of Public Information, *General Assembly Adopts 63 Drafts on First Committee’s Recommendation with Nuclear Disarmament at Core of Several Recorded Votes*, 2014.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ UN General Assembly, *Confidence-Building Measures in the Regional and Subregional Context (A/RES/69/46)*, 2014.

⁹⁴ UN Centre for Disarmament Affairs, *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, Vol. 18 (1993)*, 1994, p. 108-115.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Information on Confidence-Building Measures in the Field of Conventional Arms (A/RES/69/64)*, 2014.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ UNODA, *Remarks on Military Confidence-building and Conflict Prevention*, by Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, 2014.

Recent Developments

Regional Cooperation

With a more regional focus, GA resolution 69/73 mainly reflects progress made in the Central African region with the support of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.¹⁰² Besides disarmament and arms limitation programs, the region held a series of cooperative actions aimed to contribute to a more secure environment.¹⁰³ Particularly, a Head of State Summit to address the problem of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea as well as the successful implementation of the *Kinshasa Convention* (2010) regulating Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) and combating their illicit trade were highlighted in this resolution.¹⁰⁴ By providing a common and synchronized answer to mutual threats, such as these, states can respond more effectively by sharing the burden and reduce the likelihood of tensions among them through cooperating on security issues.¹⁰⁵ Another important UN entity currently active in the field of disarmament in Africa is the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), which has been recently active in assisting states with their national legislation reforms on SALWs.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, workshops or other events gathering states to facilitate the implementation of international conventions or similar documents has multiple benefits beyond fostering dialogue; it allows states to learn how others adapt to and perceive these documents while showing openness on such questions in turn.¹⁰⁷ This creates an environment in which neighboring states gain a better understanding of each other and their intentions behind political decisions.¹⁰⁸ This prevails too for the CBW as cooperation with and between states to facilitate its implementation is also part of UNREC's activities.¹⁰⁹ Again, bringing states closer together enhances mutual trust that in turn creates opportunities for peace regimes.¹¹⁰

Following the same goals, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) has also been very active recently as can be witnessed by the Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues held for the 13th time from 4 to 5 December 2014 mainly with a regional focus.¹¹¹ Similarly, the Regional Legal Assistance Workshop on the *Arms Trade Treaty* hosted by Cambodia from 18 – 19 November 2014 is another good example of opportunities given to states to share their opinions and positions on security matters in a peaceful environment.¹¹² The main purpose was to provide legal expertise and examining the treaty's impact on national legislations, while simultaneously providing the opportunity for states to witness efforts and commitments made by others.¹¹³ Lastly, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) is the third regional office providing assistance in the field of disarmament including confidence- and security building, one of its three main areas of focus.¹¹⁴ One of its most significant objectives is transparency in defense and security related matters within and among states, thus lowering the level of suspicion between them.¹¹⁵ This is aimed to be fulfilled via openness in military matters or standardized processes in the elaboration of Defense White Papers to facilitate comparability.¹¹⁶

CBMs and Emerging Threats

Finally, emerging threats such as the peaceful use of outer space were also addressed with a CBMs perspective as demonstrated by the adoption of GA resolution 69/38.¹¹⁷ Outlined in a 2014 UNIDIR publication on norms of

¹⁰² UN General Assembly, *Regional Confidence-Building Measures: Activities of United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (A/RES/69/73)*, 2014.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ UNREC, *UNREC in cooperation with the Governments of Mali, Nigeria and Togo for national legislation reforms on Small Arms and Light Weapon (SALW) workshops*, 2014.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ UNREC, *UNREC assists the governments of Burkina Faso and Uganda in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention*, 2014.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ UNRCPD, *13th Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues*, 2014.

¹¹² UNRCPD, *Regional Legal Assistance Workshop on the Arms Trade Treaty*, 2014.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ UNLIREC, *What We Do*, 2014.

¹¹⁵ UNLIREC, *Guidance in the Elaboration of Defence White Papers*, 2014.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/RES/69/38)*, 2014.

behavior in the context of confidence-building, norms such as transparency and information- and data-sharing are as vital in this sector as in those concerning terrestrial weaponry.¹¹⁸ Technical guidelines offering recommendations on how to conduct space activities and mechanisms encouraging cooperation between states were also put forward as well as mechanisms to lower the level of space debris orbiting the earth.¹¹⁹ Although outer space issues might seem to be mainly a global concern and ask for global measures, regional perspectives are also pertinent and of significant use as demonstrated in this recent report following its 2014 Space Security Conference.¹²⁰ Growing security tensions in Eurasia including Ukraine and the Russian Federation, which are two leading states in space activities currently embroiled in a regional conflict as well as potential tensions between India, China, and Pakistan are perfect illustrations of security concerns that could be mitigated via the use of norms of behavior or other CBMs.¹²¹ In this regard, the European Union (EU) has taken the initiative to propose an *International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities* (ICoC), but more regionally tailored alternatives could also be an asset.¹²² Additionally, cyber security has become a matter of growing interest in which CBMs have significant relevance, especially since cyber security not only concerns cyber criminality but espionage and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in conflict.¹²³ Indeed, measures such as transparency or the exchange of best practices can contribute to the creation of a peaceful regime in the context of ongoing emerging technologies.¹²⁴

Conclusion

As shown, CBMs can be applied in a large variety of cases such as strictly military matters, but also for the implementation of treaties into national legislations or on matters where tensions between states might arise such as cyber security. What all of them share is the promotion of values central to the UN: cooperation, dialogue, and often transparency between states. This update has shown that CBMs in a regional and subregional context can also address this same variety of different fields and remain a highly applicable tool in the context of current events in international peace and security. Their particularity is to offer the opportunity to shape responses and measures to the specific situations and needs of different regions. CBMs tailored to local and regional demands can prove to be more effective and should therefore be promoted. It is now up to delegates to identify potential measures leading to greater confidence and better relations between states.

¹¹⁸ UNIDIR, *Norms of Behaviour, Barriers to Entry?* 2014, p. 2.

¹¹⁹ UNIDIR, *Norms of Behaviour, Barriers to Entry?* 2014, p. 1-3.

¹²⁰ UNIDIR, *UNIDIR Space Security 2014 Conference*. 2014.

¹²¹ UNIDIR, *An Analysis of Emerging Space Capabilities in Eurasia and Rising Security Tensions*, 2014.

¹²² UNIDIR, *An Analysis of Emerging Space Capabilities in Eurasia and Rising Security Tensions*, 2014 p. 7.

¹²³ UNIDIR, *UNIDIR Cyber Stability Seminar 2014: Preventing Cyber Conflict*, 2014, p. 1.

¹²⁴ UNIDIR, *UNIDIR Cyber Stability Seminar 2014: Preventing Cyber Conflict*, 2014, p. 8-9.

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The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook is published annually and assembles all the reports, resolutions and other progresses made in the UN system in the field of disarmament. As such, it provides a unique set of primary sources at delegates' disposal. In 1993, the Disarmament Commission included the guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security in its annual report. These guidelines provide principles that should be at the center of CBMs and the purpose of regional arrangements in order to enhance global security. These guidelines are still an important reference in the field of disarmament and delegates should acquire knowledge about them and their content.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. (2014). *An Analysis of Emerging Space Capabilities in Eurasia and Rising Security Tensions* [Report]. Retrieved 23 December 2014 from: <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/an-analysis-of-emerging-space-capabilities-in-eurasia-and-rising-security-tensions-en-605.pdf>

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research is a voluntarily funded independent institute within the UN. Its goal is to provide innovative and practical research in order to assist the international community in its search of solutions to the challenges we face. Delegates will be able to find a series of articles that can help them in their research for this, but also other topics. This particular publication offers an interesting analysis of regional implications in the field of the use of outer space and shows that regional approaches can also be relevant in a field that has primarily non-regional traits.

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. (2014). *UNREC in cooperation with the Governments of Mali, Nigeria and Togo for national legislation reforms on Small Arms and Light Weapon (SALW) workshop* [Website]. Retrieved 23 December 2014 from: <http://unrec.org/default/index.php/en/2013-11-01-02-21-27/latest-news/431-unrec-in-cooperation-with-the-governments-of-mali-nigeria-and-togo-for-national-legislation-reforms-on-small-arms-and-light-weapon-salw-workshops>

Supporting Member States in their efforts to adapt national legislation to international treaties is a central activity of CBMs; the entry into force of the Arm Trade Treaty requires special action in this regard. A fundamental action in the promotion of dialogue and cooperation between states, holding workshops and organizing summits or other meetings, is among the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. This UN entity is specifically mandated to address questions related to disarmament and non-proliferation in a region often affected by conflicts and insecurity. Delegates will be able to find a perfect illustration of regional efforts with UN implications on confidence-building on this Website.

United Nations, Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. (2014). *13th Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues* [Website]. Retrieved 22 December 2014 from: <http://unrcpd.org/event/13th-republic-korea-united-nations-joint-conference-disarmament-non-proliferation-issues/>

The third regional UN entity mandated to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues is the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. While it is just one among many other conferences and similar activities organized and supported by the UN in the region, this joint conference organized by the Republic of Korea and the UN illustrates how to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues in a regional context. On top of this, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its challenges as well as new emerging issues in the field of disarmament are discussed. These discussions were important as they brought together not only governments, but members of civil society and academia as well.

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. (2014). *What We Do* [Website]. Retrieved 23 December 2014 from: http://www.unlirc.org/Defence_WhitePapers_eng.aspx

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) was created by the General Assembly and is part of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. It is the only UN entity mandated to address disarmament issues in this region and its main activity is to assist Member States in the field of disarmament. The three areas addressed by UNLIREC are disarmament advocacy, public security, and confidence- and security building. It fosters transparency and standardized methodologies on military matters between states. Delegates will be able to find information about UNLIRECs' actions on this Website.

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