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# GENERAL ASSEMBLY FIRST COMMITTEE BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

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# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





# THE 2015 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Washington, D.C. Conference (NMUN•DC)! This year's General Assembly First Committee (GA1) staff is: Director Leah Schmidt and Assistant Director Jeffrey Thorpe. Leah is working with Amnesty International in the Identity and Discrimination Unit and will graduate from the University of Calgary with degrees in International Relations and Women's Studies and a minor in Anthropology. She is excited to return to NMUN-DC to chair her favorite committee, GA1. Jeffrey has a B.A. in Political Science and International Studies and a Master's of Public Administration with a concentration in Public Management from Georgia Southern University. He currently works as a Cost Allocation Specialist at Veraction and is looking forward to return to NMUN•DC on a plenary-sized committee.

The topics under discussion for GA First are:

- I. Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction
- II. United Action Towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- III. Ensuring the Safety of Civilians in Conflict Zones

The General Assembly First Committee plays a unique role within the United Nations as a primary entity tasked with overseeing issues related to security and disarmament. In addressing these key issues, GA1 works to gain consensus through its universal membership and acts closely with the Security Council in the pursuit of this goal.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee; however, it is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in full detail and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography as part of your research to expand your knowledge on these topics and prepare to discuss solutions with fellow delegates. Prior to the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#) based on their preparation (due 1 October). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment, awards philosophy/evaluation method, etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available for download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee or the Conference itself, you are welcome to contact Under-Secretaries-General Lauren Shaw ([usglauren.dc@nmun.org](mailto:usglauren.dc@nmun.org)) and Katrena Porter ([usgkat.dc@nmun.org](mailto:usgkat.dc@nmun.org)).

We wish you all the best during your preparation and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Leah Schmidt, *Director*  
Jeffrey Thorpe, *Assistant Director*

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## Committee Overview

*“By this charter you have realized the objectives of many men of vision in your own countries who have devoted their lives to the cause of world organization for peace... This new structure of peace is rising upon strong foundations. Let us not fail to grasp this supreme chance to establish a world-wide rule of reason- to create an enduring peace under the guidance of God.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **Introduction**

The General Assembly (GA) is one of the six primary organs of the United Nations (UN), which include the GA, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Security Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.<sup>2</sup> Every Member State of the UN participates in the GA, giving it a unique and universally represented quality not seen in the other organs.<sup>3</sup> The GA has been divided into six committees to cover a broad range of topics and responsibilities.<sup>4</sup> The First Committee’s primary focus is issues of disarmament and questions of international security, and it occasionally shifts additional agenda items to the Fourth Committee, which is primarily focused on decolonization.<sup>5</sup> The Second Committee is focused on economic issues, while the social and humanitarian issues are the primary focus of Third Committee.<sup>6</sup> The Fifth Committee handles the administrative and budgetary items of the UN, and the Sixth Committee handles international legal subjects.<sup>7</sup> The most recent discussions of the First Committee have been centered on a wide range of issues from disarmament education to armed conflict in areas such as the Middle East and South Atlantic.<sup>8</sup>

### **History**

The UN was created in 1945 at the United Nations Conference on International Organization.<sup>9</sup> The creation of the UN was intended to replace the obsolete League of Nations, an international organization established after the conclusion of World War I.<sup>10</sup> The UN was created with the goal of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations between sovereign states, reaching international cooperation to solve global problems, and to be the focal point of peace and harmonization to reach common goals by all states.<sup>11</sup>

Disarmament and security has been a major issue of concern for the GA, particularly the GA First Committee, since it adopted multiple resolutions on atomic energy as its first actions.<sup>12</sup> These resolutions addressed the discovery of nuclear energy and the threats that its existence creates.<sup>13</sup> The desire of the UN to monitor the production of nuclear energy and disarmament led to the creation of United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) in January 1952.<sup>14</sup> The culmination of the work by the First Committee and the UNDC led up to the groundbreaking *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* in 1968 (NPT), a landmark treaty due to the wide range of support it has gained by having 190 States Parties, five of which are nuclear-weapon states.<sup>15</sup> Outside of nuclear issues, the GA First Committee has also produced various resolutions spanning from “Relationship Between Disarmament and Development” (52/38D), which encouraged Member States to refocus former armament resources on development,

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<sup>1</sup> Schlesinger, *Act of Creation Book*, 2003, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. III.

<sup>3</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

<sup>4</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. III.

<sup>5</sup> UNGA, *Main Committees*, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> UNGA, *Main Committees*, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> UNGA, *Agenda of the Sixty-Ninth session of the General Assembly (A/69/251)*, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Schaefer, *Conundrum*, 2009, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Schaefer, *Conundrum*, 2009, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> UNGA, *Establishment of a Commission to Deal with the Problems Raised by the Discovery of Atomic Energy (A/RES/1(I))*, 1946.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> UNODA, *United Nations Disarmament Commission*, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> UNODA, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015.

to the amended *Arms Trade Treaty* (2014), which regulates the international trade of conventional weapons such as handguns, tanks, and aircrafts.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Mandate***

The GA's mandate is established in Chapter IV of the *Charter of the United Nations* (1946).<sup>17</sup> Specifically, Article 11 enables the GA to address international issue concerning peace and security.<sup>18</sup> Article 11 also designates the GA to govern disarmament principles and international regulations of arms.<sup>19</sup> In order to keep up with the ever-changing world, the GA continues to revitalize itself to ensure its work is efficient and meaningful, with one major action being the creation of the six main committees with the 1993 GA resolution 47/223.<sup>20</sup> In an effort to strengthen the First Committee's designated task of disarmament, the work of GA First has been divided into thematic discussions, specified in GA resolution 48/87, including nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), outer space, and regional disarmament and security.<sup>21</sup> It is important to note that the GA First also has the power to discuss issues of disarmament and threats to international peace and security, and make recommendations to solve these issues.<sup>22</sup> However, the power to address these issues using any legally binding support resides with the Security Council.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Governance, Structure, and Membership***

As stated in the *Charter of the United Nations*, the GA is composed of all Member States of the UN, each having only one vote.<sup>24</sup> However, there have been entities like the European Union (EU), the Holy See, and Palestine that have been granted observer status, meaning the ability to attend and participate within formal session but not the substantive ability to vote on draft resolutions.<sup>25</sup>

The overall structure of the GA includes the General Committee, the GA Plenary, the six Main Committees, the President of the GA (PGA) and the Office of the President, the 21 Vice-Presidents of the GA, and the various subsidiary bodies of the GA.<sup>26</sup> The PGA serves as a non-voting member of the GA and is selected by majority vote with the role of carrying out the Rules of Procedure and overseeing voting procedure of GA resolutions.<sup>27</sup> The Vice-Presidents are also voted by majority, typically with at least some of the positions going to the five permanent members of the Security Council.<sup>28</sup> The rest of the positions are divided among regional groups to allow for equal geographic representation.<sup>29</sup> The General Committee makes recommendations on issues to be covered by the GA.<sup>30</sup> The six Main Committees of the GA then take the recommendation of the General Committee for the purpose of setting their agendas.<sup>31</sup> In the case of the First Committee, the GA First will take all recommendations that pertain to

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<sup>16</sup> UNGA, *Relationship between disarmament and development (A/RES/52/38/D)*, 1998; UNGA, *The Arms Trade Treaty (A/RES/69/49)*, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> UNGA, *Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly*, 2015; UNGA, *Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/RES/47/233)*, 1993.

<sup>21</sup> UNGA, *Rationalization of the Work of the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee) (A/RES/48/87)*, 1994.

<sup>22</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

<sup>23</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. VII.

<sup>24</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

<sup>25</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 30.

<sup>26</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*



its thematic discussions, such as discussions of women and their role in disarmament, and then vote on its agenda at the beginning of its session.<sup>32</sup>

The GA remains in session the entire year, but the bulk of its work occurs during the fall.<sup>33</sup> For the 2014-2015 year, the GA Fifth designated \$24.7 million to the overall disarmament initiatives under the First Committee.<sup>34</sup> In each session it is typical for the First Committee to adopt over 50 resolutions and decisions.<sup>35</sup> From mid-September until the break in December, the GA is in its most intense work period, completing the majority of its general debate and the bulk of the substantive work.<sup>36</sup> With guidance from the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, GA First is able to clearly organize its substantive work to move towards its goals of international disarmament and non-proliferation of WMDs.<sup>37</sup> All votes require a simple majority in the GA with the exception of items called to “important question,” a designation given to matters deemed very important by the body, such as the admission of new members to the GA, which requires a two-thirds majority.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Functions and Powers***

The GA’s functions and powers are outlined within the *Charter of the United Nations* in Chapter IV, Articles 10-17.<sup>39</sup> Since 1945, the GA has served as the chief deliberative and policy-making organ of the UN.<sup>40</sup> The GA has the ability to receive and approve the UN budget, elect non-permanent members of the Security Council, and initiate studies and make recommendations in areas such as international political cooperation and international law.<sup>41</sup> The GA cannot overstep the Security Council when they are deliberating a topic; however, when there is a threat to international security and peace and the Security Council has been limited by a veto by one of more of the permanent members, the GA can take action to promote peace.<sup>42</sup> In this situation, the GA can address and adopt resolutions despite the action taken by the Security Council.<sup>43</sup> In the event the GA is not in session, a vote of seven members of the Security Council or a majority vote by the GA can constitute an emergency session to discuss the important subject matter.<sup>44</sup>

### ***Recent Sessions***

The most recent session of the GA First, the 69<sup>th</sup> Session, was held between 24 September and 20 November, 2014.<sup>45</sup> The 69<sup>th</sup> Session’s successes include having heard over 70 speakers during thematic debate and approving 69 draft documents for consideration by the Plenary Committee.<sup>46</sup> The work of the GA First committee exceeded that of any other session in the past 10 years in terms of discussion and number items adopted by the body.<sup>47</sup> Various topics were discussed, including the threat of non-state actors with access to WMDs, addressing the humanitarian

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<sup>32</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 16.

<sup>33</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> UNGA, *Programme Budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/68/6/Add.1)*, 2014

<sup>35</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 63.

<sup>36</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, *The PGA Handbook: A Practical Guide to the United Nations General Assembly*, 2011, p. 14.

<sup>37</sup> UNODA, *About Us*, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> UNGA, *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.17)*, 2008; United Nations, General Assembly, *About the General Assembly* 2015.

<sup>39</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Ch. IV.

<sup>40</sup> UNGA, *Functions and Power of the General Assembly*, 2015.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> UNGA, *Uniting for Peace (A/RES/377)*, 1950.

<sup>45</sup> Meeting 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.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*



impact of nuclear weapons, and women's role in disarmament.<sup>48</sup> However, there were a number of draft resolutions tabled by the body.<sup>49</sup> Important issues like the prevention of an arms race in space were among the issues that were tabled.<sup>50</sup>

### **Conclusion**

International peace and security is one of the principal missions of the UN, and through GA First the UN is able to actively and effectively address issues that negatively affect international security. The challenge of GA First is to address issues of peace and security in a world facing the proliferation of new weapons technologies, both nuclear and non-nuclear.<sup>51</sup> Recognizing the changing world, the GA has taken measures to ensure that it is working efficiently and effectively, as well as responding to external concerns through discussion of reform.<sup>52</sup> However, the GA is limited to the scope of its mandate and by the activities of the Security Council.<sup>53</sup> Ultimately, as a central policy-making body of the UN, the underlying responsibility of GA First is to continue progress in combating threats to international peace and security while continuing to build the consensus between Member States and among other UN entities.

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*The President of the General Assembly (PGA) Handbook is an excellent source to supplement the basic knowledge of the General Assembly provided by the background guide. This source provides information about agenda-setting, voting, and the individual function of each of the Main Committees. While lacking some contemporary information regarding current operations of the GA, this source does provide some historic information relevant to the current structure of the GA. Lastly, the source provides delegates with a different scope of the General Assembly and internal procedures regarding elections and structure.*

United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml>

*The Charter of the United Nations is one of the most important and fundamental documents for the United Nations. As a delegate of the General Assembly, it is imperative to understand the mandate and most basic purpose of the General Assembly. The Charter will also give insight to the powers that the General Assembly has at their disposal, and will provide a solid foundation from which delegates can draw upon in order to address the various topics before them.*

United Nations, General Assembly (n.d.). *First Committee* [Website]. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/first/>

*The General Assembly has broken itself into several committees in order to combat the various issues that the United Nations has to address in the world today. The First Committee has been charged with the task of addressing issues of Disarmament and International Security. This website is key as it provides the mission, process, and work of the First Committee; as well as providing delegates with further databases that contain important work and resolutions that the First Committee has passed. In accordance with GA resolution 66/246, specifically Part VII, all*

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<sup>48</sup> Meeting 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; UNGA, *Documents of the First Committee (A/C.1/69/INF/1)*, 2014.

<sup>49</sup> UNODA, *Sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly*, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> UNGA, *Disarmament and International Security: First Committee*, 2015; UNGA, *Regulation, Limitation, and Balanced Reduction of all Armed Forces and all Armaments; International Control of Atomic Energy (A/RES/502)*, 2011.

<sup>52</sup> UNGA, *Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly*, 2015.

<sup>53</sup> Hansen, *Update on Revitalization of the General Assembly: A recap of developments during the 65th GA session*, 2011, p. 1.



*formal sessions of the GA can be found online at UN Web TV to provide a level of transparency with the UN and individuals not present.*

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## **I. Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

- How can the UN mitigate concerns of non-signatories to the Convention and encourage broader participation?
- How should the UN increase capacity-building within states to aid them in the process of demining and improving internal mine security measures?
- What kind of political support should be available to victims of anti-personnel mines?

### **Introduction**

Anti-personnel mines kill 15,000 to 20,000 people every year, mostly children and women, and leave countless more victims severely maimed.<sup>54</sup> Initially used defensively in protection of strategic areas, to protect borders, camps, and to restrict the movement of enemy forces, anti-personnel landmines have been deployed on a wider scale restricting civilian movement often during internal conflicts.<sup>55</sup> Despite mines indiscriminately injuring or killing civilians, they are still used as weapons of war by non-state actors and states alike.<sup>56</sup> An anti-personnel mine can be defined as a victim-activated weapon, meaning that anti-personnel mines are designed to detonate when a person, excluding vehicles, comes within close proximity of the device.<sup>57</sup> *The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction* (1997), also recognized as

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<sup>54</sup> United Nations, *Demining*, 2008.

<sup>55</sup> ICBL, *A History of Landmines*, 2014.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations, *Demining*, 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Weapons Law Encyclopedia, *Anti-personnel Mine*, 2013: *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, Article 2(1), 1997.

the “Mine Ban Treaty” or “Ottawa Convention” by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, was created to not only reach an international definition of an anti-personnel mine, but also to promote a global ban on anti-personnel mine use, stockpiling, production, development, acquisition and transfer of anti-personnel mines.<sup>58</sup> It also calls for the complete destruction of all mines stockpiled or currently placed in the ground.<sup>59</sup> A precursor to the Ottawa Convention was the *United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects* (1980) (CCW), which called for restrictions on some types conventional weapons that are considered to be excessively or discriminately harmful, but ultimately did not ban the use of mines.<sup>60</sup> The Ottawa Convention was created when the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, seeing the failures of the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons, launched the first convention in Ottawa in October 1996 with the goal of reaching a global ban on anti-personnel mines.<sup>61</sup> Several diplomatic conferences were also held in Oslo and Brussels following Ottawa, and these conferences built upon the definition of anti-personnel mines that were defined in *Protocol II* of the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons.<sup>62</sup> The drafted treaty was adopted on 18 September 1997 and opened for signature in Ottawa on 3 December 1997 and began being implemented on 1 March 1999.<sup>63</sup> This ultimately resulted in the “Ottawa Process,” a freestanding process of treaty negotiations outside a UN-facilitated forum with the goal of outlawing anti-personnel mines.<sup>64</sup> Despite the success of the Ottawa Process, 35 states have not yet ratified or adhered to the convention, including many leading military powers like China, India, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Russia and the United States of America, who combined, potentially have tens of millions of anti-personnel mines stockpiled.<sup>65</sup> That does not include several non-state actors who continually use and produce anti-personnel mines; for example, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) is currently utilizing anti-personnel mines throughout Iraq and Syria.<sup>66</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The CCW’s purpose was to prevent the use of weapons that cannot differentiate between civilians and combatants, as well as weapons that cause long term suffering.<sup>67</sup> During the second session of the First Review Conference for the CCW, *Protocol II* was amended in an effort to prohibit the use of anti-personnel mines, but the Protocol was still unable to effectively ban their usage because it still remained too vague.<sup>68</sup> Successful conversation on this issue at the Ottawa Conference lead to the adoption of GA resolution 51/45 of 10 December 1996 on “General and complete disarmament,” which urged Member States “to pursue vigorously an effective, legally binding international agreement to ban the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines with a view to completing the negotiations as soon as possible.”<sup>69</sup> The Diplomatic Conference on an International Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Land Mines was convened in Oslo on 1 September 1997, successfully adopting the completed text of the *Convention on the Prohibition of Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction* on 18 September 1997.<sup>70</sup> By 9 December 1997 the GA adopted resolution 52/38, inviting all Member States to sign and ratify the Ottawa Convention without delay.<sup>71</sup>

The Convention is composed of 22 articles separated into four main sections.<sup>72</sup> The first five articles focus on what the convention does by defining anti-personnel mines to ensure all states have one unified definition, stating that no

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<sup>58</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, Article 2(1).

<sup>59</sup> UNODA, *The Anti-personnel Landmines Convention*, 2011: UNODA, *Landmines*, 2011.

<sup>60</sup> United Nations Office at Geneva, *The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons*, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> United Nations, *Disarmament*, 2013.

<sup>62</sup> ICRC, *Results of the Oslo Landmine Conference*, 2010.

<sup>63</sup> ICRC, *Overview of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines*, 2007.

<sup>64</sup> Casey-Maslen & Stuart, *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention*, 2013.

<sup>65</sup> AP Landmine Convention, *Ensuring Universal Adherence*, 2014.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> United Nations Office at Geneva, *The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons*, 2006.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> UNGA, *General and Complete Disarmament (A/RES/51/45)* [Resolution], 1996.

<sup>70</sup> United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law, *Convention of the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, 2008.

<sup>71</sup> UNGA, *General and Complete Disarmament (A/RES/52/38)* [Resolution], 1997.

<sup>72</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997.

state shall use, develop, produce, stockpile, or trade anti-personnel mines and each state must destroy all existing stockpiles and mine fields.<sup>73</sup> Articles six through nine explain how the convention will work through international cooperation, transparency measures such as sharing information on currently mined land and current stockpiles, facilitation of compliance, and national implementation measures.<sup>74</sup> The next two articles handle disputes to the convention with the ability of states to raise concerns at the Meeting of State Parties.<sup>75</sup> Finally, articles twelve through twenty-two review the conference and allow for amendments to be added to the convention, strengthening the treaty.<sup>76</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

The UN has 14 departments involved with the implementation of the Ottawa Convention, including the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children’s Fund, and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.<sup>77</sup> The primary department involved with mine action is the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), whose Under-Secretary-General chairs the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action that brings representatives from all UN mine action entities together.<sup>78</sup> The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is responsible for coordinating UN response to landmines and also partners with civil society in efforts to raise funds for mine action operations which otherwise would be too costly of a burden for states to take on alone.<sup>79</sup> Another key UN entity is the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), which advises the UN Secretary-General and further promotes the implementation of the Ottawa Convention and the CCW.<sup>80</sup> UNODA works closely with the GA First Committee in efforts to encourage dialogue and confidence-building, and also provide states with clear information regarding issues of disarmament.<sup>81</sup> The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is the leading non-governmental organization (NGO) in mine action support; this organization is committed in all aspects of mine clearance including land mine education, victim assistance, surveying, and other basic services required in mine affected areas.<sup>82</sup>

The driving factor behind all of these efforts is the GA, which has made great strides towards implementing the Ottawa Convention in order to globally ban the use of anti-personnel mines through the adoption of annual resolutions calling for the global acceptance and full implementation of the Ottawa Convention.<sup>83</sup> The First Committee is presented with several important issues to consider, including demining, assisting victims, destroying pre-existing stockpiles, and educating civilian populace on mines in order to stay safe.<sup>84</sup> As mine-affected countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Cambodia have been consistently implementing mine clearance plans but ultimately have failed to meet the 2009 deadline for demining, groups like the ICRC remain committed to help reach a global abolition of landmines.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, Articles 1-5.

<sup>74</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, Articles 6-9.

<sup>75</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, Articles 10-11.

<sup>76</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, 1997, Articles 12-22.

<sup>77</sup> UNMAS, *The UN Mine Action Gateway*, 2013.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> UN Peacekeeping, *Mine Action*, 2015.

<sup>80</sup> UNMAS, *The UN Mine Action Gateway*, 2013.

<sup>81</sup> UNODA, *About Us*, 2015.

<sup>82</sup> ICRC, *Overview: mine action*, 2012.

<sup>83</sup> International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the UNGA Mine Ban Treaty Resolution*, 2013.

<sup>84</sup> UNMAS, *Issues*, 2013.

<sup>85</sup> ICRC, *Mine Clearance*, 2010.

## ***Demining, a Global Issue***

Several states are not party to the Ottawa Convention but are participants of the *Amended Protocol II on Certain Conventional Weapons*, which highlights the negative effects of landmines but ultimately does not ban their usage.<sup>86</sup> Part of the amended protocol is the requirement to label mined areas to alert civilians to prevent them from entering mine ridden lands; however, many sites have not been marked, including hundreds of miles along the India-Pakistan border that have been mined with little to no markers indicating the mine infected spaces.<sup>87</sup> Contaminated areas left unmarked raises a challenge of achieving successful demining because they require impact surveys and technical surveys to properly identify and map out what area has been contaminated by mines so that demining can take place.<sup>88</sup> Demining is a dangerous and expensive task that requires cooperation between UN departments, civil society, and local authorities in order to educate the civilians to stay away from infected areas and to assist when possible in the demining process.<sup>89</sup>

### ***Case Study: Somalia***

Due to conflict with Ethiopia and two decades of civil war, Somalia has had its ground marred by explosive remnants of war, but through efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) countless lives have been saved.<sup>90</sup> Somalia is estimated to have one of the highest levels of landmine contamination with estimates ranging from 1 to 3 million, meaning that Somalia is failing to meet the deadline of mine extermination expected of it as a party to the Ottawa Convention.<sup>91</sup> UNMAS programs provide support to peacekeeping through the Explosive Management Support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) project, explosive management support to the security sector, and humanitarian stabilization support.<sup>92</sup> Between 2013 and 2014, 634,911 men, women, and children received awareness messages, and 18,144 units of unexploded ordinance (UXO) were successfully removed and destroyed.<sup>93</sup> Additionally through UNMAS capacity building efforts, trained support teams have removed another 1,034 UXO.<sup>94</sup> The process requires thoroughly inspecting every inch of land in a contaminated site and disposing of UXO through three main clearance methods.<sup>95</sup> One method is mechanical clearance, utilizing machinery to detect and blow up mines in the ground.<sup>96</sup> Another clearance method is using mine detection dogs, and then manual clearance performed by trained de-miners using metal detectors and prodders to identify mines and blow up ordinance in a controlled setting.<sup>97</sup> With thousands of mines eliminated, UNMAS has made a large impact on Somalia's public safety but ultimately has failed to achieve its goal of completely eliminating anti-personnel mines from the land.<sup>98</sup> This failure is largely attributed to a lack of sufficient funds, as well as a weak national government that is unable to efficiently work with civil society to address the issue of demining.<sup>99</sup> UNMAS's portfolio of demining related projects fell short of their requested funds in 2015 by \$242 million.<sup>100</sup>

### ***Non-State Actors***

Through a combination of lack of funds, lack of awareness, and continual noncompliance from armed non-state actors (NSA), mines are still affecting populations around the globe. In an attempt to provide NSAs with the opportunity to commit to the mine ban, Geneva Call was created.<sup>101</sup> Geneva Call is actively involved in the fight

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<sup>86</sup> United Nations, *Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects*, 2015.

<sup>87</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Recent Landmine Use By India and Pakistan*, 2002.

<sup>88</sup> UNMAS, *Clearance of Mines and Explosive Remnants of War*, 2013.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> UNMAS, *About UNMAS in Somalia*, 2014.

<sup>91</sup> Taylor, *Landmines and UXO in Somaliland, Puntland and Central & Southern Somalia*, 2000, p. 5-6.

<sup>92</sup> UNMAS, *About UNMAS in Somalia*, 2014.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> UNMAS, *Clearance*, 2013.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> UNMAS, *About UNMAS in Somalia*, 2014.

<sup>99</sup> UNMAS, *2015 Portfolio of Projects*, 2015: UNMAS, *About UNMAS in Somalia*, 2014.

<sup>100</sup> UNMAS, *2015 Portfolio of Projects*, 2015.

<sup>101</sup> Geneva Call, *Who We Are*, 2015.

against anti-personnel mines globally, signing 53 NSAs to the Deed of Commitment, which publicly announces their international recognition of humanitarian norms and agreement to being held accountable.<sup>102</sup> While Geneva Call's actions are leading more NSAs to respect international humanitarian law and limiting the effects of armed conflict against persons who are not participating in the conflict, several emerging and already established NSAs are continuing to use anti-personal mines.<sup>103</sup> ISIS has reportedly been planting mines in several cities throughout Iraq and Syria, resulting in a mine killing one child and severely injuring 3 more on 19 March 2015.<sup>104</sup> However ISIS is not the only NSA using mines; roughly 60 NSAs have deployed mines throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America, and further stockpiles of mines that could be used by NSAs still exist.<sup>105</sup> Eighty-eight States Parties to the Ottawa Convention have already destroyed their stockpiles of mines, however new stockpiles are still being discovered, seized, and turned-in.<sup>106</sup>

### Conclusion

There are an estimated 110 million anti-personnel mines in the ground to this day with another 100 million stockpiled around the globe.<sup>107</sup> Humanitarian outcry by the civilians in affected areas and IGOS and NGOs alike have called for the abolition of all anti-personnel mines, yet they are continually produced and used.<sup>108</sup> This is largely a result of the relative cheapness of landmines, which cost roughly \$3 to \$75 to produce compared the \$300 to \$1000 cost to remove each mine.<sup>109</sup> The practice of marking and mapping minefields has not been followed enabling civilians, peacekeepers, and aid workers to unknowingly enter mined areas and become victims of mine related injuries and deaths.<sup>110</sup> The future of landmines is dependent on international diplomacy and prioritizing human rights, meaning that greater focus must be given to universal implementation of the Ottawa Convention.<sup>111</sup>

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*This is an overview of the key Ottawa Convention, held to promote the destruction of anti-personnel mines and to prevent their further use. This source not only has the entire treaty but it also outlines the history of anti-personnel landmine banning. Delegates must have a full understanding of the Convention in order to be able to promote its implementation and would benefit from understanding its history to be able to discuss future anti-land mine measures..*

International Committee of the Red Cross. (2004). *What is International Humanitarian Law?* [Website]. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: [https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/what\\_is\\_ihl.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/what_is_ihl.pdf)

*One of the key elements of International Humanitarian Law is to protect civilians living in combat zones from harm as well as to protect the environment from long lasting effects of war. Highlighted in this source is how the use of anti-personnel mines violates International Humanitarian Law. The International Committee of the Red Cross presents the importance of the Ottawa Convention and the impact of not abiding by the treaty under International Humanitarian Law.*

Short, N. (1999). *The Role of NGOs in the Ottawa Process to Ban Landmines*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from:

[http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/rdenever/IntlSecurity2008\\_docs/Short\\_NGOsOttawa.pdf](http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/rdenever/IntlSecurity2008_docs/Short_NGOsOttawa.pdf)

*Non-governmental organizations alone are unable to successfully prevent and reverse the effects of landmines due to a lack of resources as well as limits in the negotiation process between states. In this*

<sup>102</sup> Geneva Call, *Who We Are*, 2015.

<sup>103</sup> Geneva Call, *Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action*, 2014.

<sup>104</sup> Union of Kurdish Students in Syria and Germany, *ISIL Mine cause three injured and one dead child*, 2015.

<sup>105</sup> Anki Sjoberg [Geneva Call], *Armed Non-State Actors: The Main Users of the "Poor Man's Weapon"*, 2013.

<sup>106</sup> ICBL, *Disarm*, 2014.

<sup>107</sup> CARE, *Facts About Landmines*, 2003.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations, *Demining*, 2008.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> ICBL, *A History of Landmines*, 2014.

<sup>111</sup> ICBL, *Campaign Pushes for Progress on Landmine Treaty*, 2011.



*document the author highlights the use of non-governmental organizations to implement international law. Short's writing expands upon the impact non-governmental organizations have had on the process of implementing the Ottawa Convention through negotiations and demining efforts.*

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*Demining is a global issue; mines to this day still affect 78 countries around the world. The cost to remove landmines makes it a significantly expensive task to accomplish the goals of totally abolishing all landmines. Over 100 million landmines still remain in the ground and are actively killing civilian populations. The general overview of demining makes this a significant source when understanding the global effect landmines have and the difficulties they present to the Ottawa Convention.*

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*One of the most significant resources towards achieving global demining is the United Nations Mine Action Service. Through this source, delegates gain access to reading further about the roles that 14 UN departments that play in the implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty. Further explained in this document are the financial institutions that support the Mine Action Service. Understanding the current actions being taken on this issue is key to making future recommendations.*

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## II. United Action Towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

- Why is nuclear elimination the ultimate goal of the UN and UNODA, and how do the processes necessary to achieve this end differ from those involved with nuclear non-proliferation?
- Should the responsibility for nuclear weapons elimination fall primarily under international organizations, or should sovereign responsibility and/or civil society involvement also be emphasized?
- How can related international security concerns, such as the threat of nuclear terrorism and regionalized arms races, be mitigated through international diplomacy on issues of nuclear elimination?

### *Introduction*

The issue of nuclear weapons remains one of the most pressing and topical issues discussed in international security today, with the UN defining them indisputably as “the most dangerous weapons on earth.”<sup>112</sup> Though there have been only two cases of nuclear weapons actually being utilized in warfare, during the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II, the enduring calamitous effects of a detonated nuclear bomb present enough of a threat that the UN has been attempting to eliminate their existence since the organization’s inception.<sup>113</sup>

The extent of the threat of nuclear weapons cannot be understated; however, a side effect of this threat has been nuclear weapons production as a defensive tactic, by which the existence of the weapons is judged to be a substantial enough threat to preemptively dissuade and deter future nuclear warfare.<sup>114</sup> An estimated 15,000-20,000 nuclear warheads currently exist worldwide, and around 2,000 nuclear weapons tests have been conducted to date.<sup>115</sup> Approximately, 4300 of the world’s nuclear warheads are currently deployed, meaning that the warheads are placed

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<sup>112</sup> UNODA, *Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> UNODA, *Study on Deterrence*, 1987, p. viii.

<sup>115</sup> UNODA, *Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

on a missile or are located on a military base with operational forces.<sup>116</sup> Nine states currently have nuclear arsenals: the United States of America (7260 total warheads, of which 2080 are deployed), Russia (7500 warheads; 1780 deployed), France (300 warheads; 290 deployed), China (250 warheads), the United Kingdom (215 warheads; 150 deployed), Pakistan (100-120 warheads), India (90-110 warheads), and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) (6-8 warheads, estimated).<sup>117</sup> While not officially confirmed, Israel is also believed to have 80 nuclear warheads, and additionally, certain North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) states such as Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey share access to arsenals owned by relevant P-5 NATO members.<sup>118</sup> Of these nuclear weapons-possessing countries, China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States of America have been designated as nuclear weapon states (NWS) under the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (1970).<sup>119</sup> India, Israel, and Pakistan have not yet ratified the NPT, and the DPRK has withdrawn.<sup>120</sup>

This group, often informally referred to as the “nuclear club” or the “nuclear nine,” is the source of the world's existing nuclear weapons and the leaders in nuclear proliferation.<sup>121</sup> However, elimination is a different matter altogether from proliferation, and while arsenals have been successful up to this point at preemptively eliminating warfare, the official stance of the UN is that the existence of any nuclear weapons poses a threat and that elimination should be the ultimate goal.<sup>122</sup> This is no easy task: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and South Africa remain the only countries in the world to successfully disarm and eliminate their nuclear weapons programs and arsenals, and the former Soviet states were primarily motivated to do so through alternative security assurances, such as the Budapest Memorandum; therefore, South Africa is the only country that has eliminated nuclear weapons without gaining security assurances.<sup>123</sup>

Nuclear weapons have a history of being pursued by NSAs as well, and although that issue has been discussed within the international community, no ratified solution has yet been put forward.<sup>124</sup> During the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that “[t]he prospect of terrorists acquiring nuclear materials is one of the most unnerving threats imaginable. Yet some have already stated their hopes of obtaining nuclear weapons. Still others may be working in the shadows to achieve this goal.”<sup>125</sup> Two main documents stand on the issue, the *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism* (finalized in 2005), which effectively criminalizes the act of nuclear terrorism under international law, and Security Council resolution 1540, which establishes legally binding obligations on all UN Member States to ensure that access to all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons is controlled to prevent terrorists and criminal organizations from obtaining them.<sup>126</sup> Additionally, concerns around nuclear sabotage, in which a nuclear facility is specifically targeted, and “dirty bombs,” combination devices made with conventional explosives and nuclear explosives that contaminate the area they explode within with nuclear waste, remain.<sup>127</sup> Thus, by their very existence, even if not specifically detonated in an act of war by a state, nuclear weapons pose a threat to global peace and security.

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<sup>116</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *Nuclear Forces*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> The Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Country Profiles: Israel*, 2015, p. 1; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO's Position Regarding Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Arms Control, Disarmament and Related Issues*, 2009, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> IAEA, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 1970; The Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>120</sup> World Nuclear Association, *India, China, & NPT*, 2014, p. 1

<sup>121</sup> Nuclear Zero, *Who are the Nuclear Nine?*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>122</sup> UNODA, *Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>123</sup> UNODA, “*Hope for a Future world Without Nuclear Weapons*,” 2013, p. 1; Council on Foreign Relations, *Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurances, 1994*, 1994, p. 1.

<sup>124</sup> United Nations, *Strategies Contemplating Nuclear Weapons Use, Acquisition by Terrorists Fortify Case for their Elimination, Say First Committee Speakers*, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>125</sup> UN News Centre, *UN official call for stronger global measures to combat nuclear terrorism*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>126</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 1540, 2004*; Audiovisual Library of the United Nations, *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism*, 2005.

<sup>127</sup> Dahl, *U.N. nuclear chief warns of 'dirty bomb' threat*, 2013 p. 1.

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The pivotal *Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water* (LTBT) was created in 1963 and establishes limits on nuclear testing, stresses the importance of negotiation in issues of nuclear weapons, and places responsibility on the original nuclear powers to curtail nuclear capability acquisition.<sup>128</sup>

Following the LTBT, the most definitive document on nuclear weapons issues, the NPT, entered into force in 1970 and was extended indefinitely in 1995.<sup>129</sup> The NPT represents the “only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States,” and 190 states have ratified it to date.<sup>130</sup> The work of the NPT remains the most progressive anti-nuclear weapon document currently standing.<sup>131</sup> The goal of the treaty is to develop peaceful methods of utilizing nuclear technology and to further the goals of non-proliferation and disarmament, and it is reviewed every five years, including the 2015 Review Conference (“RevCon”) from 27 April to 22 May 2015.<sup>132</sup> While the majority of the decisions made at the 2015 RevCon were primarily administrative, there was a greater focus in official statements on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, specifically by the Humanitarian Impact Group and the ICRC.<sup>133</sup> This meant that discussion surrounding nuclear weapons trended towards approaches to elimination as opposed to non-proliferation.<sup>134</sup> This is a step forward for the work of the NPT which, despite promoting inter-state negotiation and the development of a 13 point action plan at the 2000 RevCon, has failed in its elimination of existing nuclear arsenals, as required by Article VI.<sup>135</sup> It is important to note that the 13 Practical Steps of the 2000 RevCon outcome document detail the importance of nuclear test moratoriums, fissile material cutoff treaties, securing excess nuclear material, eliminating excess fissile material, and regular reports on disarmament progress, and, despite not yet being put into action, was still brought up regularly during 2015 RevCon as a potential path forward.<sup>136</sup>

The NPT was also followed by the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* (CTBT) of 1996, which officially prohibits all nuclear explosions on earth and resulted in discussions on the development of a global alarm system that could potentially hinder non-nuclear states from acquiring nuclear capabilities, making it the document closest to encouraging total nuclear weapon elimination.<sup>137</sup> The CTBT also established the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization, which enacts the work of the CTBT through the development of an International Monitoring System, the creation of the International Data Centre, and through the management of all administrative details of the treaty’s implementation.<sup>138</sup> However, it is important to note that key nuclear players, including the United States of America, the DPRK, Pakistan, and India have not yet ratified it, although some non-ratifying states can be considered compliant to the CTBT as they have not completed nuclear tests since its entry into force.<sup>139</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

The initial forays of the international community into nuclear issues were tentative but effective; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was formally established in 1956 and works for the “safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology” and reports to both the GA and the Security Council on the inhibition of nuclear energy being used for military purposes.<sup>140</sup> GA resolution 64/35 established 29 August as the International Day

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<sup>128</sup> The Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Treaty Banning Nuclear Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outerspace, and in Water (Partial Test Ban Treaty)*, 2015, p. 1

<sup>129</sup> UNODA, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 1970, p. 1.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> The Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>132</sup> UNODA *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>133</sup> ICRC, *2015 Review of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 2; Bird, *Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>134</sup> Bird, *Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>135</sup> UNODA, *Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, *Creating the CTBTO*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> IAEA, *Our Work*, 2015, p. 1.

Against Nuclear Tests, reiterating the UN’s devotion to “enhancing public awareness and education about the effects of nuclear weapons test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means for achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free-world.”<sup>141</sup> The importance of 64/35 is the emphasis it places on civil society’s involvement in holding governments accountable for nuclear weapons arsenals, thereby moving the issue beyond a pure security framework to include discussions of civil rights.<sup>142</sup> The most recent major UN recommendation on nuclear disarmament is GA/11/593, a group of 63 drafts adopted in 2014 with unprecedented support that call upon states to stop qualitative improvement, development, production, and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems.<sup>143</sup>

Today, the majority of nuclear weapons issues are overseen by the UNODA, which supervises global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and collaborates with The Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament and reports to the GA First committee.<sup>144</sup> The mandate of the UNODA is distinct from GA First in that it specifically calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons through collective, inter-level efforts, and as such, it is the world’s current leader on efforts to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.<sup>145</sup> Additionally, other agencies such as the IAEA, Nuclear Suppliers Groups, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, and the Wassenaar Arrangement continue to work independently on the issue and report to GA First.<sup>146</sup>

#### *Civil Society Organizations*

Many civil society organizations, including Unfold Zero, Small Arms Survey, Institute for Economics and Peace, Nuclear Security Project, World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates, Hague Appeal for Peace, and the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission have a long history of calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons, along with other special-interest groups such as physicians, women’s rights groups, peace activists, and non-governmental researchers.<sup>147</sup> In the 1980s, NGOs first lobbied the NPT Review Conference to institute a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, which would eventually develop into the CTBT and initiate the involvement of civil society groups in all future NPT Review Conferences.<sup>148</sup> Civil society groups today are also being encouraged by the UN to push their governments towards endorsing the Secretary-General’s “Five Point Proposal for Nuclear Disarmament,” which includes full ratification of the CTBT and the increased negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention.<sup>149</sup>

#### *Case Study: South Africa*

South Africa is one of only four states to successfully and voluntarily eliminate nuclear weapons capabilities within its own borders.<sup>150</sup> South Africa originally delved into nuclear development as a means to find a security deterrent to external military pressures and unstable borders and as a by-product of research into peaceful nuclear explosives initially commencing in 1969.<sup>151</sup> The issues of international adversaries and border insecurity heightened the quest to develop nuclear weapons as a deterrent and eventually resulted in international awareness of the existence of nuclear weapons capabilities within South African borders.<sup>152</sup> After Soviet surveillance detected increased nuclear testing in the 1970s, South Africa began to face diplomatic pressure from the United States of America, the Soviet Union, and France and instigated an internal culture of fear and secrecy surrounding the state’s nuclear program that would last

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<sup>141</sup> UNGA, *Resolution 64/35*, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> UNGA, *General Assembly Adopts 63 Drafts on First Committee’s Recommendation with Nuclear Disarmament at Core of Several Recorded Votes*, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>144</sup> UNODA, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 1970, p. 1.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> UNODA, *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*, 1970, p. 1; UNODA, *Nuclear Weapons*, 2015, p. 5.

<sup>147</sup> United Nations, *Outside Resources*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> United Nations, *International Day Against Nuclear Testing*, 2015, p. 1; UNODA, “*The United Nations and Security in a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*”, 2011, p. 1.

<sup>150</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1; Global Security, *Weapons of Mass Destruction: Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>151</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>152</sup> Villiers et al, *Why South Africa Gave Up the Bomb*, 1993, p. 1.

until the end of apartheid, culminating on 10 July 1991 when South Africa signed the NPT.<sup>153</sup> In September of that same year, a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement was signed in collaboration with the IAEA, resulting in an in-depth cooperative relationship between South Africa and international organizations calling for nuclear elimination with regards to the inspecting and verification of South Africa's nuclear capabilities.<sup>154</sup> Working with the state to disarm and remove former nuclear weapon supplies, the IAEA eventually declared all nuclear capabilities in South Africa as primarily for medical and industrial uses.<sup>155</sup> South Africa, in seeking to reinforce and promote the state's image as a "responsible producer, possessor, and trader of advanced technologies" had officially reverted to being a non-nuclear power.<sup>156</sup> Since this period, through its Council for Nuclear Security, South Africa has also become a leader in developing research information in the field of nuclear safety, as well as developing agreements with the United States of America and other African States through the *Treaty of Pelindaba* (1996), which called for the creation of an African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in order to openly share information on nuclear capabilities and safety, as well as become a leader in the ratification of the CTBT.<sup>157</sup> Thus, in this case, the prioritization of international perception and diplomacy, instead of border and security concerns, led to the domestic elimination of nuclear weapons.<sup>158</sup>

### Conclusion

While the movement towards nuclear weapons elimination has an extended history, there are still a number of issues remaining for the international community to discuss. Additionally, diplomatic conflict between nuclear and non-nuclear states has remained an international constant, particularly as the NWS are perceived as inconsistently upholding Article V of the NPT, meaning that commitment to disarmament is not consistently demonstrated.<sup>159</sup> Additionally, major obstacles toward nuclear elimination include the reluctance of the "nuclear nine" to begin multilateral negotiations regarding disarmament, as well as the inability of the international community to develop security alternatives that would make an elimination of the nuclear deterrent feasible.<sup>160</sup> Conflict-risk areas, such as the Middle East, South-East Asia, and North Africa are not predisposed to reducing existing security deterrents, and in fact possess a number of states which instead aim to increase or gain nuclear arsenals.<sup>161</sup>

There are a number of steps that the GA could look towards that have not yet been pursued due to these very obstacles. For instance, GA First could act on the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat of or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, or a development of the 2013 *High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament* results, programs that have been advised but not acted-upon.<sup>162</sup> Additionally, the creation of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, which provides step-by-step quantitative reduction of nuclear threats through disarmament strategies within a specified timeframe, could be the document needed to kick start multilateral negotiations. Progress through these means has indeed been made effective through efforts the regional level.<sup>163</sup> Ultimately, the future of nuclear warfare and non-proliferation comes down to the diplomacy and dialogue of international delegates, and discussion is a key means to achieving the goal of nuclear weapons elimination.

<sup>153</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1; General Assembly First, *South African Statement on Nuclear Weapons During The Thematic Debate of the 2012 UN First Committee*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>154</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1; Baeckmann et al, *Nuclear Verification in South Africa*, 1995.

<sup>155</sup> International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, *Banning Nuclear Weapons: An African Perspective*, 2014.

<sup>156</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1; International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, *Banning Nuclear Weapons: An African Perspective*, 2014.

<sup>157</sup> Federation of American Scientists, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1; Global Security, *Weapons of Mass Destruction: Nuclear Weapons Program*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>158</sup> UNGA First Committee, *South African Statement on Nuclear Weapons During The Thematic Debate of the 2012 UN First Committee*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>159</sup> Meyerle, *Nuclear Weapons and Escalation in Regional Conflict*, 2015 p. 1; Hundley, Tom, *Pakistan and India: Race to the End*, 2012, p.1.

<sup>160</sup> Nuclear Zero, *Who are the Nuclear Nine?*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>161</sup> Zenko, *What Will Iran Do If It Gets a Nuclear Bomb?*, 2012, p. 1.

<sup>162</sup> International Court of Justice, *Legality of the Threat of or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, 1996, p. 1; UNGA, *Resolution A/RES/67/39*, 2013, p. 1.

<sup>163</sup> The Nuclear Threat Initiative, *African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone*, 2009. p. 1; Hague Code of Conduct, *What is the HCOC?*, 2015, p. 1.



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*South Africa remains the only state in the world to eliminate nuclear weapons within its borders without external monetary or security assurances; and Africa has done excellent work recently with the Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. Therefore, while not a UN document, this report provides an excellent look into the approaches behind Africa's current level of disarmament, and the challenges they have encountered along the way. Additionally, this report provides thorough human-and-civil-rights insight into security issues, keeping the impacted humans at the forefront of every discussion.*

The Nuclear Threat Initiative. (2015). *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* [Website]. The Nuclear Threat Initiative. Retrieved 30 May 2015 from: <http://www.nti.org/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-on-the-non-proliferation-of-nuclear-weapons/>

*The Nuclear Threat Initiative provides in-depth fact-sheets on every relevant issue around nuclear weapons elimination, including international documents, country profiles, and pressing issues. In their examination on the NPT, the NTI provides an examination into the provisions and review procedures of the Treaty, including providing links to the most recent documents. Additionally, the NTI discusses openly flaws and strengths of the existing policy, as well as NGO and civil-society suggestions for future developments.*

*Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (1970). Retrieved 30 May 2015 from: <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/infcircs/1970/infcirc140.pdf>

The key document to understanding UN's greatest historical efforts towards nuclear elimination. This treaty was the first to stop the transfer of nuclear weapons between states, create an international nuclear safeguard system, and sets standards for nuclear non-proliferation safety for States to meet under the International Atomic Energy Agency. Additionally, this treaty lays out the future of amendment conferences to keep the document evolving to the safety needs of the international community.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session. (2010). *International Day Against Nuclear Tests (A/RES/64/35)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/35](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/35)

*While much work is being done by the UN on the topic of nuclear disarmament, this resolution proves to be one of the most-cited examples. Calling for an International Day against Nuclear Tests, this resolution notes that the promotion of peace and security can be done through avenues outside of official policy, including through governmental organizations, civil society, academia, and mass media. Additionally, this resolution provides suggestions for future steps for progress against nuclear weapons, including education and media.*

United Nations, General Assembly Meetings Coverage. (2014). *General Assembly Adopts 63 Drafts on First Committee's Recommendation with Nuclear Disarmament at Core of Several Recorded Votes* [Website]. Retrieved 6 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ga11593.doc.htm>

*While the UN is in the process of fully finalizing the latest work done on nuclear disarmament, this report provides an incredibly conclusive overview of the most recent areas of discussion in the General Assembly on the topic of nuclear weapons. Providing both voting number breakdowns and the passed proposals, this report is a good first step to understanding the newest developments in nuclear disarmament, including the movement against ballistic missile proliferation and goals of establishing a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East.*

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### III. Ensuring the Safety of Civilians in Conflict Zones

*“For the United Nations, there is no goal more overriding, no commitment more compelling, no aspiration more profound than the prevention of armed conflict...Ensuring human security, in the broadest sense, is the United Nations cardinal mission.”<sup>164</sup>*

- How can the First Committee assist Member States in their attempts to address the role of non-state actors in violence against civilians in conflict zones?
- How can the First Committee utilize UN peacekeeping forces to address the dangers that unarmed humanitarian aid personnel face in a non-militaristic manner?
- How can the First Committee further urge full inclusion of women in issues of disarmament and civilian protection with Member States?

#### **Introduction**

In times of armed conflicts, there have always been cases of civilian casualties. However, those casualties have expanded to the deliberate targeting of civilians, mainly women, children, and humanitarian aid workers.<sup>165</sup> Instances of these heinous acts reach from the on-going sexual assault of women in the DRC to the deliberate attacks on humanitarian aid workers in Mogadishu, Somalia in 2013.<sup>166</sup> As women and children are the groups most susceptible to violence in areas of armed combat, GA First has put an emphasis on the inclusion of women in the issues of civilian peace and disarmament, thus giving them increased input as “protected persons” in conflict.<sup>167</sup> The categorization of protected persons is not solely ascribed to women and children; the Geneva Convention of 1949 states that “[p]ersons protected by the Convention are those who, at a given moment and in any manner whatsoever, find themselves, in case of a conflict or occupation, in the hands of a Party to the conflict or Occupying Power of which they are not nationals.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Meeting 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.

<sup>165</sup> UNGA, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel (A/RES/69/133); Increased Attacks on Aid Workers Due to Lack of Respect for International Humanitarian Law*, Deputy Secretary-General Tells Security Council, Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, 2014.

<sup>166</sup> Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, *In Security Council Debate on Civilian Protection, Speakers Voice Deep Concern over Alarming Reports of Violence against Women, Mass Displacement*; UNGA, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel: Report of the Secretary General (A/RES/68/489)*, 2013.

<sup>167</sup> UNGA, *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (A/RES/69/61)*, 2014; Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, *In Security Council Debate on Civilian Protection, Speakers Voice Deep Concern over Alarming Reports of Violence against Women, Mass Displacement*, 2015.

<sup>168</sup> ICRC, *Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*. Geneva, 12 August 1949.

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The 1949 Geneva Conventions were some of the first documents to outline the security of, and humane acts toward, civilians in conflict zones.<sup>169</sup> The decision to focus on civilians within the conventions is the result of the tragedies of World War II.<sup>170</sup> Although the conventions address some rules of conflict, most of the conventions address how to treat protected persons or non-combatants.<sup>171</sup> In addition to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the GA has adopted several resolutions addressing civilian security including *Respect for Human Rights in Armed Conflicts* (2444/XXIII), adopted 19 December 1968, which welcomes international organizations like the ICRC to assess the need for an international convention or legal framework to warrant civilian protection.<sup>172</sup> The aforementioned resolution laid down the platform for the GA resolution *Basic Principles for the Protection of Civilian Populations in Armed Conflicts* (2675/XXV) that elaborated basic fundamentals of civilian protection in times of conflict.<sup>173</sup> Highlighting incidents of security breaches and abductions that took place in 2011 and 2012, the GA adopted resolution 67/85, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel*, which delineates non-combatant UN officers and humanitarian employees in conflict zones as groups needing increased safety and security.<sup>174</sup>

The issue of providing safety and security to civilians in conflict zones is not an issue being handled solely by the GA. In the *Report of the Secretary-General on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict* (S/2013/689), the Secretary-General expresses his deepest concern for the protection of civilians in conflict zones.<sup>175</sup> After calling attention to atrocities in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, and Côte d'Ivoire, the Secretary-General expressed five core challenges faced when providing security for civilians: enhancing compliance, enhancing compliance by non-state armed groups, enhancing the role of peacekeeping and other missions, enhancing humanitarian access, and enhancing accountability.<sup>176</sup> The Secretary-General further emphasized that the protection of civilians is a fundamental and legal responsibility of all parties of conflict and must be taken seriously and considered an obligation by all.<sup>177</sup> As a means to promote peace, the GA unanimously adopted resolution 55/82 to make 21 September the Annual Day of Peace, where international conflicts are encouraged to cease for a day.<sup>178</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

GA First has continued its efforts to ensure the safety of non-combatant and humanitarian persons.<sup>179</sup> In its most recent session, GA First adopted resolution 69/1633, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and protection of United Nations Personnel*, which strongly condemns the recent threats, targeting, and violence that humanitarian workers and UN personnel have endured.<sup>180</sup> Going further, the resolution addresses the violence that women and children are faced with in environments of conflict, which include incidents of robbery, hostage-taking, and sexual assault and harassment.<sup>181</sup> In addition to resolution 69/1633, the GA also adopted resolution of 69/91, which addresses the overall applicability of the Geneva Conventions in relation to protecting civilians during war, especially pertaining to the Occupied Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories and designated Member States as enforcers of justice and security.<sup>182</sup>

The Security Council has also been committed for over a decade to efforts to provide safety for civilians, as seen through the adoption of resolutions 1265 (1999), 1674 (2006), and 1894 (2009), all of which address the

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<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> ICRC, *Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*. Geneva, 12 August 1949: State Parties.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> UNGA, *Respect for an implementation of Human Rights in Occupied Territories* (A/RES/2444/XIII), 1968.

<sup>173</sup> UNGA, *Basic Principles for the Protection of Civilian Populations in Armed Conflicts* (A/RES/2675/XXV), 1970.

<sup>174</sup> UNGA, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel* (A/RES/67/85), 2013.

<sup>175</sup> UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict* (S/2013/89), 2013.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> United Nations, *International Day of Peace*, 2015.

<sup>179</sup> UNGA, *Agenda of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly* (A/69/251), 2014.

<sup>180</sup> UNGA, *Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel* (A/RES/69/133).

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> UNGA, *Basic Principles for the Protection of Civilian Populations in Armed Conflicts* (A/RES/2675/XXV), 1970; UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict* (S/2013/89), 2013.

importance of respect for humanitarian law and rights and emphasize the respect of peacekeepers and peacekeeping protocols.<sup>183</sup> In addition, the resolutions highlight and express sadness for the violence aimed at civilians.<sup>184</sup> In regards to states' roles, resolution 1674 expresses the need for states to take more measures of addressing the violators of humanitarian law.<sup>185</sup> In a Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2014/3), the Security Council stated that protection of civilians during times of armed conflict is a part of the core work of the Security Council.<sup>186</sup> Additionally, the report of the President addresses several concerns regarding conflict-affected populations, children affected by armed conflict, and women affected by armed conflict.<sup>187</sup> However, like the GA, the President reiterates that the principle instrument to help combat each of the problematic areas is the individual Member States and local governance.<sup>188</sup> In situations where local government is in need of assistance, the Security Council has the ability to deploy peacekeepers.<sup>189</sup> As their name implies, peacekeepers' primary function is to maintain peace, impartial to the conflicting parties, and to protect civilians while only using force when directly threatened.<sup>190</sup>

### ***Civil Society Organizations***

On 15 December 2014, the GA adopted resolution 69/139, which welcomes “the initiatives of civil society, in collaboration with governments, to strengthen civilian capacities to enhance the physical safety of vulnerable populations under threat of violence and to promote peaceful settlement of disputes.”<sup>191</sup> Civil society organizations provide extra support in both UN and Member States' efforts to provide security and safety for unarmed civilians.<sup>192</sup> One of the civil society organizations currently addressing this issue is Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP). NP is an NGO that utilizes unarmed civilian protection, an evidence-based tactic first mentioned in resolution 69/L.34 for reducing violence and human rights abuses, to reduce violence and protect civilian populations.<sup>193</sup> The focus of NP is to empower communities affected by conflict to reach a level of security through their own means within the local region.<sup>194</sup> NP works by engaging other civil society organizations, the local government, and other uniformed security forces in long-term partnerships that allow the local community to increase their own protection and security.<sup>195</sup>

### ***Women, Children, and Displaced Persons***

In a committee hearing of the Security Council, officials of the ICRC stated that they saw an increase of 76 million displaced persons in 2014, from its previous estimate of 54 million.<sup>196</sup> As the committee hearing continued, the Security Council was made aware of incidents of stoning, rape, and enslavement endured by women and children in conflict zones worldwide.<sup>197</sup> The director of International Law and Policy at the ICRC, Helen Durham, stated that “sexual violence during armed conflict is a violation of international humanitarian law... It is not inevitable. It must and can be stopped. What is required is a concerted effort by everyone concerned to prevent and put an end to it.”<sup>198</sup> The same concerns were echoed by Iwad Elman of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security, who

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<sup>183</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 1265* (S/RES/1265 (1999)), 1999; UNSC, *Resolution 1674* (S/RES/1674 (2006)), 2006; UNSC, *Resolution 1894* (S/RES/1894 (2006)), 2006.

<sup>184</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 1265* (S/RES/1265 (1999)), 1999; UNSC, *Resolution 1674* (S/RES/1674 (2006)), 2006; UNSC, *Resolution 1894* (S/RES/1894 (2006)), 2006.

<sup>185</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 1674* (S/RES/1674 (2006)), 2006.

<sup>186</sup> UNSC, *Speech by President of the Security Council on 12 February 2014*, 2014.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> UNSC, *Speech by President of the Security Council on 12 February 2014*, 2014.

<sup>189</sup> UN DPKO, *Principles of Peacekeeping*, 2015.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> Nonviolent Peaceforce, *UN General Assembly Approves Language Supporting Unarmed Civilian Protection*, 2014.

<sup>192</sup> UNGA, *Follow-up to the Declaration of Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace (A/RES/69/139)*, 2015.

<sup>193</sup> Nonviolent Peaceforce, *UN General Assembly Approves Language Supporting Unarmed Civilian Protection*, 2014; Nonviolent Peaceforce, *What We Do: NP On The Ground*, 2015.

<sup>194</sup> Nonviolent Peaceforce, *What We Do: NP On The Ground*, 2015.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, *In Security Council Debate on Civilian Protection, Speakers Voice Deep Concern over Alarming Reports of Violence against Women, Mass Displacement*, 2015.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

urged the importance of gender based decision-making when devising legislation on civilian protection.<sup>199</sup> There has been consistent momentum towards the inclusion of women in issues of peace and security, specifically in issues of civilian protection and disarmament. Multiple GA resolutions make the argument for women to be an active contributor to decisions concerning civilian protection and security in conflict.<sup>200</sup> Most recently, the GA adopted *Women, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Control (69/61)* that urges increased participation of women in issues of disarmament in local, states, and international debate and policy formulation.<sup>201</sup> In the conclusion of the resolution, the GA included a special provision within the thematic division name “General and complete disarmament” with an agenda that is to be titled “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control” for the GA’s 71<sup>st</sup> session in 2016.<sup>202</sup>

The Security Council has also designated a significant portion of its efforts to include women in decision-making process. Security Council resolutions 1888 (2009), 1325 (2000), and 2122 (2013) all highlight the need for women to be involved in the decision-making process of disarmament and encourage Member States to include women in those high-level decision processes.<sup>203</sup> Through resolution 2122 (2013) the Security Council expressed its intention to better include women in leadership and policy-making positions pertaining to conflict resolution and peacebuilding.<sup>204</sup> The Security Council restated its intentions of reviewing and renewing current mandates on UN missions that would include increased promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment in conflict, as well as through other events such as elections, disarmament, and security and judicial reforms.<sup>205</sup>

Evidence of the UN commitment to women’s inclusion in high level discussions was made clear with the recent events in South Sudan.<sup>206</sup> Recently, the Security Council deployed peacekeepers to South Sudan, the world’s newest country, under the direction of resolution 1996 (2011).<sup>207</sup> After a crisis occurred in South Sudan in December 2013, the Security Council adopted resolution 2155, which reprioritized the mandate established in resolution 1996, while increasing the presence of the United Nations Missions in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) for the purpose of protecting civilians.<sup>208</sup> Among the protected, UNMISS was authorized to protect women, children, and internally displaced persons.<sup>209</sup> Lastly, resolution 2155 encouraged the new government of South Sudan to include women in the various council, groups, and discussions concerning the protection of civilians during the current conflict.<sup>210</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In a debate held by the Security Council, the representative of Spain stated, “we are clearly not doing our job very well” after hearing the gruesome details of violence against women and children in conflict zones.<sup>211</sup> Despite the efforts of civil society organizations, NGOs, the GA, Security Council, and other actors who actively attempt to provide safety for civilians in conflict zones, the world is still faced with degrading acts of violence, such as the sexual assault of a woman every minute in the DRC.<sup>212</sup> However, the issue has also now escalated to targeting non-combatant humanitarian workers.<sup>213</sup> As mandated, GA First, in concert with the work of the Security Council, has attempted to create policy that would help deter these acts of violence against civilian and humanitarian populations;

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> UNGA, *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (A/RES/69/61)*, 2014.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>203</sup> Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, *In Security Council Debate on Civilian Protection, Speakers Voice Deep Concern over Alarming Reports of Violence against Women, Mass Displacement*, 2015; UNGA, *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (A/RES/69/61)*, 2014.

<sup>204</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 2122 (S/RES/2122 (2013))*, 2013.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> UNMISS, *Protecting civilians, monitoring human rights and supporting implementation of cessation of hostilities agreement*, 2014.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>209</sup> UNSC, *Resolution 2155 (S/RES/2155(2014))*, 2014.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> Meeting Coverage and Press Releases, *In Security Council Debate on Civilian Protection, Speakers Voice Deep Concern over Alarming Reports of Violence against Women, Mass Displacement*, 2015.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

however, as the Jordanian representative to the Security Council stated, "...the fight against impunity [is] the greatest challenge".<sup>214</sup> This is a concept that has been echoed by both the Security Council and the GA, indicating a need to hold violators of international humanitarian law accountable for their actions.

### Annotated Bibliography

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*The Geneva Convention is a powerful tool for delegates to understand when addressing the issue of protecting civilians. As one of the first documents to include civilians during conflict, it defines who civilians and non-combatants are, thus, the people who should be protected for harm during conflict. The Convention will provide a necessary basis for delegates when devising ways to solution the issue at hand. More importantly, the Geneva Convention can provide an initial framework for delegates in their attempt to address this issue.*

Security Council Report. (2014). *August 2014 Monthly Forecast: Protection of Civilians*. Security Council Report. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2014-08/protection\\_of\\_civilians\\_3.php?print=true](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2014-08/protection_of_civilians_3.php?print=true)

*This report provides some general background in to the issue of protecting civilians. More importantly, this source outlines the most recent, key UN developments in the issue of protecting civilians. In addition, this source provides important resolutions for delegates to understand in their research, including the need for providing security to civilians and unarmed UN personnel. Lastly, the UN Security Council's position as well as areas of future development are stated.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session. (2013). *Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel: Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/489)*. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/68/489>

*The threat that United Nations personnel face when aiding individuals within conflict zones is an issue needing to be addressed. This report provides details of the challenges and threats faced by humanitarian and unarmed UN personnel. Additionally, the report addresses the measures that have been taken by the security management agencies of the UN such as the Department of Safety and Security of the United Nations. Lastly, this document provides observations and recommendations that delegates could utilize in order to aid the issue of protection and securing unarmed civilians.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session. (2014). *Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (A/RES/69/61)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/61>

*Like the Security Council resolution S/RES/2122 of 2013, this document is one of the most recently adopted resolutions from the General Assembly concerning protecting civilians during conflict. This document is good because it shows the continued support and desire to include women in efforts to establish, support, and maintain international peace and security. Additionally, this document serves as a means to empower women to address their own personal safety. Lastly, this document provides other sources that provide both historical context on the issue at hand and useful recommendations for delegates to utilize.*

United Nations, Security Council, 7044th Meeting. (2013). *Resolution 2122 (S/RES/2122 (2013))*. Retrieved 21 May 2015 from: [http://undocs.org/S/RES/2122\(2013\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/2122(2013))

*As one of the most recent document adopted by the Security Council, this resolution provides delegates with a more in-depth summary of the direction that the United Nations is taking to solve this issue. In addition, this source provides historical data as well as multiple resolutions concerning protection of civilians. More importantly, it outlines some key steps that the Security Council believes needs to be addressed in the coming years. Lastly, this source provides some*

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<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*



*recommendations the delegates may find helpful in ensuring the safety of all civilians during conflict.*

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