

Forum: Disarmament Commission

Issue: Implementing international regulations for the safe use of armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)

Chair: David Wang

Introduction

Since the first armed UAV, the Kettering Bug (which was more torpedo than drone) was first created and used in World War I, the use of UAVs as military weapons has improved vastly. Today, almost a century later, drones are being used in almost every major conflict. Though UAVs often are used simply as surveillance vehicles, as drone technology continually improves, the uses of drones also continually diversifies. Modern UAVs can fly long distances and carry heavy payloads, including weapons of the likes of missiles and bombs. Arguably the most famous drone currently being used by the US, the MQ-9 Reaper, has, according to General T. Michael Moseley, helped the US “[move] from using UAVs primarily in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance roles ... to a true hunter-killer role”.

The ability to strike targets precisely from large distances is something that we have always been trying to develop. From the melee weapons of the medieval ages, to the inaccurate muskets of the 18th century, to the modern rifle, weapons developers are constantly seeking to improve range. Drones, are simply a part of the evolutionary chain of aircraft. They are highly advantageous for battle tactics, since militaries now have the option to attack without being attacked. In contrast with fighter jets, drones are cheaper, and much safer for the pilots who operate from an airfield hundreds of miles away from the conflict zone. As our technology continues to modernize, it is to be expected that we will continue to develop weapons which will allow us to kill from a distance. Cruise missiles, or even Intercontinental ballistic missiles are all part of this trend.

Obviously, having “true hunter-killers” flying around throughout the air space of any conflict zone can be incredibly dangerous. For all of the benefits, the UAVs are not without downsides. Some studies show that these UAVs are up to a hundred times more likely to have

accidents than air vehicles with pilots. Moving a pilot from the vehicle to a base hundreds of miles away may not seem like such a large change, but this allows for not only groundbreaking new tactics, but also may psychologically affect a pilot's decision making. The US's notoriously bad record with collateral damage from drone strikes against the Taliban in Pakistan, against the rebels in Yemen and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria over the past few years has caused many people to question the morality and legality of UAVs.

In order to prevent further accidents and unnecessary harm, several committees of the UN have expressed their support for greater regulations. The UNHRC has emphasized on multiple occasions that the drones must follow international humanitarian law, and the rules of war. Despite this, because there are no regulations specifically addressed towards armed UAVs, member nations tend to ignore what little regulation there is. Though we cannot hope to end usage of these UAVs, just as limiting nuclear proliferation is near impossible, providing safe regulations is key for responsible usage.

Definition of Key Terms

Armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Armed UAVs)

As the name suggests, UAVs are literally any aircraft that do not have pilots, which could potentially include the toy quadrotor drones. However, for this topic specifically discusses Armed UAVs, meaning the reconnaissance drones used by various militaries and even the UN itself are not relevant to the topic. The Armed UAVs that delegates should seek to address are those used in conflicts such as the civil war in Yemen, or the war on terror in Pakistan, in Iraq and in Syria. Typically such armed drones are controlled by the directions or commands of a remote pilot positioned at a nearby airfield.

Counter-Terrorism

Sometimes also referred to as anti terrorism, this is the main purpose that armed UAVs are used for. Counter-terrorism is the practice of military tactics, techniques, and other strategies for the purpose of preventing terrorism. Since 9/11, the US, in particular, has been extremely invested in counter-terrorism, and as a result has also been very invested in armed

UAVs. Because of the value placed on counter-terrorism, often, civilian casualties and collateral damage caused by UAVs are justified by

Principle of Distinction

The principle of distinction is a principle that all nations are expected to follow when conducting military exercise. This principle, enshrined in several protocols and two conventions, simply states that nations must make distinctions between civilians and actual combatants during a conflict. Meaning, military forces must be careful only to attack combatants rather than targeting everyone without distinction. Obviously, this principle does not leave much room for the possibility of UAV collateral damage being ethical, as it by no means provides any exceptions to this rule. What ultimately gives nations using UAVs that wiggle room is the controversial and vague definition of combatant.

Principle of Proportionality

This principle is often used in conjunction with the principle of distinction to justify collateral damage. In national legal systems it is used to test the lawfulness of an attack that caused harm to civilians. Basically, the loss or harm dealt to civilians must be proportional to the strategic advantage of the attack. Meaning, an attack that killed civilians must have a very important strategic advantage, such as the assassination of an important terrorist leader. On the other hand, an attack in which there was little to no civilian harm can be carried out with little regard to the anticipated concrete and direct military advantage of the attack.

Combatant / Civilian

Although the principle of distinction calls for differentiation between combatants and civilians, often times there are grey areas in between. One commonly accepted definition for combatants is “All members of the armed forces of a party to the conflict ... except medical and religious personnel.” A civilian then is anyone that is not a combatant. However, when civilians are involved in activities that directly or indirectly assist the armed forces such as gun production or food production, it is up to delegates to decide whether or not those people should be considered true combatants or civilians. This also raises the question of reliable intelligence sources. How much evidence should be necessary before it is safe to determine if that person is a combatant or a civilian?

General Overview

Concerning usage of armed UAVs

As discussed in the introduction, the usage of armed UAVs poses some serious human rights issues, especially when the drone strikes are carried out unilaterally, against a nation's will, and with little transparency. Though the UN and many human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are actively spreading awareness on this issue, it is clear that regulations must be made even clearer, and definitions must be set straight.

As a counter-terrorist measure

Armed UAV's have been used extensively in several counter-terrorist operations. In Pakistan, there have been thousands of drone-strikes against militants involved with the taliban, a notorious terrorist group. Though the CIA claims to have killed 2000-3000 militants in Pakistan, some believe that these drone strikes have killed even more civilians, up to 10 civilians for every militant killed. What's important however is not who is right, but the fact that there is so much doubt regarding this topic. The counter-terrorist usage of the UAVs is so poorly documented that one's estimate can differ so drastically and no one has the ability to point out who is correct or incorrect. Even Pakistan does not know the extent of the UAV strikes, neither are they in control of these UAV strikes, another key issue. The drone strikes in Pakistan are largely being carried out with little regard to public opinion, and with every civilian casualty, US involvement only adds to the growing animosity of the Pakistani public against the US. As a result of this, Pakistan is in the unique position where a foreign nation is in control of domestic counter-terrorism, allowing the US to carry out drone strikes unilaterally, and at their own



discretion,
meaning
the
attacks
are often
less than

ideal in terms of safety or accountability.

Caption #1: Royal Air Force Reaper drone taking off

Another country in which drone strikes have been used extensively is Yemen. This Middle Eastern nation is still battling with a revolution, similar to that of Syria. As a result of the political uncertainty, terrorist cells have also spread throughout the country. US has been carrying out drone strikes in Yemen relentlessly, adding to the civilian casualties with every operation.

Despite all this there also is some doubt regarding the effectiveness of drones. It has not been shown conclusively that drone strikes can help prevent terrorist attacks despite their lethality. It is generally accepted that the drones are a major factor in the current weakness of Al Qaeda, and that they are a general nuisance and deterrent for terrorists. In order to hide from armed drones, these terrorists have to go to complicated and inefficient methods of communication to avoid surveillance. So, while some would point to the minimal terrorist activity from Al-Qaeda as a success of the drone, it fails in one key aspect. That is, drones do nothing to counter the destructive ideologies of the terrorist cells. Often times, civilians affected by these attacks join terrorist groups out of bitterness, and other times, terrorists can use these drone strikes in their propaganda to recruit young and impressionable people.

In other major conflicts

Drones have also been used as weapons in wars or civil wars. Despite the fact that in conflicts between nations, rules are more likely to go out the window, according to international humanitarian law, it is just as important in a war to observe the two rules mentioned in the definitions. As secretary general Ban Ki-Moon so concisely said: “Even wars have rules”. The two main rules that are being referenced here relating to the usage of drones one, the principle of distinction, and two the principle of proportionality. These two principles together suggest that any usage of drones in which civilians are killed, whether during a war or not is unacceptable. Again, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon put it this way “when so-called surgical strikes are hitting surgical wards, something is deeply wrong”.

Issues with national sovereignty

National sovereignty is always a touchy subject. In simple terms, national sovereignty is the right of a government to govern their own nation without foreign involvement, an idea that is hard to not like. It is because of this principle that the General Assembly’s resolutions are never legally binding. But the issue is a bit more complicated than that. If it is in a foreign nation’s interest to interfere with the governance of the local government, they sometimes choose to do that without approval, because they argue that it is in the interest of the local government. Pakistan is the main example for this. Terrorist cells in Pakistan are terrible dangers to the national security of the United States and of the safety of United States citizens. As a result, under the pretense of “safety”, the US preemptively attacks suspected terrorists. The result is usually obscenely high amounts of civilian casualties and a furious Pakistani public.

Issues with transparency

One of the greatest annoyances regarding the usage of drones relates to transparency, or the lack of. The statistics released by governments such as the US and Israel usually cannot be trusted. And, with so little intelligence, the government agencies themselves often have to make estimates when it comes to statistics like civilian casualties because the operations are usually carried out in secret.

Because of this, any accusations can usually just be shrugged off because there is so little firm evidence and so few accurate statistics. It's impossible to regulate what is entirely unknown. The excuse for this is often simply that drone strikes need to be secretive for them to be effective, but a dangerous side effect of the secretive actions is a total lack of accountability. For the US where the voice of the citizens is so important this is even more of an issue. If the public were to find out about the human rights violations of these drones, they would doubtless be able to pressure the government into limiting their drone operations. However, because there is a lack of transparency, citizens rarely see what the US military is truly doing, and victims of the drone strikes can almost never have their voices heard.

Key blocs

One reason as to why this topic is so contentious and debates are often so heated is the very polarized stances that member nations often take. While nations in possession of armed drones are more than happy to continue to use drones unregulated seeing as the lack of accountability is advantageous for them, other nations where drones have been extensively used, particularly Pakistan, Yemen, and Syria, are wary of the dangers, albeit to varying extents. As a result, the more developed MEDCs in possession of UAVs end up taking a hard line against the interests of LEDCs with conflict zones that drones are being deployed in. Although the UN, specifically the UNHRC, has in the past, expressed great support for stricter regulations and greater transparency in drone usage, it is difficult to do so without angering drone developers. So, seeing as resolutions in the Disarmament Commission are not legally binding, in addressing this topic delegates will have to be careful to make good compromises in order to ensure all nations will be likely to cooperate. Thus, to help you better understand the stances of both sides and make better compromises, below are some of the more important groups involved in the debate. Note that the UN will be covered in a separate section later.

Pro-drone nations

Arguably the most powerful bloc involved in this debate are those nations that are currently producing and using armed UAVs. Though it's easy to just point at the US and their notorious counter-terrorist drone program, other nations such as India, Israel, Iran, Russia and Germany have also invested great interest on their drone programs. Though

all of these nations also have a great interest in human rights, in general they believe that the cost of their citizen's safety is not always worth the extra effort to protect human rights.

The issue of American drones in Pakistan has already been briefly addressed. Essentially, the US is carrying out a very active preemptive measure against terrorists, attacking the terrorists before the US can be attacked. Because sending US troops has become increasingly unpopular with the American public, the development of armed drones has been a godsend. Without the direct involvement of armed US troopers, the military can safely strike their targets from a safe distance away, and without the attention and media coverage that sending US troops would undoubtedly bring.

Another important country involved with armed drones is Israel. The issue of Palestine has not been a very peaceful one, made only more bloody due to the usage of drones. On several occasions in recent times, armed conflicts have arisen in the Gaza strip due to Israel or Palestine blaming the other for some aggression. Each nation responds to the other's hostility, starting a chain reaction of increasingly lethal attacks until the attention of the international community causes them to reach an uncertain ceasefire until hostilities boil up again. Fortunately, in most cases it does not take long for the fighting to reach international attention. The indiscriminate killing of civilians in these operations never fails to cause a massive outcry and protestation of the illegality of the attacks. The Gaza war AKA Operation Cast Lead is one such example of this. Over a period of 22 days Israel killed over 1400 palestinians, 82% of whom were civilians, prompting Hamas to launch a counteroffensive of rockets. According to the Human Rights watch, Israel simply did not take the proper precautions to limit civilian casualties, though it definitely has not helped that in many cases Hamas used civilians as human shields for their military in an attempt to prevent attacks from drones or missiles. The UN Fact finding mission on the Gaza Strip found evidence in support of Palestine, ultimately concluding that Israel's deliberate policy of disproportionality meant that civilians rather than militants were the ones targeted. Drones played a key role in the Israeli attack. Aside from their usual surveillance purposes, locals reported that armed drones were also used to fire Spike missiles, causing large amounts of civilian death. Though Israel formally denies the usage of drones, it is not hard to believe that armed drones were

used, considering the vast amount of Israeli drones from the IAI Heron to the Elbit Hermes 450. Most other nations that are in possession of drones have not American drones, but Israeli drones.

In essence, nations in possession of drone programs have no interest in limiting themselves. No military would wish to part with a weapon as successful as an armed drone, nor would it be easy for others to attempt to impose restrictions on the usage of these armed drones because of the obvious advantages. In general, they recognize the importance of humanitarian law, but do not believe that drones have a conflict of interest with human rights. As the number of nations using drones increases, this bloc's position becomes stronger and stronger. Delegates must be careful to make sure that their either has or has not a drone program, as these are often highly secretive,

Nations against Drones

Other nations in which drone programs are not that well developed, or nations in which drones are actively being used are much more cautious with their usage of drones. The most vocal of these nations being Pakistan, where US drone strikes against Taliban have caused significant civilian harm and social unrest. Because of their efforts, the UN has already passed several resolutions reminding member nations of their responsibility to answer to humanitarian law. This is the key point that nations against drones emphasize. The usage of UAVs violates basic human rights, and obviously violates the principle of distinction. As a result, drone operations need to be stopped, or at the very least limited.

This idea is criticized as being a little idealistic. It is unrealistic to assume that there must be zero civilian casualties, and even more unrealistic to assume that other nations will change without greater pressure. From the utilitarian standpoint, the civilian casualties matter even less, because the death of a militant can justify the deaths of the civilians. Despite this, the UN is an organization based on ideals, including some very important human rights ideals which all member nations are expected to conform to without exception. In the UN, human rights are universal, regardless of their own status. A civilian does not matter less than a militant, and thus the death of that militant cannot justify the death of the civilian.

Another key concern of these nations, is the lack of accountability/responsibility. The drone strikes are carried out with little regard to the opinions of the local government, and usually lack any form of consultation. As a result, nations with weaker governments and problems with terrorism no longer have the agency to say no to the drone strikes. They occur whether or not the government approves of them, because they cannot control where the drones can fly. The US in particular exploits this to advance their own anti-terrorist foreign policy with dangerously little regard to the civilian casualties.

Ultimately, delegates from countries that are more wary of the usage of UAVs such as Pakistan, Afghanistan or Yemen will want to seek assurance that these drones will not be carried out in private. Instead the operations and the details of these operation should be kept out in the open for all to see, to keep drone strikes accountable, and to ensure that foreign nations will not be able to advance imperialistic agendas while local governments will be able to maintain full jurisdiction of their country.

Non-governmental organizations

Many other important NGOs support the UN's stance in emphasizing the importance of human rights. Amnesty International and most other NGOs even believe that the drone strikes could amount to war crimes due to the tremendous amount of collateral damage. Human rights watch as mentioned earlier has called out several nations including Israel on their unethical use of armed drones in conflict situations. Like the united nations, these NGOs usually have less affiliations to their countries, and thus care more for humanitarian aid than the benefit of the nation. Because of this, they share a similar stance to the United Nations, that is that nations need to be held accountable for the humanitarian trespasses of the drones, and as a result, need to be kept under better regulation. Nations that ignore these regulations need to be called out on and punished for humanitarian rights violations.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
April 1917	The Kettering bug began development.

September 2001	Following the 9/11 attacks, the US officially declares war on terror, thus beginning their long standing activities against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Pakistan.
18 June 2004	The first known drone strike in Pakistan was carried out, killing 5-8 people including 2 children.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Seeing as encouraging the respect of human rights is a purpose written in the UN charter, it should not come as a surprise that the United Nations Human Rights Council is so invested in the issue of the ethical use of drones. Of course, the usefulness of drones can not be understated. The UN peacekeeping corps themselves also use drones, although obviously unarmed for surveillance purposes. One UN operation in particular, MONUSCO in Congo has put UAVs to great use as surveillance vehicles in countering terrorist groups and other militants. The General Assembly and even the Security Council have also been involved in solving the issues of armed drones. That being said, there still is a great amount that needs to be done.

The majority of the resolutions have an obligatory human rights clause, tacked on at the end as if it were only an afterthought. It seems as if the resolution were saying “Oh and by the way drones shouldn’t be hurting people because that’s obviously bad”. In each, the resolution basically refers to previous conventions and human rights agreements, essentially the principles of proportionality and distinction. Yet, because of the way that these clauses are thrown into the resolution, they seem more reminders than admonitions for nations that have been abusing the rules. Humanitarian law needs to be more than just an afterthought, and the rules of warfare too should not be ignored so easily, which brings us to the second type of UN involvement.

The UN has also tried on several occasions to condemn the actions of the US in an attempt to make them improve the safety of their drone missions. This is a great step forward since all nations must be held accountable, and often the United States as one of the most powerful nations in the world gets a blind eye. Due to the advocacy of nations such as Pakistan, the UN can no longer ignore the human rights abuses of the US and will continue to call out the US on its questionable drone operations until there is change. On one occasion, a resolution proposed by Pakistan calling for the US to take greater responsibility for their drone strikes was

passed unanimously in the general assembly, clearly a great step forward. Despite this, resolution in the past have turned a blind eye to the operations done by other nations. In the past there have been task forces assigned to investigate the operations of nations such as Israel's operation cast lead, but not much has been done with information gained from these task forces. It is important not just to address the US's problem but to ensure that other nations don't begin to follow the US's example when it comes to armed drones.

- [Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, 18 December 2007 \(A/RES/62/159\)](#)
- [The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review, 13 June 2014 \(A/RES/68/276\)](#)
- [Resolution 2286 \(2016\), 3 May 2016 \(S/RES/2286\)](#)

Possible Solutions

Delegates can do a few things to alleviate some of the tensions on this topic. In terms of new regulations for drones that need to be implemented, as of now there still has not been much action on the issues with national sovereignty, meaning that regulations aimed towards protecting the rights of nations would be greatly appreciated. Even if the drones can be operated effectively from such remote distances, military operations should not occur in another nation's territory without that nation's consent. And if they do occur, some kind of incentive or punishment must be established for nations to follow these rules.

But, before any regulations can truly work effectively, first it must be determined how humanitarian law should apply to drones. Some nations may even want to consider if the same humanitarian law can even apply at all to armed drones. As has been brought up before, there are a few key questions. Regarding the principles of proportionality and distinction, who counts as combatants, and who counts as civilians? When is it alright for there to be collateral damage, or is it ever alright for collateral damage? Delegates must research their own country's stance regarding these issues and come to the debate prepared with their nation's reasoning. If these issues are clarified so that all nations are in agreement then set into stone in resolutions, it can be expected that there will be much better results when new regulations are implemented.

One last issue that delegates can work to solve in their resolutions is that of government transparency. Although it is not usually the UN's position to impose rules on a nation's governance, in this case it is of paramount importance that nations improve their transparency. One must keep in mind that the public hysteria is never a good thing, and having government transparency would be a great step in abating the suspicions of the citizens. On the other hand, transparency should also be ensured because of the public opinion. If citizens can see first hand the damage that armed drones can cause, they will be more motivated to seek change with their nation's government. For this, NGOs or other third party organizations must be involved to ensure maximum accountability. Thus, clauses seeking to empower these NGOs would be very effective. In doing so, the UN will be able to, if not prevent accidents at the very least lower the probability and mitigate the effects of a UAV accident.

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Forum: The Disarmament Commission

Issue: Limiting the availability of light weapons to reduce urban violence

Chair: Celina Pan & Emily Wang

Introduction

The issue of light weapons is a pressing issue of great magnitude. Currently 875 million small arms and light weapons are estimated to be in circulation worldwide, with between 700,000 and 900,000 small arms produced annually. The annual authorized trade in small arms and light weapons exceeds US\$8.5 billion. It is even estimated that guns on earth outnumber cars by about 40 per cent. Other than being of great magnitude, it is also widespread, international issue faced by all countries as more than 1,000 companies from nearly 100 countries produce small arms and light weapons. What makes the issue of light weapons so pressing is the fact that less than 25 percent of light weapons are in the possession of armies, police or other government agencies; the remaining three-quarters are in the hands of civilians, used by them to commit urban violence.

Definition of Key Terms

Light Weapons

Light weapons are defined by the United Nations General Assembly as: “any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899”.

It is also stated by the UN that: “Light weapons’ are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, inter alia, general purpose or universal machine guns, medium machine guns, heavy machine guns, rifle grenades, under-barrel grenade launchers and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, man portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, man portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 100 millimetres”. Small Arms and Light Weapons can be referred to using the term SALW which stands for Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Small arms

According to the UN, “Small arms” are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns.

Urban Violence

Urbanization has caused a rapid increase in urban violence, which is defined as behavior involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something (defined by the International Committee of the Red Cross)

General Overview

Advantages of light weapons for civilians

Low Cost and Wide Availability

The production of small arms and light weapons requires very little high level technology, with low costs of production. This makes it cheap for people to buy. There are also plenty of suppliers all around the world. As stated in the introduction, there are 1,000 companies from nearly 100 countries produce small arms and light weapons. This low cost and wide availability makes SALWs a popular choice for civilians.

Lethality

SALW increase in lethality and sophistication every year. With some rapid-fire assault rifles, automatic pistols and submachine guns that are capable of firing up to 300 rounds a minute, a single person can cause a lot of urban violence with just one SALW. This makes SALWs a good choice for civilians who wish to either cause urban violence or defend themselves.

and the lethality of light weapons have increased by 47%.

Simplicity and Durability

Small arms and light weapons are much simpler to use and easier maintain than most other forms of artillery. They require very little training to master and a single SALW was be operational for many years given the correct care.

Portability and Concealability

Small arms and light weapons were made so that a single person would be able to carry the weapons with relative ease. They are also much easier to smuggle past officials than larger forms for artillery. It is also easier to conceal SALWs in cargo or sneak different parts of a light weapon through the airport and then reassemble them once all the parts have arrived at their destination.

Black Markets

Due to the fact that most countries ban civilian usage of weapons, citizens must acquire their light arms through illicit sources. The growth of black markets is based off of the increasing number of arms embargoes made by the United Nations. In some cases, black markets will also work with corrupted governments. These black markets make it much more possible that civilians may illegally obtain guns without government knowledge.

Major countries and organizations involved

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Established in January, 1998, this organization coordinates works on small arms and light weapons. It also provides objective, impartial and up-to-date information on multilateral

disarmament issues and activities to Member States, States parties to multilateral agreements, intergovernmental organizations and institutions, departments and agencies of the United Nations system, research and educational institutions, civil society, especially non-governmental organizations, the media and the general public. The UNODA also seeks to global norms of disarmament.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

The UNIDIR is a voluntarily funded autonomous institute within the United Nations. An impartial actor, the Institute generates ideas and promotes action on disarmament and security. The UNIDIR's mission is to find and implement solutions, through research and educational efforts, to promote peace throughout the nations.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC is an independent and neutral organization that helps ensure humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of war. It takes action in response to emergencies and promotes respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation in national law. The ICRC has published an International Review on urban violence (No. 878) in June, 2010.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF helps fight for the rights and safety of children from around the world. It also works with the United Nations to make sure children are on the global agenda. UNICEF has done work to reduce the amount of light weapons in order to prevent the loss of lives.

United States

The United States has one of the most serious urban violence issues in the world due to the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (which guarantees the right to bear arms). The US is aware of the rising problem with gun violence; however, nothing much has been done. Based on an article by the Atlantic, it has been shown that more than 50% of the guns on earth are owned by Americans.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
December 6, 1991	First time light weapons and small arms were raised to discussion in the UN by GA Resolution A/RES/46/36.
January, 1998	The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs was established
April 2, 2013	The UN General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty.
December 24, 2014	The Arms Trade Treaty entered into force.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

The UN have made a number of efforts over the past few decades to limit the availability and regulate light weapons. The General Assembly and Security Council have multiple resolutions tackling the issue.

- General Assembly Resolution, December 6th, 1991 (A/RES/46/36)
- General Assembly Resolution, January ,1996 (A/RES/50/70)
- General Assembly Resolution, 1997, (A/52/298)
- General Assembly Resolution, 1999 (A/54/258)
- July 2001, United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms
- Security Council Resolution, 26 September, 2013, Resolution 2117
- April 2nd, 2013, the UN General Assembly voted with an overwhelming majority to adopt the Arms Trade Treaty which governs the legal international trade in different types of weapons including light weapons.
- Arms Trade Treaty commenced on December 24, 2014.

Possible Solutions

First, reduce the existing stockpile: To reduce the stockpile in citizen hands, Many countries have implemented voluntary programs encouraging citizens to surrender weapons in exchange for cash, household goods or other benefits. In "Weapons for Development" schemes, the reward for handing in guns is development assistance to improve educational,

economic and security conditions for the entire community. This voluntary collection has been met with varying success across the world. Another way is to implement obligatory weapons collection programmes. Countries like Australia and Brazil removed massive numbers of light weapons from circulation with programmes based on cash compensation for the confiscated weapon and legislative changes that made it much harder to obtain a gun legally. This meant that in addition to ensuring that less people would be able to legally own a gun, it also meant that many former owners were in danger of being in illegal possession which would encourage them to get rid of them. Public awareness about light weapons and their role in urban violence can also contribute to citizens willingly giving up their light weapons. Forced disarmament programs like the ones in Uganda in which soldiers searched houses and assaulted civilians to force them to give up their light weapons was met with limited success and even heightened the sense of insecurity within the population.

Also, resolutions should aim to use different means to reduce the supply of new weapons. The UN should provide sanctions towards any governments working with black markets for economic purposes. Nations should also seek to strengthen their borders to prevent illegal arms trade from entering the country. Different non-governmental organizations and the UN should work together with countries with high crime rates to prevent criminals from gaining access to the light weapons.

In order to reduce crime rates, states should draw a clear distinction between who may or may not gain access to light weapons. New laws should be implemented to define terms regarding to access. If guns are legal under certain circumstances, stricter gun laws should be implemented. For example, people who wish to purchase guns should be required a permit, as well as thorough background checks. Gun shops should also be monitored by the government (maybe local officials), and all data of who have made a purchase should be submitted to the government in order to prevent gun related crimes, or it make it easier for government officials to track down criminals.

Last, the government should educate the public about the dangers of light arms and weapons. Education should aim towards younger generations, which will help them grow up with a mindset that guns are meant for harmful purposes instead of protective purposes. Local governments should work with NGOs and sending representatives to different school districts to educate the children. MEDCs should also help fund LEDCs to allow crime rates to go down. For

example, they could provide them with the money to facilitate cash compensation or other rewards for voluntarily handed in small arms and light weapons. They could also send some speakers to LEDCs who can go to school or public gathering to speak to civilians about the dangers of SALW.

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Forum: Disarmament I & II

Issue: Measures to combat civilian casualties caused by landmines in Southeast Asia

Chairs: Melissa Chang and Justin Zhou

Introduction

Countries of Southeast Asia:



Landmines are deadly explosives that can kill or injure people. Landmines can be small and as cheap as \$3. They remain active up to 50 years after being installed. There are over 700 kinds of landmines, but all of them can be placed under of of the two categories: Anti-personnel or anti-vehicle landmines. Landmine are usually placed on the ground manually but can also by

installed by large machines called mechanical minelayers. Mines are installed in groups called minefield to hinder movement or kill enemies.

There are 2,000 land mine casualties per month in Southeast Asia. Both anti-vehicle and anti-personnel landmines make land unsuitable for cultivation and limit moment, hindering socio economic growth within a nation. For instance, in Cambodia, where the economy relies heavily on agricultural manual labor, landmines make people unable to work in the fields. As a result, they have no source of income for their families. Moreover, many of the victims lack the support they need like disability services, prosthetics, mental support, and physical therapy. The countries most affected by landmine casualties in Southeast Asia and Laos and Cambodia. The International Campaign for Banning Landmines (ICBL) advocates for banning landmines and aims to help recovering landmine victims. ICBL culminated the Mine-Ban Convention, also known as the “Ottawa Treaty”. However, although the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) directly assists countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, it does not provide direct assistance to any countries in Southeast Asia.

Definition of Key Terms

Landmines

Explosive devices that can be detonated by sound, vibration, tripwires, or pressure. They are placed under or near the ground.

Antipersonnel (AP) landmines

Landmines installed in the ground used to kill or injure a person. There are three kinds of AP landmines. Explosive blast effect mines can blast off a person’s leg, causing amputation. Fragmentation mines that are stuffed with metal darts that shoot off in all directions upon detonation. Bouncing mines are charge upwards before detonating and shooting off fragments in all directions.

Anti-vehicle or antitank (AT) landmines

Landmines used to explode vehicles like tanks. They are bigger than AP mines and require heavier weight to detonate.

Demilitarized zones (DMZs)

A DMZ is an area where military personnel, machines, or activities are prohibited because of a treaty or agreement.

Anti-handling device

An anti-handling device is a part of a landmine designed to prevent tampering, acting a lot like a booby trap. They prevent enemies from rupturing and reusing landmines. They also make demining the mines harder.

Fuse

Combustible material used to ignite the explosives of a mine

Smart mines

Mines designed to self-deactivate after conflict. Experts are still working on this technology to prevent post-conflict

Prosthetics

Replacements for body parts like arms or legs. Many landmine victims require prosthetics because their body parts are blown off.

General Overview

Key Issues

Moral Concerns

- Land mines go against International Humanitarian Law as it does not distinguish civilians from soldiers. These mines remain active, blindly killing mostly civilians years after their intended use

- The injuries caused by these mines are much harder to treat than most other war injuries. Those who survive a landmine typically have limb damage so severe that victims are forced to get their limbs amputated. They are then forced to face the psychological, social, and economical disadvantages of having such a disability.

Economic Concerns

- The price of producing and implanting landmines are cheap, typically costing between \$3-50 USD. However, the cost of removing landmines are significantly higher, 50x higher than that of the mine. In 1996 the UN Secretary General estimated that it would cost more than \$50 billion to clear all of the landmines. ‘
- Landmines are typically near roads, fields, and forests, which is inconvenient for landowners. It is estimated that without landmines, the extra land in Cambodia and Afghanistan would be able to double their agricultural production.
- Because landmines make travelling through land difficult, relief suppliers are forced to travel through the sky. In Angola 1988, the Red Cross delivered its relief supplies at \$2200 per ton by air. If there was no threat of landmines, this delivery would have only been a mere \$89 per ton.

Major Organizations and Countries Involved

Cambodia

Landmines in post-conflict regions are a major issue in rural areas of Cambodia. The landmines were installed by the Khmer Rouge, the Heng Samrin, and the Hun Sen regimes that fought during Cambodia's Civil War in the 1970s. Cambodia has 40,000 amputees (2014), one of the highest numbers in the world. A key player in Cambodia's dissemination of mines and support of mine victims is the Cambodia Mine Action Center (CMAC). Landmines endanger field workers and farmers. Those who are injured are handicapped and lose their ability to do heavy manual agricultural labor to make a living.

Laos

The dissemination of mines began in Laos around the 1960s when the US dropped thousands of mines in the country to close off the Ho Chi Minh Trail. It has been estimated that approximately 15,000 people (2016) have been injured by unexploded ordnances.

International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)

The ICBL is a coalition of NGOs working to make the world free of cluster munition and AP mines so that communities living in post-conflict areas can lead fulfilling lives. In 1997, the campaign was successful in culminating the Ottawa Treaty, which aims to eliminate all landmines

Mine advisory group (MAG)

MAG's vision to make the world a safer for people to successfully rebuild their lives and futures. This NGO has destroyed over 300,000 landmines since the 1990s and freed over 5 billion square meters of land from unexploded ordnances. MAG also has a risk education program for children to prevent them from stepping onto mines. It trains and provides expertise to locals in landmine clearance to help them lead safer lives. MAG also offers emergency response to situations where an unexploded ordnance threatens the safety of a community.

Handicap International

This NGO works to help people around the world in poverty, conflict, and disaster. Like MAG, it works to clear landmines, educate endangered communities, and help mine victims rebuild their lives in countries such as Laos and Cambodia. This organization played a pivotal role in the ICBL.

Clear Path International

An NGO based in the United States that assists civilians in post-conflict zones. Similar to Handicap International and MAG, it provides risk education and delivers survivor assistance.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
Aug 12, 1949	Geneva Convention

December 1983	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons implemented
October 1997	UNMAS formed
December 1997	Ottawa Treaty

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- Geneva Convention: The Geneva Convention describes the rules of war. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons of Protocol II of the Geneva Convention states that placing landmines without recording their location is a war crime
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS): The UNMAS provides direct assistance to 18 countries, none of which are in Southeast Asia. While most demining and risk education services are provided by NGOs, the UN does provide humanitarian mine action services. The UNMAS is funded by GA appropriations, UN voluntary funds, and the UN Peacekeeping Support Account,
- 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines, also known as the Ottawa Treaty, the Mine Ban Treaty, or the Mine Ban Convention: This convention bans the use, stockpiling, and production of AP landmines. It aims to disarm all landmines in post-conflict territories. This convention does not purely ban a weapon, it is designed to provide humanitarian and educational support for civilian populations that live in mine-infested areas. Non signatories in Southeast Asia of the convention include Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, and Singapore.

Possible Solutions

One solution to combat civilian casualties by landmines is universalization of the Ottawa Treaty, or getting all countries to sign it. Nations can also help eliminate problems caused by landmines by:

- Creating and following a moratorium on the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of landmines.
- Engaging in and providing mine risk education, including clearance procedures
- Assisting landmine survivors and their families

Another possible solution would be to get the UNMAS to support countries in Southeast Asia, as they only provide direct support countries in Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

There are also many kinds of mine clearing machines. Tanks are usually equipped with mine plows. These clear minefields by pushing mines out of the tank's path. The Panther is a remote control vehicle that employs metal rollers to set off mines. Aardvarks are large vehicles with large beating chains that destroy landmines, they are more commonly used for humanitarian de-mining processes. The Berm Processing Assembly is a vehicle that uncovers mine for units to disarm them safely.

Experts have begun to research and develop smart mines, landmines that will be able to self-deactivate once conflict is over so post-conflict zones will not be infested with landmines. Delegates should look solutions involving research into smart mines.

Animals like dogs and rats can be trained to sniff out mines. In 2015, it was discovered that African giant pouched rats have an extremely keen sense of smell, which is very useful for detecting mines. By helping detect these mines, demining unit can successfully uncover them and disarm them.

Since many victims lose body parts, delegates should do research into making cheap and practical prosthetic limbs for victims.

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