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2. Letter From The Under Secretary General

Dear distinguished participants,

First and utmost we are more than grateful to have you with us at the BILSEM United Nations Conference 2026.

So, with most heartfelt greetings, We shall continue moving forward with our letter as fast as possible to bring you one step closer to our study guide which will hopefully, be the leading key to make this year's conference, as well as the committee, succeed in making a marvelous memory for each and one of you.

My name is Zehra Günes and I have been responsible for the GA committee you all are most likely familiar with, DISEC. Throughout the year, full of sweat and tears, we as the academic team has worked like ants, as one may claim, not to only come up with a twist with our unusual and interesting agenda items regarding immortality, but also to make a useful source of knowledge to keep the debate revolve around each one of our diligent delegates.

Furthermore, I would like for all of you to enjoy your precious time here; learning, meeting new people and making many more unforgettable memories together. We will be there to support you before and during the committee so, please do not be hesitant in communicating with us! Hope to see you all soon…

Best Regards,

Zehra Güneş

Under Secretary General - DISEC
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3. Introduction to the Committee

The First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly is the Committee for Disarmament and International Security (DISEC).

This committee concerns itself with “disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.”

This committee also works in tandem with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, which meets in Geneva. Sessions of DISEC take a tripartite structure.

First, there is a general debate, where in the committee decides on which topics will be covered. This is followed by a stage of thematic discussions, and the process is concluded with action on drafts.

As enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter, all member states and observers of the UN are permitted to be a member of DISEC.

The First Committee may pass resolutions by a simple majority, recommending that member states take specific or general actions. As a General Assembly committee, it does not have the power to pass binding resolutions, nor does it have the power to sanction.

Our aim for this weekend is to emulate DISEC’s above-stated debate structure, powers, and limitations to the best of our ability, so that we may deal with serious threats to international peace and security, just as the delegates in the chambers of the First Committee would.

4. Introduction to the Agenda Item

Since the birth of the United Nations, the goals of multilateral disarmament and arms limitation have been central to the Organization’s efforts to maintain international peace and security. The UN has given highest priority to reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons, destroying chemical weapons, and strengthening the prohibition of biological weapons – all of which pose the direst threats to humankind.

Linkages between illicit arms, organized crime, and armed conflict can reinforce one another while also escalating and prolonging violence and eroding governance.

Financial gains from crime can lengthen or intensify armed conflicts by creating revenue streams for non-State armed groups (NSAGs). Beyond undermining the monopoly of the State on the use of force, armed conflict also creates an environment that can enable organized crime to prosper.

when hostilities cease and parties to a conflict move towards a peaceful resolution, the widespread availability of surplus arms and ammunition can contribute to a situation of ‘criminalized peace’ that obstructs sustainable peacebuilding efforts.

Illicit arms and ammunition clearly link conflict to crime as well as crime to conflict. Illicit arms can both enable and fuel an armed conflict, while different conflict phases provide opportunities for the diversion of arms and a potentially lucrative income source for organized arms trafficking networks.

NSAGs and organized criminal groups (OCGs) use illicit arms to engage in conflict or perpetrate crime respectively, while both types of groups can also be involved in the trafficking of arms. Furthermore, there are often-blurred lines between these types of groups, particularly in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Researchers and practitioners have examined the nexus between two of these three security challenges: armed conflict, organized crime, and illicit arms. Yet, there has been limited research

examining the linkages between all three of these security challenges. In response to this knowledge gap, this issue brief explores the different ways in which illicit arms connect armed conflict and organized crime and provides suggestions on how to better address these inter- connected challenges.

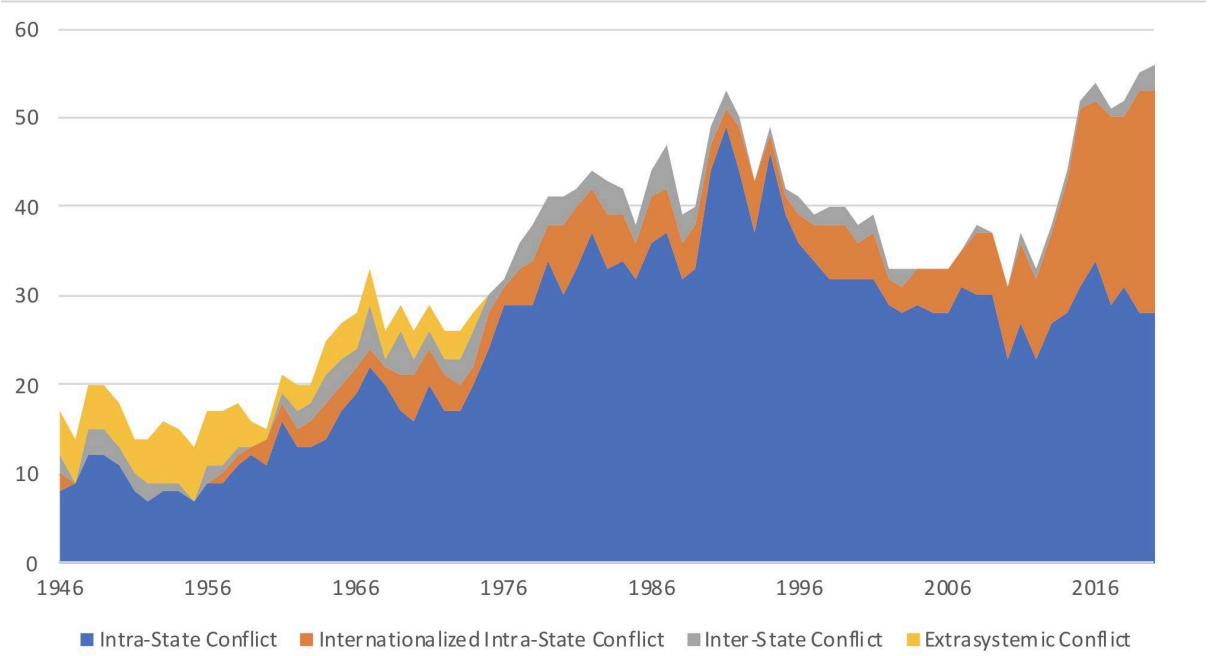
This brief may further inform practitioners and policymakers by framing the conversation for future decision-making and research.

Conflict and Crime The number of active conflicts has grown over the last two decades and since the mid- 1990s more civil conflicts have recurred than started new. Internationalized civil conflicts account for most of the global increase in conflicts in recent years. Intra-State conflicts in this current wave often have characteristics that increase the likelihood of a longer duration, such as fighting factions or external involvement.

NSAGs sometimes engage in illicit economies as a source of funding, including in criminal pursuits such as looting, extortion and kidnapping, resource extraction, and the production and sale of other illicit commodities.

This can be viewed as both a cause and consequence of recurring and prolonged armed conflicts.

Figure 1. Number of Conflicts, 1946–2020



An **intra-State** conflict is between a government and a non-government party, with no interference from other countries.

An **internationalized intra-State** conflict is between a government and a non-government party, with at least one of the parties to the conflict receiving troop support from other governments that actively participate in the conflict.

An **inter-State conflict** is between two or more governments.

An **extrasystemic conflict** is between a state and a non-state group outside it's the state's territory.

This issue brief highlights some of the linkages between organized crime and conflict across conflict phases—including potentially sparking the crisis, lengthening the conflict by providing resources, and threatening the consolidation of peace and development due to political ties or economic incentives. Security Council resolutions have increasingly highlighted the challenging security implications posed by organized crime in conflict-affected and fragile settings, noting

Illicit arms and ammunition are key enablers of armed conflict and organized criminal activities. NSAGs use illicit weapons to engage in a conflict, and sometimes increase a conflict's intensity and duration. OCGs use illicit arms to carry out crimes and, more broadly, to assert and sustain power. OCGs also sometimes participate in arms trafficking to source weapons or earn revenue.

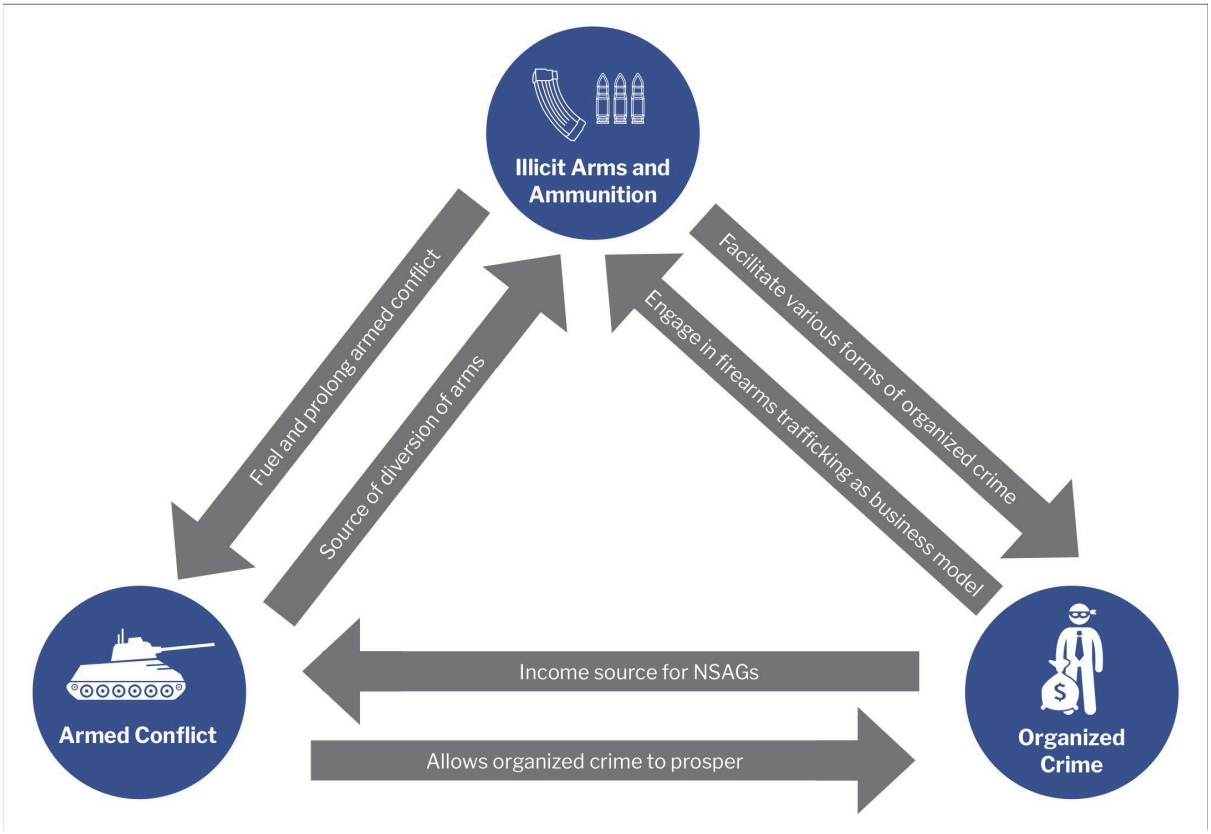


Figure 2 illustrates the different types of connections between these three concerns, highlighting their interconnected nature and showing how illicit arms often flow in two different directions within conflict-affected settings.

In one direction, conflict is a destination—creating demand for arms and ammunition (e.g. arms flows to conflict areas in order to cover the demand of the conflict parties); in the other, conflict is a source—providing a supply of illicit arms (e.g. surplus arms stemming from armed conflicts, battlefield captures, and looted stockpiles that are trans- ferred either to other conflicts or to non-conflict areas). Armed conflict and State fragility provide opportunities for the diversion of arms to the illicit market, including through and to criminal groups. Since NSAGs typically seek to diversify their sources of illicit weapons, they may use criminal networks to purchase illicit arms, including from other conflict-affected areas

The large-scale acquisition of illicit arms by NSAGs and OCGs is typically linked to regional economies of armed conflict or other forms of organized crime.17 Large, interregional arms transfers are rare without government support, though unauthorized re-exports may enable the diversion of arms without the original exporting government's approval, and shipments sometimes move through transit States without their authorization. Illicit arms acquisition within fragile and conflict-affected regions often involves small batches of firearms trafficked across borders.18 However, as shown in several illustrations throughout this issue brief, some NSAGs and OCGs have also been able to access weapons through larger transfers and trafficking beyond neigh- boring States. Organized crime, armed conflict, and illicit arms trafficking—separately and in combination— undermine political stability, good governance, and sustainable development. Corruption in particular serves as a reinforcing factor for increased connections between OCGs and NSAGs. For instance, corrupt officials—such as those who accept bribes and allow OCGs to operate with impunity—can erode public confidence in governing institutions, which may serve as a motiva- tor of conflict. While underdevelopment, weak institutions, and a lack of resources tend to drive crime and conflict, illicit arms—whether in the hands of OCGs or NSAGs—have a facilitating function by exacerbating power, undermining State control, and providing an opportunity for violence.

While these objectives have remained constant over the years, the scope of deliberations and negotiations has changed as political realities and the international situation has evolved. The global community is addressing the spread of small arms, light weapons and landmines, which pose a threat to societies and harm civilians, especially women and children.

It's acknowledged that different types of weapons impact people of all genders and ages differently. The UN is also focusing on the impact of new information, telecommunications technologies and other emerging technologies on international security. Through global efforts, several multilateral treaties and instruments have been established with the aim of regulating, restricting, or eliminating certain weapons.

These include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Convention, the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty.

Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation Nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons on earth. One can destroy a whole city, potentially killing millions, and jeopardizing the natural environment and lives of future generations through its long-term catastrophic effects. The dangers from such weapons arise from their very existence. Although nuclear weapons have only been used twice in warfare, about 12,500 reportedly remain in our world today and there have been over 2,000 nuclear tests conducted to date.

Disarmament is the best protection against such dangers but achieving this goal has been a tremendously difficult challenge. The UN has sought to eliminate such weapons ever since its establishment.

The first resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1946 established a Commission to deal with problems related to the discovery of atomic energy among others. The Commission was to make

proposals for, inter alia, the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes.

Several multilateral treaties have since been established with the aim of preventing nuclear proliferation and testing, while promoting progress in nuclear disarmament. These include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests In The Atmosphere, In Outer Space And Under Water, also known as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was signed in 1996 but has yet to enter into force, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Missiles continue to be a focus of increased international attention, discussion, and activity. Their potential to carry and deliver weapons of mass destruction (WMD) payload quickly and accurately makes missiles a qualitatively significant political and military issue. In addition, the diversity of international views on matters related to missiles poses a particular challenge for efforts to address the issue in multilateral fora.

Currently, there is no legally binding multilateral instrument dealing with the issue of missiles. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions, three Panels of Government Experts devoted to the issue of missiles have been established within the United Nations. Presently, several other multilateral regimes exist which seek to prevent the proliferation of missiles and related technology.

These include, notably, the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

Biological Weapons The international taboo against biological weapons grew out of the horrors of the First World War. Their use has long been established as contrary to the laws of humanity and the dictates of public conscience.

Biological weapons disseminate disease-causing organisms or toxins to harm or kill humans, animals, or plants. They can be deadly and highly contagious. Diseases caused by such weapons would not confine themselves to national borders and could spread rapidly around the world. The consequences of the deliberate release of biological agents or toxins by state or non-state actors could be dramatic. In addition to the tragic loss of lives, such events could cause food shortages, environmental catastrophes, devastating economic loss, and widespread illness, fear, and mistrust among the public.

Long-sought efforts to globally eliminate these weapons of mass destruction finally came to fruition with the conclusion in 1972 of the Biological Weapons Convention. The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) effectively prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons. It was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Chemical Weapons

The modern use of chemical weapons began with World War I, when both sides to the conflict used poisonous gas to inflict agonizing suffering and to cause significant battlefield casualties. Such weapons basically consisted of well-known commercial chemicals put into standard munitions such as grenades and artillery shells. Chlorine, phosgene (a choking agent) and mustard gas were among the chemicals used. The results were indiscriminate and often devastating.

Nearly 100,000 deaths resulted. Since World War I, chemical weapons have caused more than one million casualties globally. Long-sought efforts to globally eliminate these weapons of mass destruction finally came to fruition with the conclusion in 1993 of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Convention aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons; to prevent their re-emergence; to ensure the elimination of existing stocks of such weapons; and, in so doing, to make the world safe from the threat of chemical warfare.

Conventional Weapons are weapons other than weapons of mass destruction. They are the most commonly known and widely used armaments in conflict and crime settings and encompass a wide range of equipment, including battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, large-caliber artillery systems, combat aircraft and uncrewed combat aerial vehicles (UCAV), attack helicopters, warships, missile and missile launchers, landmines, cluster munitions, small arms, and lights weapons and ammunition.

The UN Charter does not forbid its Member States to own and use conventional arms when this is done in conformity with international law. This is the reason why the terms “arms control” and “arms limitations” are more often used than “disarmament” when referring to conventional arms.

Some conventional weapons, however, may cause humanitarian concern either because of the way they are used or may be used, or because of their design which makes them incompatible with international humanitarian law.

Early efforts to address such concerns were made already in the 19th century. A more recent example of legally binding regulations and limitations in the use of conventional weapons is the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is a key instrument of international humanitarian law and, with its five Protocols, seeks to ban or restrict the use of specific types of weapons (non-detectable fragments; mines, booby-traps and other devices; incendiary weapons; blinding laser weapons and explosive remnants of war) that have indiscriminate effects on civilians or cause unnecessary suffering for combatants.

(A peacekeeper of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) takes stock of weapons and ammunition collected during the demobilization

process in Matembo, North Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UN Photo/Martine Perret)

Landmines Every day, people die or lose limbs from stepping on a landmine (anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines). Mostly in countries at peace – and the majority of victims are civilians. The Anti-personnel Landmine Convention, adopted in 1997, addresses this scourge.

It bans the stockpiling, transfer and use of anti-personnel landmines, requires countries to clear them on their territory, while prescribing States in a position to do so to assist affected countries. More than 164 countries have joined this treaty. Its positive impact includes a marked reduction of casualties, an increased number of mine-free States, destroyed stockpiles and improved assistance to victims.

(A member of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) clears the UN base in the Jebel area of Juba of unexploded ordnance (UXO's) in the aftermath of days of heavy clashes between the two South Sudanese government forces.)

Demining In 2022, mines, explosive remnants of conflict, and victim-operated improvised explosive devices caused over 4,710 casualties. 60 countries and territories, remain contaminated by antipersonnel mines. The UN aims for a world free of landmines and explosive remnants of war, where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development and where the needs of victims are met.

Twelve UN Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes play a role in mine-action programs in 30 countries and three territories. Mine action involves more than just removing landmines from the ground. It enables peacekeepers to patrol safely, humanitarian

agencies to provide assistance, and citizens to live without fear. It also includes efforts to protect people from danger and help victims reintegrate into their communities.

A jointly developed policy is Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the United Nations Inter-Agency Policy. It guides the division of labour within the United Nations. Much of the actual work, such as demining and mine risk education, is carried out by nongovernmental organizations.

Commercial contractors and, in some situations, militaries, add humanitarian mine-action services to this. Furthermore, a variety of intergovernmental, international and regional organizations, as well as international financial institutions, fund operations and provide services to individuals and communities affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war.

The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) coordinates the UN's mine-related activities. UNMAS ensures an effective, proactive and coordinated response to the problems of landmines and explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions. It assesses and monitors the threat posed by mines and unexploded ordnance on an ongoing basis and develops policies and standards.

The Service mobilizes resources, and advocates in support of the global ban on anti-personnel landmines. In 2022, UNMAS achieved significant successes, including the destruction of 109,976 explosive remnants of war, 397 improvised explosive devices, and 5,970 landmines. In addition, 159 square kilometers of land were confirmed safe, while 8,468 kilometers of roads were surveyed, cleared and confirmed safe.

It also provided face-to-face explosive ordnance risk education to more than 2.6 million people and assisted more than 742 victims of explosive ordnance The UN has addressed the problems posed by landmines since the 1980s.

It acted decisively to address the use of weapons having indiscriminate effects when it sponsored the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. In 1996, that Convention was strengthened to include the use of landmines in internal conflicts and to require that all mines be detectable.

Eventually, a growing public outcry, combined with the committed action of non-governmental organizations involved in the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines (ICBL), led to the adoption of a comprehensive global agreement. The landmark 1997 UN Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine-Ban Convention) bans the production, use and export of these weapons and has nearly universal support.

As of February 2024, it has 164 States parties. A UN International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed every year on 4 April. In 2015, the UN Secretary-General designated the renowned actor Daniel Craig as the first UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards.

The famous English movie star concluded his tenure on 4 April 2023. “I urge you, compel you, to continue acknowledging and supporting the essential work that the United Nations is doing. From clearing ground so children can play and walk to school without fear, to patrolling roads for peacekeeping, training local people in the skills they need to keep themselves safe, and rebuilding communities after the devastating results of war and conflict.

UNMAS has a fundamental part to play in an ever-changing dangerous world. So, please do keep their essential work in the forefront of your minds”, said Craig in his final message as UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards.

Cluster Munitions consists of a hollow shell that is dropped from the air or fired from the ground. It breaks open in mid-air and releases smaller bombs, or submunitions, that can number in the hundreds and saturate areas as wide as several football fields.

This means that everyone in those areas, including civilians, run the risk of being harmed or even killed. The smaller explosive submunitions also sometimes fail to detonate immediately, leaving them capable of killing or maiming at random even long after a conflict has ended.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibits under any circumstances the use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions, as well as the assistance or encouragement of anyone to engage in prohibited activities.

The Convention provides a comprehensive international response to the suffering caused by the use of cluster munitions and their remnants, to prevent the proliferation and future use of these weapons. According to the UN-partnered Cluster Munition Monitor (CMC) there was a dramatic increase in the number of civilians killed by cluster munitions during 2022. The late report issued by the civil society group indicates that 1,172 people were killed or injured in 2022, which is the highest number since regular reporting started in 2010.

Ammunition Stockpiled ammunition can become unsafe if not properly stored. Unintended explosions of ammunition depots have affected over 100 countries worldwide, leading to thousands of casualties over the past 15 years.

Moreover, when depots are not well managed, they form an unremitting source for diversion of ammunition to armed groups and criminals, thus sustaining conflict and armed criminal activity. Through the UN Safeguard Programme, the UN works on improving whole-life management of ammunition, thus providing people more safety and more security.

(A United Nations peacekeeper from the Indian battalion of MONUC examines AK-47 magazines stored in a warehouse after they have been collected in the demobilization process in Matembo, North Kivu, in the DRC)

Arms Trade The ready availability of weapons and ammunition leads to human suffering, political repression, crime, and terror among civilian populations. Illicit arms transfers can destabilize an entire region, enable violations of arms embargoes, and contribute to human rights abuses in countries experiencing conflict and high levels of violence.

States affected by conflict or pervasive crime have the most difficulty attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in April 2013 by the General Assembly of the United Nations marked a turning point in the international community's efforts to regulate the global trade in conventional arms and promote peace and security.

Before the adoption of the ATT, there was no global set of legal rules governing the trade in conventional weapons. The Treaty sets robust international standards to help guide governments in deciding whether or not to authorize arms transfers. It provides for cooperation and assistance to help countries develop adequate regulatory systems and safe weapons stockpiles.

Gender and disarmament People are differently involved in and impacted by weapons, armed conflict and issues related to weapons and security based on their gender and other factors. Disarmament and arms control processes and policies are more effective when the realities faced by women, men, girls and boys are taken into consideration Multiple international frameworks and UN resolutions recognize the gender dimensions of disarmament and arms control. For example, according to the Arms Trade Treaty, States Parties are legally required to assess how export of conventional weapons and ammunition can be used to commit gender-based violence, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons acknowledges the disproportionate impact of nuclear radiation on women and girls. In 2000, the Security Council adopted the first of ten resolutions on women, peace and security (WPS) acknowledging the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls and calling for women's full involvement in all peace and security efforts.

The General Assembly in its resolution 65/69 (2010) and eight subsequent resolutions on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control also encourages better understanding of the gendered impact of armed conflict and recognizes the need to facilitate equal opportunities and increase the participation of women in disarmament decision-making Nevertheless, women remain underrepresented and make up only approximately one third of participants in multilateral disarmament meetings and even fewer are heads of delegations.

(Water is distributed in El Srief (North Darfur) where the nearest water point is 15 kilometres away. The activity fosters Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR))

Disarmament and Youth United Nations Secretary-General Guterres articulates in his Agenda for Disarmament, Securing Our Common Future, how young people have been a tremendous force for change in the world.

The important and positive contribution that young people can make in sustaining peace and security was reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly through its unanimous support for a resolution entitled, Youth, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, adopted on 4 December 2023. Recognizing the importance of young people to bring about change, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) launched its youth outreach initiative, "#Youth4Disarmament" in 2019 to engage, educate and empower young people with the aim of facilitating their meaningful and inclusive participation in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The initiative invites youth of all backgrounds, interests and expertise to meaningfully participate in Securing our Common Future - one safer, more sustainable and peaceful for all and future generations.

4.1 Disarmament Bodies and Institutions

- United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
- Disarmament in the General Assembly
- Disarmament in the Security Council
- Conference on Disarmament
- United Nations Disarmament Commission
- Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)
- Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

4.2 Related Observances

- Disarmament Week
- International Day against Nuclear Tests
- International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- International Day of Peace
- International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
- Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

4.3 Resources

- Disarmament Treaties Database
- Research Guide on Disarmament
- Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament
- Disarmament: A Basic Guide (4th edition, 2017)
- UN Disarmament Yearbook

5. International Efforts to Eliminate Chemical Weapons

The Issue: Chemical weapons are back. Today, old actors are employing new forms of chemical weapons, and new chemical weapons (CW) states are employing them in new ways. Meanwhile crude forms of chemical weapons have fallen within the reach of non-state actors.

The willingness of some state and non-state actors to use or acquire chemical weapons appears to have increased, and the potential for state or non-state actors to field CW capabilities is growing rapidly.

Unless the international nonproliferation regime can adapt to address the threat of chemical weapons, these concerning trends will almost certainly intensify in the foreseeable future as proliferation networks and emerging technologies with CW implications mature.

This study examines the evolving and changing nature of chemical weapons and how the system of restraint—comprised of norms, taboos, deterrence, and denial of benefit—must adapt to ensure that

the proliferation and use of chemical weapons do not reemerge as endemic features of the global security landscape.

The study provides a framework for structuring the problem, identifies gaps and challenges, and puts forward options for improving the global effort to prevent the proliferation and use of these weapons. The Evolving CW Landscape By 2010, the establishment and entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the declaration and elimination of most known CW programs, and a sustained period of non-use of chemical weapons had driven concern about chemical weapons to a few esoteric corners.

As the number of states possessing chemical weapons steadily declined, the CWC appeared to be in the final technical stage of implementation, and some countries began questioning the sustainability of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the implementing body of the treaty.

It seemed that chemical weapons had been successfully managed and controlled through a robust international system of treaties, laws, and cooperative arrangements that led to a near universal CW disarmament.

For many it was time to "declare victory" on chemical weapons and focus on other more pressing threats—nuclear, biological, and even cyber. Unfortunately, this optimistic view has proven unwarranted. Syrian use of chemical weapons persisted even as the Assad regime joined the CWC and the international community embarked on a large-scale effort to remove and destroy the country's declared CW stockpiles and facilities.

Since 2015, the numbers and types of CW attacks have increased, with at least 336 documented cases in Syria alone.2 While the overwhelming preponderance of uses have occurred throughout the Syrian conflict, CW attacks have occurred in three other countries—Iraq, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom—for a variety of purposes and involving a variety of agents.

The prospect of large-scale, state-on-state chemical warfare has continued to fade, but states have pursued and employed chemical weapons for a variety of tactics and strategies that include counterinsurgency, assassination, coercion, terror, collective punishment, and signaling.

Even more alarming, such use has not been confined to states operating outside of the CWC. Rather, states parties to the CWC, specifically Syria and Russia, have used and enabled use of chemical weapons despite their status as treaty adherents. Small-scale, high-impact use of chemical weapons has been used to suppress internal conflicts, intimidate or eliminate political adversaries, and engage in grey zone conflict in ways that challenge the ability of countries to respond effectively.

Additionally, non-state actors have developed and used "military agents" (specifically sulfur mustard, though it is unlikely as pure as traditional military-grade sulfur mustard agent) and chlorine with a range of improvised delivery systems. ISIL demonstrated that access to territorial safe havens, facilities, and personnel could be leveraged into more advanced chemical agent and delivery capabilities, which the group used in targeted regional military or insurgent operations rather than in classic terrorist attacks.

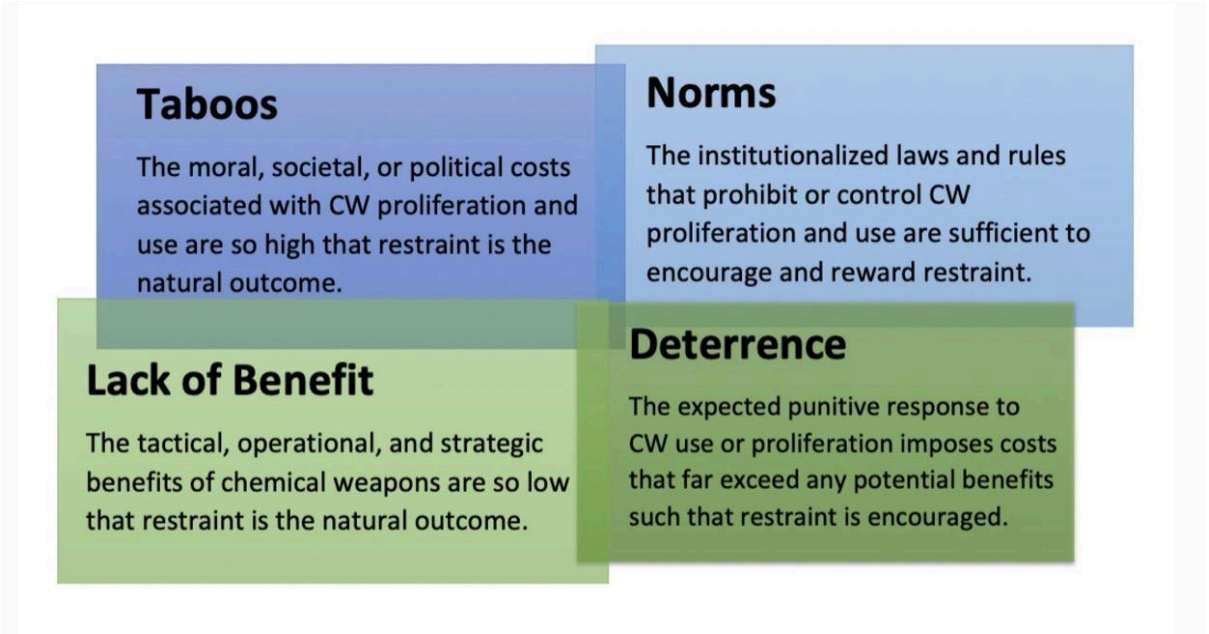
CW users have also employed significant improvisation—agents, munitions, delivery systems, and concept of operations—even when more traditional options are available. Such improvisation—from chlorine barrel bombs to perfume bottles filled with thousands of lethal doses of advanced military nerve agent—is a hallmark of the evolving utility and application of chemical weapons to

contemporary conflicts. Meanwhile, international organizations such as the United Nations and the OPCW have shown little ability to enforce obligations or hold perpetrators accountable.

Moreover, the little progress made has required a shift to more contentious forms of diplomacy and resulted in the collapse of consensus within the OPCW Executive Council. Finally, chemical agents that fall outside of the traditional schedule of military agents—such as chlorine and other TICs, fentanyls and other incapacitants and opioids, and Novichoks—are demonstrating growing potential for use.

Meanwhile, advances in chemical engineering and rapidly expanding global supply networks are making weaponized chemicals increasingly accessible.

All of these trends suggest that chemical weapons remain a persistent and evolving challenge to the global nonproliferation system, with implications and lessons that stretch far beyond the relatively obscure niche these weapons generally occupy.



The CW System of Restraint

This evolving landscape suggests the traditional concepts, tools, and institutions that comprise the anti-CW regime must evolve and adapt as well to prevent the proliferation and use of these weapons. A 2018 CSIS report, Restoring Restraint: Enforcing Accountability for Users of Chemical Weapons, describes how the global system "shapes nations" behavior and encourages restraint through several different, often mutually reinforcing mechanisms: taboos, lack of benefit, norms, and deterrence.[3] Each of these mechanisms simultaneously plays a role in decisionmaking and helps inform how the international community must work to prevent the proliferation and use of chemical weapons.
This evolving landscape suggests the traditional concepts, tools, and institutions that comprise the anti-CW regime must evolve and adapt as well to prevent the proliferation and use of these weapons.
The system of restraint provides a framework for structuring the problem, identifying gaps and challenges, and hopefully developing options to improve our ability to prevent the proliferation and use of chemical weapons. It also seeks to enhance accountability and enforcement when prevention fails by better understanding how and where to apply tools of enforcement and compliance.

Norms

Norms emanate from a system of recognized and institutionalized laws and rules designed to shape behavior and encourage restraint through a mix of legal, political, and sometimes military carrots and sticks.[4] Most actors or states conform to these rules or laws because they value credibility or legitimacy in the system, value the restraining effects of these rules on the behavior of others, or fear the costs of their enforcement.

Chemical weapons face one of the most robust normative structures in the international system: a web of national and international laws and regimes that spans more than 100 years and includes a comprehensive ban in a nearly-universal treaty. Additionally, the norms against CW use are woven extensively throughout international humanitarian and war crimes law.

Though Syria and Russia's continued violation of the treaty from within the institution has not met significant consequence, it is highly corrosive of these norms and their restraining value. In addition, actors that operate outside of the treaty, both state and non-state, such as North Korea and ISIL, face little normative restraint. Moreover, while the treaty's central prohibitions on the possession and use of chemical weapons encompasses any chemical agent used as a deadly weapon, the growing number of chemical agents and precursors that lie outside of the existing control and verification schedules (e.g., chlorine, novachuks, and PBAs) further complicates the effectiveness of the system. Finally, repeated small-scale use of chemical weapons effectively raises costs for responders and lowers costs for users, further degrading the normative structure over time.

Lack of Benefit

Potential users and proliferators of chemical weapons can also be restrained through a perception that these actions fundamentally lack benefit or utility in terms of meeting desired objectives. If an actor fundamentally believes chemical weapons have no utility or functionality, then the motivation for their use is low, and restraint is a natural outcome. Furthermore, enhanced CW defenses or protection offer additional ways of reinforcing perceived lack of benefit, leading to what some call deterrence by denial.

However, it is impossible to deny the benefits of CW use if their utility to the adversary is fundamentally misunderstood. Projected bias and unchallenged assumptions about the utility of chemical weapons have led to a serious underestimation of their utility for counterinsurgency, special operations, intimidation, coercive grey zone or hybrid tactics, and large-scale civilian terror operations. This faulty analysis has been fostered by a tendency to evaluate the efficacy of chemical use solely in terms of direct lethality or tactical impact rather than as a psychological weapon of terror or intimidation. Additionally, in the case of Syria, the role chemical weapons play in combined chemical and conventional military operations has been underappreciated. Discounting the "logic" of CW use based on misperceptions of benefit to the user can also aid proponents of false flag conspiracy theories and other disinformation tactics.

Deterrence

Deterrence encourages restraint when an actor can convince an adversary that punitive response to an action, in this case the use or proliferation of chemical weapons, will produce costs that exceed any benefits the actor might hope to gain.

Effective deterrence relies on the existence of a mutually understood, credible threat. In many cases, enforcing deterrence involves the imposition of punishment by force, but it can also be punishment through economic, political, or other means. Above all, attribution is critical to deterrence: a threat cannot be enforced if the perpetrator cannot be identified.

Historically, deterrence has not been a strong feature in the CW system of restraint. In the case of Syria, the threats that existed, such as the now infamous Obama red line, lacked appreciation of the utility of the weapons and credibility with the user. Subsequent instances of cost imposition (air strikes) failed to impose costs in excess of benefit and were applied selectively and inconsistently, without clear understanding of thresholds.

The Syria case exposes another serious challenge we face in deterring CW use: limited or small-scale use. In these scenarios, benefit accumulates over time with each successive CW use. Even when a particular use event has triggered a punitive response, this response is shaped entirely by the "last" use rather than the accumulated benefit of all prior instances of use. Our traditional deterrence toolkit assumes an adversary behaves like a mass murderer—dramatic, visible, and attributable.

Yet CW use seems to be following a different playbook: a serial killer approach, which uses selective, targeted use to achieve its coercive or punitive goals. Small- scale or limited use also complicates the attribution process by making it more difficult to investigate and assess.

Finally, deterrence is even more problematic when applied to the proliferation of chemical weapons. Among other problems, verifying and attributing such transfers is extremely difficult and may not rise to a level of consequence required for a credible deterrence threat. Along these lines, no such threats have been issued to North Korea with respect to its assistance to the Syrian CW program. When it comes to proliferation prevention, thresholds may be too difficult to define, and perpetrators may be too difficult to identify for punitive deterrence to be credible.

Taboos

Taboos exist when an action is perceived to carry such high moral, societal, or political cost that self-restraint is the natural outcome.
Taboos tend to build over time as leaders internalize the potential risks.

Taboos are most effective when perceptions are more universally held and globally understood. In addition, taboos naturally become fragile when violations do not result in the anticipated costs and the user's legitimacy with essential stakeholders does not suffer.

In general, taboos have had limited restraining value in terms of CW use, and where they have existed, they have been temporary and regional in effect. Some believe the physical and psychological damage inflicted by weaponized chemicals during World War I built a sense of taboo around these weapons in Europe, but such a taboo clearly did not extend to the extensive use of gas chambers throughout the Holocaust or the repeated use of chemical weapons in the Middle East in the late-1980s and in recent years.

In part, the CW taboo is undermined by many actors, both state and non-state, that lack understanding or have bad information on CW use, their effects, and the impacts on the system or that see such threats as unimportant. Further, the growing impunity surrounding chemical weapons—the ability to

use them without severe internal or external penalty—is fostered by the lack of political, moral, or societal costs associated with their use.

Emerging Challenges to the CW System of Restraint

Today's shifting security environment has revealed emerging challenges to and increased pressure points on the ways in which norms, taboos, denial of benefit, and deterrence might restrain future CW proliferation and use.

Small-Scale and Limited Use

Traditionally, the presence of costly, industrial-scale military CW programs—such as those possessed by the United States and Russia prior to joining the CWC and used extensively by Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War and against the Kurds of Iraq—animated the international system and drove international efforts to ban and eliminate these weapons. Today, with the glaring exception of North Korea, industrial-scale, battlefield- oriented CW programs have largely vanished and with them much of the prospect of large-scale, state-on-state chemical warfare. Unfortunately, CW use is making a comeback, albeit generally in small-scale and limited-use scenarios, including assassinations, special operations, and insurgency/ counterinsurgency. Such scenarios greatly complicate the system of restraint by challenging legal verification approaches given the small quantities needed; complicating deterrence with low use thresholds; increasing the perception of benefit or utility of such weapons to users; and eroding societal or moral costs associated with these weapons.

Unfortunately, CW use is making a comeback, albeit generally in small-scale and limited-use scenarios, including assassinations, special operations, and insurgency/counterinsurgency.

Evolving CW Acquisition Pathways

The majority of modern state and non-state CW programs do not require the production-scale facilities or large bulk quantities of agents or precursors of the past. Research and development-level (R&D) infrastructure that can be hidden in dual-use facilities and combined with on-demand surge capacity to make small-scale CW capabilities sufficient for almost all scenarios. In addition, advances in R&D and production techniques enhance speed, precision, and ease of concealment. Advances in chemical science and engineering are also rapidly expanding relevant chemicals and compounds outside of the CW control regime. Over 100 million new chemical substances have been created since the establishment of the CWC Schedules of Chemicals, growing by about 15,000 substances per day.

Under the CWC, precursor trade is monitored and controlled, but 3 of top 10 chemical-producing countries in the world—Russia, China, and Brazil—are outside of the control regime.

Furthermore, back-integration—the process of synthesizing precursor chemicals from simpler, unregulated, or domestically available chemicals—has become easier to accomplish. Finally, diffuse procurement networks facilitate the ability to identify and deceive suppliers, especially with the growth of e-commerce options.

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New and Emerging Agents

In addition to new technology, there are new and emerging agents, as well as old agents being used in new ways. Many such chemical agents—chlorine and other TICs, fentanyls and other deadly pharmaceutically-base agents (PBAs), and Novichoks—are not fully included on the CWC schedules and can be transferred and used in ways that challenge or elude traditional verification and controls. For example, chlorine is too ubiquitous to control, and a significant number of actual and potential CW agents, like fentanyls, lie outside of the CWC schedules. Following the Skripal attack, some Novichoks formulations were added to Schedule 1, but it is not clear if and how precursors to these agents can be regulated.

In addition, PBAs, such as fentanyls, are a growing concern because they are easily produced, acquired, and weaponized and can be highly lethal. Fentanyl is 50 times more potent than heroin and, in drug-trafficking operations, is frequently mixed with heroin and cocaine or made into counterfeit pills.

Fentanyl seizures have made headlines in recent years, with millions of lethal doses being confiscated in single drug busts. In August 2019, a three-state drug bust seized 30 kilograms of fentanyl—enough to kill roughly 14 million people.

Disinformation

Today, international efforts to prevent CW proliferation and use take place in an information warzone. The growing accessibility, maturation, and diffusion of online platforms and digital tools have democratized information but also contributed to easy manipulation and misuse, undermining credible and authoritative sources of information.

While the CW system of restraint benefits greatly from a robust verification system, such verification-based arms control generally requires an ability to establish agreed facts and trust authoritative sources of information, including sensitive national information often from intelligence sources. Verification without an ability to validate and trust factual information is virtually impossible.

Today, international efforts to prevent CW proliferation and use take place in an information warzone. Syria, Russia, and state and non-state supporters have been particularly successful in their systematic attack of authoritative information and institutions. The attacks are meant to: deny the occurrence of events or actions perpetrated; misidentify the victims and targets; discredit or falsify the motives and identities of witnesses and responders; and elevate “authority figures,” who seek to promulgate counter-narratives through disinformation. While awareness of the disinformation challenge is growing, there is little consensus on the best ways to counter it; detailed, tit-for-tat responses often simply give more ammunition, while infrequent responses leave a vacuum to be filled.

Open-Source Investigation and Verification

Open-source intelligence (OSINT) analysts working independently or within NGOs, international governmental organizations, or other entities are rapidly expanding and increasingly sophisticated. OSINT analysts use techniques that were previously confined to intelligence or law enforcement communities working within classified information networks. OSINT products have substantially increased response time, public awareness, transparency, and accountability. However, with this rapid growth, efforts to protect and validate sources of analysis have struggled to keep up.

The arms control arena has reaped many benefits of OSINT analysis in monitoring and verification

procedures, as the OPCW, IAEA, national governments, NGOs, and private citizens have increasingly benefitted from this independent, publicly available information over the last two decades. Credible analysis outside of national governmental controls can provide greater access, transparency, and independence, especially in terms of matters of compliance. However, this environment also enables the production and spread of counter-truth phenomena—sometimes called alternative facts—as hostile actors may seek to manipulate and attack the data, tools, and techniques used by OSINT analysts in hopes of degrading the reliability of OSINT work or manipulating outcomes.

Enforcement and Accountability
Without an ability to hold violators accountable, neither threats nor rules can sustain a dissuasive power. National authorities and law enforcement provide vital accountability mechanisms, but recent investigations and prosecutions have shown mixed results. In Japan, Aum Shinrikyo members responsible for a CW terrorist attack in 1995 were ultimately convicted and given the death penalty, but the decades-long process reduced deterrent value. In Malaysia, the most significant perpetrators of the assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's half-brother, Kim Jong-nam, with VX nerve agent evaded capture. The two captured perpetrators avoided prosecution or received a token sentence, a strong indication of political and diplomatic interference. In the United Kingdom, exceptional police work and emergency response minimized injury and led to rapid attribution and identification of perpetrators in the Novichok nerve agent Skripal attacks, but arrests and prosecution seem unlikely after perpetrators fled the country and their identities were revealed.

5.1 Recommendations

Adapting the CQ Regime to New Realities
Enhance and amend the regime to address small-scale, limited quantity/limited use, newer, and improvised agents. The treaty's verification system must be adapted to account for new realities and include new additions to the schedules. Adding some Novichok agents to Schedule 1 chemicals (the most dangerous and highly controlled chemicals) was a positive first step, but more additions will probably be needed. A step-by-step process to weigh the costs and benefits of these is essential.

Reframe the mission of the CWC. The mission of the CWC should address how to manage chemical threats to security instead of focusing exclusively on preventing the reemergence of chemical weapons.

Improve and support OPCW laboratories to improve technical capabilities and resources for diagnostic purposes. It is essential to raise standards and capabilities of OPCW-designated laboratories in terms of the chain of custody, investigatory standards, and new techniques and procedures, as well as improved security and protection against cyberattacks, tampering, and disinformation. This will require sustained investment by states parties and a commitment to complete the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology as scheduled.

Reform the Australia Group (AG) to cover additional agents and reduced-quantity challenges for existing agents. The AG includes a more select group of participants, which may facilitate the usefulness of the forum but also means the dominant suppliers exist outside of the group. The AG must expand its efforts to not only consider approaches to more dual-use agents but also support innovations that might provide greater accountability for rapidly expanding online suppliers that operate in or through their countries.

Consider establishing an Additional Protocol to the CWC. The CWC lacks meaningful "carrots" for many states to engage in higher levels of transparency, control, and compliance since there are few benefits in terms of safely and securely accessing the peaceful uses of chemical science, technology, and commerce. An Additional Protocol could seek improved control and verification of the newer agents, improvised agents, and smaller quantities which fall outside of current declaration and verification requirements. States that commit to higher standards could in turn receive greater safe and secure access to commercial opportunities afforded by chemical science and technology. Through such a protocol, participating states could agree to additional, voluntary challenge inspections and other measures while also gaining more favorable access to technical assistance, preferential commerce, and information sharing.

Improving Accountability and Enforcement

Look beyond traditional arms control to build the legal basis for accountability for CW use. It is essential that arms control and humanitarian/war crimes communities work collaboratively to maximize national and international prosecutorial pathways.

Build and support national capacities for enforcing CW norms. National authorities will always be the accountability pathway of first resort. It is vital to make better use of national tools and authorities, especially in coordination and collaboration with law enforcement entities across governments. This must include efforts to raise national technical and forensic capacities for diagnostics and chain of custody. Targeted capacity-building efforts through the Global Partnership, European Union, and U.S.-based cooperative threat reduction programs could pay big dividends.

Protect access and security of evidence repositories, including reports, forensic evidence (including samples), and witness and victim testimonials. These repositories will be attacked and sabotaged, but there will also be efforts to limit the availability of legitimate legal proceedings outside of the UN Security Council. Be mindful of the unintended consequences of burying evidence.

Leverage open-source analysis when feasible and accurate. Open-source analysis and evidence repositories will play an increasingly vital role in accountability. Work remains to better understand and support the relationship between these efforts and national law enforcement so that open- source disclosures and public confirmations of individual perpetrators do not impede effective arrest and prosecution. Furthermore, in order to leverage civilian capabilities, there must be guidelines and best practices developed for open- source verification. Open-source analysis is absolutely legitimate for legal enquiry and in many cases may be admissible as evidence, so finding ways to support and strengthen rather than censor the information is essential.

Adaptong Deterrence Approaches

Identify tailored deterrence measures that can be applied proportionately and repeatedly. The United States, along with its partners and allies, must develop a menu of possible punitive, pre-coordinated responses, such as detailed sanctions or penalties. If done ahead, tailored responses to specific behaviors can be developed to shape future behaviors rather than to simply be punitive.

Coordinate national responses and synchronize actions. These actions should complement and support or enhance international institutional responses using various forms of accountability, including legal, sanctions/economic, political, and military actions.

Investigate and expose every credible case. Selectively engaging with cases encourages risk-taking

by users; certainty is more dissuasive than severity in most cases. Consequences in all cases are important, but not all consequences must be military in nature. The United Kingdom's tailored nonresponse to the Novichok attack suggests nonmilitary tailored deterrence has a role to play.

Reducing Benefit and Utility to Users

Improve civilian, military, and international capacity and cooperation by working collaboratively across the military and civilian sectors. New agents—Novichoks and fentanyls especially—will force the international community to up its game in terms of detecting, protecting, analyzing, diagnosing, treating, and attributing CW threats. This requires collaboration between local law enforcement and first responders with international partners to improve detection, protection, and treatment in the event of an attack.

Enhance capacities for response and attribution across the alliance, in partner countries, and in international institutions. Domestic responders, especially those in countries that may not have highly advanced or sophisticated chemical defense expertise, must be better equipped to safely recognize and treat these types of chemical agents. Some of these capabilities are far too expensive for smaller countries, but on-demand diagnostics, technical cooperation agreements, and surge capacities can improve preparedness and response.

Build and enhance capabilities to investigate and attribute CW events. Enhance national and international technical and operational investigative and response capacities. Novichoks are more demanding from a technical perspective, so it is essential to have adequate defense and response capabilities. The United Kingdom's ability to quickly identify the agents, treat the victims, and persuasively develop conclusions about the attribution of the attack proved highly effective and may have a dissuasive impact on future Novichok use since it is not clear that the agents can be used in a nonattributable fashion. That said, few countries have the technical capacity to detect and respond to these threats in a similar fashion.

Ensure that domestic responders can be better equipped to safely recognize and treat these types of chemical agents. This is especially important for those in countries that may not have highly advanced or sophisticated chemical defense expertise. The Skripal attack and Kim Jong-nam's assassination demonstrate that even when these weapons are used for targeted violence, they can have much broader impacts for responders, medical providers, law enforcement, and others. But the Aum Shinryko attack showed similar things many years earlier. We should not have to keep relearning lessons on the importance of domestic response and domestic law enforcement. Moreover, all these cases—Malaysia, Skripal, Aum Shinryko, and even Amerithrax (the anthrax attack in United States)—demonstrate that the economic and societal costs can far exceed the impact in terms of fatalities. Responses need to create perceptions that benefits will be denied, not enhanced.

Preparing For Arms Control in an Era of Great Competition

Contest in the face of noncompliance. CW use is a manifestation of hybrid warfare, and while it is important to find areas for cooperation among states, contesting in the face of noncompliance is essential. Contestation in these arenas is simply part of the broader competitive environment. Using the rules and procedures in the CWC to press compliance reinforces norm resilience and reduces the risk of conflict or crisis at higher levels of escalation.

Do not value the institutions (or treaties) beyond their purpose. Threats by Russia and others to walk away from the CWC in response to growing compliance concerns has some country's

questioning whether reducing conflict in the Executive Council and prioritizing consensus is necessary to preserve the treaty. Such approaches risk reducing the treaty to a "paper tiger" while doing little to eliminate discord and tensions overall. The CWC offers the benefits of multilateralism: all stakeholders have a role and a vote. As a result, countries like Russia and the United States pay much higher costs for walking away, which means losing the ability to shape outcomes from within. This only works, however, if countries understand the stakes and exercise their rights through the treaty's procedures and mechanisms.

Preparing and Contesting the Information Battleground

Engage a sustained, multilateral counter-disinformation campaign. Call out disinformation where it is observed and counter it with facts to support the rules-based order by repeatedly issuing consistent, verifiable information. Do not wait to react. Anticipate attacks and develop responses to disinformation challenges that are aggressive, collective, asymmetric, and rapid and that can be readily deployed when needed.

Fill the research and analysis gap. Rigorous, data-driven research and analysis is desperately needed to detect and recognize disinformation, understand why its effective, and appreciate how it can best be stopped and countered. Case studies to capture insights and lessons-learned studies are also needed. In the wake of the Skripal poisoning and subsequent Russian disinformation campaign, the United Kingdom's Foreign & Commonwealth Office put out videos that attempted to explain and counter the false narratives. These efforts are a start, but far more data and analysis are needed. Disinformation will be a persistent feature of multilateral diplomacy and arms control for the foreseeable future. It is time to take it much more seriously.

Focus on noncompliance in messaging. There is quite a bit of disagreement on appropriate strategies, but the focus must be kept on noncompliance. Detailed responses sometimes give adversaries more to pick apart, but not responding enough leaves a vacuum that is filled by other narratives. Techniques of repeatedly issuing consistent information seem useful.

Preparing for CW Contingencies

Plan and prepare for the North Korean CW challenge. The technical, operational, legal, and political hurdles associated with the North Korean CW program require dedicated planning and preparation. In conflict, North Korea could determine that chemical weapons are more usable than its nuclear weapons and consider their employment early to weaken resolve in South Korea.

Engage critical partners and allies on the DPRK CW problem and planning for chemical disarmament. A North Korean decision to abandon its chemical weapons is not impossible, either as part of a comprehensive denuclearization agreement or perhaps independent of one. Regardless, such an effort would be technically complex, dangerous, and expensive. It is essential to anticipate these scenarios, identify critical capability gaps, build partnerships, and address challenges in advance to be able to respond to future crises or opportunities involving these weapons.

Broadening and Engaging the International Community

Provide greater education opportunities and training within and outside of The Hague. This includes offering opportunities in national capitals, security discussions, partnerships, and alliances (e.g., NATO) and through consortium outreach to address a fundamental lack of knowledge and expertise across many countries.

Awaken the "quiet middle." There is a huge number of nonvoting and abstaining countries in the OPCW that should be tapped into by improving their understanding of the stakes of CW procurement and use and providing more education and awareness on the facts to move states off the sidelines. It is vital to raise states' comfort levels with contested outcomes by reiterating that in the face of evolving yet persistent CW threats, using the tools of the treaty in support of compliance is a sign of resilience, not failure.

Protect and defend the anti-CW norms and the institutions that support them. Every alliance member bears a responsibility to stand up for the legitimacy, objectivity, and credibility of the anti-CW regime, including the OPCW. Attribution and the pursuit of compliance are central to the treaty's viability over time—arms control appeasement will ultimately fail.

5.2 EU STRATEGY AGAINST PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

1. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery such as ballistic missiles are a growing threat to international peace and security. While the international treaty regimes and export controls arrangements have slowed the spread of WMD and delivery systems, a number of states have sought or are seeking to develop such weapons. The risk that terrorists will acquire chemical, biological, radiological or fissile materials and their means of delivery adds a new critical dimension to this threat.

2. As the European Security Strategy makes clear, the European Union cannot ignore these dangers. WMD and missile proliferation puts at risk the security of our states, our peoples and our interests around the world. Meeting this challenge must be a central element in the EU's external action. The EU must act with resolve, using all instruments and policies at its disposal. Our objective is to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern worldwide.
3. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control can make an essential contribution in the global fight against terrorism by reducing the risk of non state actors gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, radioactive materials, and means of delivery. We recall in this context the Council conclusions of 10 December 2001 on implications of the terrorist threat on the non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control policy of the

4. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are a growing threat. Proliferation is driven by a small number of countries and non-state actors, but presents a real threat through the spread of technologies and information and because proliferating countries may help one another.
These developments take place outside the current control regime.

5. Increasingly widespread proliferation of weapons of mass destruction increases the risk of their use by States (as shown by the Iran/Iraq conflict) and of their acquisition by terrorist groups who could conduct actions aimed at causing large-scale death and destruction.

6. Nuclear weapons proliferation: the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must be preserved in its integrity. It has helped to slow and in some cases reverse the spread of military nuclear capability, but it has not been able to prevent it completely. The possession of nuclear

weapons by States outside the NPT and non-compliance with the Treaty's provisions by states party to the Treaty, risk undermining non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

7. Chemical Weapons Proliferation: A particular difficulty with verification and export control regimes is that the materials, equipment, and know-how are dual use. One way of assessing the level of risk is to see whether there is indigenous ability to produce chemical warfare (CW) agent precursors and to weaponise chemical warfare agents. In addition, several countries still possess large chemical weapons stockpiles that should be destroyed, as provided for in the Chemical Weapons Convention. The possible existence of chemical weapons in States not party to the Chemical Weapons Convention is also a matter of concern.

8. Biological weapons proliferation: although effective deployment of biological weapons requires specialised scientific knowledge including the acquisition of agents for effective dissemination, the potential for the misuse of the dual-use technology and knowledge is increasing as a result of rapid developments in the life sciences.

Biological weapons are particularly difficult to defend against (due to their lack of signature). Moreover, the consequence of the use maybe difficult to contain depending on the agent used and whether humans, animals, or plants are the targets. They may have particular attractions for terrorists. Biological weapons, as well as chemical weapons, pose a special threat in this respect.

9. Proliferation of means of delivery related to weapons of mass destruction: development by several countries of concern of ballistic programmes, of autonomous capacity in the production of medium and long range missiles, as well as cruise missiles and UAV are a growing cause of concern.

10. All such weapons could directly or indirectly threaten the European Union and its wider interests. A WMD attack on the EU's territory would involve the risk of disruption on a massive scale, in addition to grave immediate consequences in terms of destruction and casualties. In particular, the possibility of WMD being used by terrorists present a direct and growing threat to our societies in this respect.

11. In areas of tension where there are WMD programmes, European interests are potentially under threat, either through conventional conflicts between States or through terrorist attacks. In those regions, expatriate communities, stationed and deployed troops (bases or external operations), and economic interests (natural resources, investments, export markets) can be affected, whether or not specially targeted.

12. All the States of the Union and the EU institutions have a collective responsibility for preventing these risks by actively contributing to the fight against proliferation.

13. The EU Situation Centre has prepared and will continuously update a threat assessment using all available sources; we will keep this issue under review and continue to support this process, in particular by enhancing our co-operation.

14. To address with unceasing determination the threat posed by WMD a broad approach covering a wide spectrum of actions is needed. Our approach will be guided by:

- our conviction that a multilateralist approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order and hence our commitment to

uphold, implement and strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements;

- our conviction that non-proliferation should be mainstreamed in our overall policies, drawing upon all resources and instruments available to the Union;

- our determination to support the multilateral institutions charged respectively with verification and upholding of compliance with these treaties;

- our view that increased efforts are needed to enhance consequence management capabilities and improve coordination;

- our commitment to strong national and internationally-coordinated export controls;

- our conviction that the EU in pursuing effective non-proliferation should be forceful and inclusive and needs to actively contribute to international stability;

- our commitment to co-operate with the United States and other partners who share our objectives. At the same time, the EU will continue to address the root causes of instability including through pursuing and enhancing its efforts in the areas of political conflicts, development assistance, reduction of poverty and promotion of human rights.

15. Political and diplomatic preventative measures (multilateral treaties and export control regimes) and resort to the competent international organisations form the first line of defence against proliferation. When these measures (including political dialogue and diplomatic pressure) have failed, coercive measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and international law (sanctions, selective or global, interceptions of shipments and, as appropriate, the use of force) could be envisioned. The UN Security Council should play a central role.

16. The EU is committed to the multilateral treaty system, which provides the legal and normative basis for all non-proliferation efforts. The EU policy is to pursue the implementation and universalisation of the existing disarmament and non-proliferation norms. To that end, we will pursue the universalisation of the NPT, the IAEA Safeguard agreements and protocols additional to them, the CWC, the BTWC, the HCOC, and the early entry into force of the CTBT.

The EU policy is to work towards the bans on biological and chemical weapons being declared universally binding rules of international law. The EU policy is to pursue an international agreement on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The EU will assist third countries in the fulfilment of their obligations under multilateral conventions and regimes.

17. If the multilateral treaty regime is to remain credible it must be made more effective. The EU will place particular emphasis on a policy of reinforcing compliance with the multilateral treaty regime. Such a policy must be geared towards enhancing the detectability of significant violations and strengthening enforcement of the prohibitions and norms established by the multilateral treaty regime, including by providing for criminalisation of violations committed under the jurisdiction or control of a State.

The role of the UN Security Council, as the final arbiter on the consequence of non-compliance – as foreseen in multilateral regimes – needs to be effectively strengthened.

18. To ensure effective detectability of violations and to deter non-compliance the EU will make best use of , and seek improvements to, existing verification mechanisms and systems. It will also support the establishment of additional international verification instruments and, if necessary, the use of non-routine inspections under international control beyond facilities declared under existing treaty regimes. The EU is prepared to enhance, as appropriate, its political, financial and technical support for agencies in charge of verification.

19. The EU is committed to strengthening export control policies and practices within its borders and beyond, in co-ordination with partners. The EU will work towards improving the existing export control mechanisms. It will advocate adherence to effective export control criteria by countries outside the existing regimes and arrangements.

20. The EU is determined to play a part in addressing the problems of regional instability and insecurity and the situations of conflict which lie behind many weapons programmes, recognising that instability does not occur in a vacuum.

The best solution to the problem of proliferation of WMD is that countries should no longer feel they need them. If possible, political solutions should be found to the problems, which lead them to seek WMD. The more secure countries feel, the more likely they are to abandon programmes: disarmament measures can lead to a virtuous circle just as weapons programmes can lead to an arms race.

21. To this end, the EU will foster regional security arrangements and regional arms control and disarmament processes. The EU's dialogue with the countries concerned should take account of the fact that in many cases they have real and legitimate security concerns, with the clear understanding that there can never be any justification for the proliferation of WMD. The EU will encourage these countries to renounce the use of technology and facilities that might cause a particular risk of proliferation. The EU will expand co-operative threat reduction activities and assistance programmes.

22. The EU believes that political solutions to all of the different problems, fears and ambitions of countries in the most dangerous regions for proliferation will not be easy to achieve in the short run. Our policy is therefore to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern, while dealing with their underlying causes.

23. Positive and negative security assurances can play an important role: they can serve both as an incentive to forego the acquisition of WMD and as a deterrent. The EU will promote further consideration of security assurances.

24. Proliferation of WMD is a global threat, which requires a global approach. However, as security in Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean, we should pay particular attention to the issue of proliferation in the Mediterranean area.

6. Key terms

1. Chemical Weapons — toxic chemicals used to harm or kill people.

2. Proliferation — the spread of weapons, materials, or technology to more countries or groups.

3. Disarmament — the process of reducing or destroying weapons.
4. Non-Proliferation — efforts to stop the spread of dangerous weapons.
5. International Security — the protection of countries and people from global threats.
6. Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) — weapons that can cause large-scale death and destruction, such as chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons.
7. Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) — the main international treaty that bans chemical weapons.
8. Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) — the international body that monitors and helps enforce the ban on chemical weapons.
9. Arms Control — rules and agreements to limit the development and use of weapons.
10. Verification Mechanisms — systems used to check whether countries are following agreements.
11. Compliance — acting according to international rules or treaties.
12. Sanctions — penalties or restrictions placed on countries that break international law.
13. Toxic Agents — harmful chemical substances that can injure or kill living beings.
14. Stockpile Destruction — the safe elimination of stored chemical weapons.
15. International Cooperation — countries working together to solve global problems.

7. QTBA(Questions To Be Answered)

1. What are chemical weapons, and why are they considered a major threat to international security?
2. What are the main causes of chemical weapons proliferation?
3. Which countries or non-state actors pose the greatest risk in the spread of chemical weapons?
4. How effective is the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in preventing the use and spread of chemical weapons?
5. What role does the OPCW play in eliminating chemical weapons worldwide?

6. Why do some states or groups continue to develop or use chemical weapons despite international bans?

7. How can the international community improve verification and inspection mechanisms?

8. What are the biggest challenges in detecting hidden chemical weapons programs?

9. How should the international community respond to violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention?

10. What kinds of sanctions or penalties are most effective against users of chemical weapons?

11. How can international law be strengthened to ensure accountability for chemical weapons attacks?

12. What measures can prevent terrorist organizations from obtaining chemical agents?

13. How can countries safely destroy existing chemical weapons stockpiles?

14. What support should be given to countries that lack the resources to eliminate chemical weapons?

15. How can international cooperation be improved in intelligence-sharing and enforcement?

16. What role should the United Nations play in responding to chemical weapons threats?

17. How can civilian populations be better protected from chemical weapons attacks?

18. What are the humanitarian consequences of chemical weapons use?

19. How can education, awareness, and scientific responsibility help prevent the misuse of chemicals?

20. What further steps are needed to achieve a world free of chemical weapons?

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