UN Committee on Disarmament & International Security

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STUDY GUIDE

Agenda:
1. Stability in North-east Africa
2. Illicit Trafficking of Weapons
The DISEC committee was established by the United Nations to serve as a Council for Representatives from all UN member states to debate issues of disarmament and security in an environment of equality. This committee takes measures necessary for the prevention or the reduction of international hostilities and conflict on matters that are not discussed by the United Nations Security Council.

Background
The North-eastern Africa region covers the majority of Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. This area is also commonly known as the Horn of Africa. Each of the countries of the Horn—Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Sudan—suffers from protracted political strife, arising from local and national grievance, identity politics and regional inter-state rivalries. For 150 years, the Horn has also been a theatre for strategic power struggles—the British Empire’s demand to control the Red Sea, Egypt’s attempt to control the Nile Waters, the Cold War confrontation in which each of the principal countries of the Horn switched sides at crucial junctures, and most recently the U.S. Administration’s “Global War on Terror.”

For the UNDISEC we will be focusing primarily on Sudan, South Sudan and Chad-Sudan borders, where the infamous Darfur genocide is ongoing. The council will not focus on the humanitarian aspect of it rather we will be focusing on the Stockpiling of weapons in these countries that may lead to a war.

History
Sudan gained independence in from Egypt and the United Kingdom in 1956. Independence was rapidly overshadowed by unresolved constitutional tensions with the south, which flared up into full-scale civil war that the coup-prone central government was ill-equipped to suppress. South Sudan gained autonomy in 1972, but went into civil war in 1983, this ended in 2005 when the rebels signed a treaty with the South Sudanese government. In January 2011 the people of Southern Sudan voted for full independence from the north.

1 Taken from Crisis in the Horn of Africa, [http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/](http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/)
2 Taken from Sudan country profile, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/820864.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/820864.stm)
Peace was not the case for Northern Sudan, also referred to as Sudan, though, up till now the Darfur Genocide, referred to also as the Darfur conflict, is still ongoing. Since 2003, the genocidal conflict in Darfur has devastated millions of non-combatant civilians and resulted in the death of at least 200,000 people. As of 2010, Sudan continues to direct its troops and proxy Janjaweed militias to systematically destroy the livelihoods of Darfuris by bombing and burning villages, looting economic resources, and murdering, raping, and torturing non-combatant civilians.3

The person behind this is genocide is none other than the Sudanese President, Omar Al-Bashir. The International Court of Justice has charged him with three counts of genocide. He is charged with trying to wipe out three non-Arab ethnic groups which led to a death toll of more than 200,00. The arrest warrant said there were "reasonable grounds to believe" Sudanese forces attempted genocide against the Darfur tribal groups Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa.4

This conflict has resulted in much tension between Chad, South Sudan and Sudan. In an official statement made by Chad, Chad says that Sudan is backing rebel groups which have recently sprung up in the east of the country and which are blamed for the attack on Adre, which borders Sudan's troubled Darfur region. It also accuses Sudanese militia of making daily incursions into Chad, stealing cattle, killing innocent people and burning villages on the Chadian border.5

Furthermore Chad and Sudan have accused each other of Cross Border incursions. Even though there has been some form of peace talks between them such as the peace talks in 2008 and 2010. However mistrust between the two nations is still very high.

South Sudan has also halted peace talks with Sudan accusing Khartoum of arming militias in the contested Abyei border region and provoking other fighting in a plot to overthrow the southern government since the referendum.6

Predominant Issues

There are a couple of pressing issues which need to be solved with immediacy to ensure Stability in this region:

Stockpiling of Weapons
There has been a build-up of military weapons in Abyei, along the Northern and Southern Sudan border, by forces from both north and south Sudan raising fears of further violence in the flashpoint border region. These weapons include grenade launchers, mounted machine guns and rocket launchers. With the northern and southern armies deploying extra troops near the volatile region, and in the absence of

3 Taken from SUDAN, http://www.genocideintervention.net/areas_of_concern/darfur

4 Taken from Omar al-Bashir charged with Darfur genocide, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/12/bashir-charged-with-darfur-genocide

5 Taken from Calls to ease Sudan-Chad Tension, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4559254.stm

6 Taken from article from North, south Sudan urged to resume separation talks, Thomson Reuters article
a political solution, the situation in Abyei could quickly deteriorate into a war. Abyei’s future is the most sensitive of a raft of issues that the governments of north and south Sudan have been trying to resolve ahead of southern independence in July, which include borders, citizenship, security and debt.\textsuperscript{7}

As the UNDISEC it is your job to ensure that there is peace and that this stockpiling does not continue. Delegates can delve into setting regulations or maybe sending UN peacekeepers to help aid disarmament. However, delegates should bear in mind many factors including sovereignty and security.

**Armed Militias/rebel groups/tribes**

Much of the conflict is due to rebel groups, some utilized by the government to sabotage and plan attacks. The UN Security Council called for the Janjaweed, a Arab nomadic tribe utilized by the North Sudanese Government, to be disarmed. Many of these groups refuse and boycott peace talks. With the disarmament of these rebel groups much underhanded business such as raids and attacks on neighboring nations can be avoided. Do note that the government and the rebel group’s cooperation are needed because many of these groups are affiliated to the government.

**Tension between Nations**

As mentioned earlier Chad and South Sudan have many issues with Sudan. However, there is great tension between these nations. Most notably would be the fact that South Sudan has halted talks with Sudan. Furthermore, even though talks do happen between Chad and Sudan not much progress has been made.

The international body has stressed that these talks are crucial for this issue to be solved. There is also interest in international intervention on this issue, do note that this is the UNDISEC and what is meant by international intervention is to ensure peace and security not military intervention.

**UN actions**

The UN has primarily focused more on humanitarian aid the UNHCR has many initiatives currently in Sudan. In addition there is also a United Nations Mission to Sudan (UNMIS) which intensifies the peace efforts and builds on the momentum of the progress made—including the signing of the Agreement on Wealth Sharing on 7 January 2004 and the Protocol on Power Sharing on 26 May 2004 at the IGAD-led talks—the UN Security Council, on the recommendation of the Secretary-General, established by resolution 1547 (2004) of 11 June 2004, a special political mission—the United Nations Advance Mission in the Sudan (UNAMIS). UNAMIS was mandated to facilitate contacts with the parties concerned and to prepare for the introduction of an envisaged UN peace support operation.\textsuperscript{8}

The predominant issues of our council as mentioned earlier are relatively new topics; hence there is much room for the UN to help out. Especially in terms of the stockpiling of weapons.

\textsuperscript{7} Taken from *North, south Sudan militarising Abyei, warns UN general*, Agence France-Passe article

\textsuperscript{8} Taken from *UNMIS background*, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmis/background.shtml
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North, south Sudan militarising Abyei, warns UN general, Agence France-Passe article

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http://www.genocideintervention.net/areas_of_concern/darfur


http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12666585

http://www.sudantribune.com/Russia-calls-for-international,31247

http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jan/18/sudan-northern-south-violence
The United Nations Disarmament & International Security Council:

The Illicit Trafficking of Weapons

Background
“The global scourge from the illicit trade in small arms and ammunition continued to wreak havoc, albeit in different manifestations: youth gangs terrorizing a neighbourhood; pirates capturing commercial vessels, including oil tankers; armed groups attacking civilians or peacekeepers; insurgents fighting government forces; drug lords randomly killing law enforcers or anyone else interfering with their unlawful business; and bandits hijacking humanitarian aid convoys. They all shared a common characteristic — the ability to massively multiply their force through the use of illicitly acquired fire power. The illicit circulation of arms and ammunition was, therefore, highly destabilizing, impacting security and development in literally all regions of the world: from Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Pacific, to the Americas, he said. “

Opening speech made by Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, at opening of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on combating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in 2010.9

This aptly sums up the reasons as to why the UN has put great importance in solving this issue.

History
While the issue of global illicit trafficking of weapons does not attract much attention in the international arena, it evidently is an issue of pressing importance. Illicit arms trafficking fuels civil wars, contributes to sky-rocketing crime rates and feeds the arsenals of the world’s worst terrorists. Particularly troubling is the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. These weapons account for an estimated 60-90% of the 100,000+ conflict deaths each year (Small Arms Survey 2005) and tens of thousands of additional deaths outside of war zones. They are also the weapons of choice for many terrorists.10

The global illegitimate business in small arms alone is valued approximately around US$ 1 billion. Even though, the figure does not seem very outrageous, it’s important to realise that it’s the small arms that fuel crime and sustain armed conflicts world over, for example, 4 decades in Columbia and continues to

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9 Taken from http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2010/dc3247.doc.htm

10 Taken from The Illicit Arms Trade, http://www.fas.org/asmp/campaigns/smallarms/IssueBrief3ArmsTrafficking.html
plague the country of Afghanistan. It is equally responsible for facilitating terrorism and creating anarchy after civil wars. Burundi, Ghana, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan are few of many countries that suffer from this form of ‘black globalisation’.11

“The illicit trade in small weapons means big business for dealers – no taxes or customs are paid, and the profit margin is enormous. Adding to the danger, the vast supply makes small arms increasingly cheap; in some areas of the world an AK-47 assault rifle can be bought for a bag of maize, or US$20-30. There is also an undeniable link between small arms and drug trafficking, resulting in a related security threat. This activity is underpinned by criminal organizations which deal in both commodities – weapons and drugs. Readily available and easy to use, small arms and light weapons have been the primary or sole tools of violence in almost every recent conflict dealt with by the United Nations. In the hands of irregular troops operating with scant respect for international and humanitarian law, these weapons take a heavy toll of human lives.” - 7th UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan

Predominant issues

No international binding treaty to combat this issue

In spite of the countless number of resolutions on this issue up till now, there has not been a legally binding treaty towards this issue. Take for example the United Nations (UN) Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the UN firearms protocol. These actions taken by the UN do not directly tackle the problem; they advocate actions to be done: it all depends on a country’s preference.

No way of tracing a weapon

Arms sales should be regulated and monitored nationally and internationally and international benchmarks of export practices should be ascertained for countries to act in coordination.12

Curbing demand

The demand for these weapons is at an all time high, this is especially so in Latin America and in the Caribbean due to an increase in criminal activities. Information regarding this is also inadequate leading to not much being done about this issue. In Columbia alone it is estimated that the number of illegal firearms has reached five million, although most experts calculate the number to be roughly three million. Moreover, the illegal arms market in Colombia has grown considerably in the last ten years, and this increase is largely related to the needs generated by irregular groups involved in the internal arms conflict.13


13 Taken from http://www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art918.pdf
Delegates may also wish to delve into the following areas:

1. **No treaty on how to deal with the illegal arms dealer**
2. **Custom policies in the detection of arms**

**UN actions**

The following treaties and agreements the UN has implemented:

1. **International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons** - http://www.poa-iss.org/InternationalTracing/ITI_English.pdf

   (However this is all up to the discrepancies of the individual states and not much progress has been made.)


**Encouraged readings**


**Bibliography**


http://www.sbmun.org/hs/study_guides/OAS_Trafficking.pdf


http://www.fas.org/asmp/campaigns/smallarms/IssueBrief3ArmsTrafficking.html


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