Dear Delegates,

I am excited to welcome you to the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) of the third SCIMUNC conference. We look forward to cultivating newcomers, while also challenging advanced delegates with simulations.

I joined my school's Model UN (Freedom High School) two years ago, and it has held a special place in my heart since. The communication and problem-solving skills I gleaned from attending conferences has proved to be thrilling in the moment, but also invaluable for my desire to enhance my debate and collaboration skills.

Through SCIMUNC, as well as the preparation leading up to it, the staff and I hope to ignite a similar passion for bridging differences in all of our delegates. In order to provide the best experience for all involved, we ask that you participate in session with the same energy that you may bring to any such conference. Make your voice heard throughout the weekend of negotiations, whether it be through giving speeches in committee, passing notes to forge alliances, or by drafting and redrafting working papers. It will end up being way more enjoyable than sitting back and counting the minutes until the next break.

Trust me.

Please note that the attached background guide functions as a starting point for your research on the given topics. We do not provide extensive information on your delegation's positions on the matters of a debate, information that will be critical to your success. Finally, per SCIMUNC policy, delegations position papers not turned in on time will not be considered for awards.

Topic One: Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Trade

<u>Topic Overview</u>

Since their inception, guns have served as a catalyst of political instability. With the innovation of interchangeable parts and the industrial era, small arms and light weapons have played a central role for non-governmental players in wresting control from or resisting established authorities. At times this has led to the overthrow of oppressive regimes, but the illicit arms trade continues to destabilize the Middle East, Africa, and South America. Efforts made to restrict and eradicate the illegal arms trade would handicap drug cartels, terrorist groups, and oppressive regimes.

The United Nations has not formally catalogued items considered small arms or light weapons. In a 2005 report, the General Committee defined small arms and light weapons as "any man-portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive." More specifically, small arms are individual use weapons, including pistols, rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns. Light weapons are intended as crew-use items, encompassing heavy machine guns, portable anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, and mortars. The source of black market SALW can be from illegal manufacturing, but most often occurs as a diversion of arms from the legal to illegal realm. State actors have the right to purchase and move weapons, however these can trickle to private dealers through corrupt officials and unchecked stockpiles. Political vendettas can also lead to governments covertly supplying non-state groups directly, or indirectly when abandoning supplies due to a cessation of action. Although such weapons cannot be

transported openly, the degree of capital involved in the black market weapons trade has led to elaborate smuggling techniques.

The topic of the illicit SALW trade has been on the UN agenda since 1990, and is encompassed by Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, and the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. In 2001 countries adopted the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA), which included commitments to strengthen national and international weapons laws, stockpiles, and trade. In 2005 the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) was instituted to ensure proper markings of legally produced weapons, while also providing a framework for further cooperation on weapons tracing. In 2013 the UN General Assembly passed an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which looked to increase transparency and accountability in arms deals to better identify smugglers.

Bloc Positions

Middle East

Frequent international conflict in the Middle East has led to a significant sum of well crafted SALW to remain unaccounted for in the region. Recent U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as past conflict with the USSR, has funneled arms into the region for nearly half of a century. At the same time, outside regimes have covertly supplied opposing factions with weapons shipments, such as in the Iran-Contra affair, or the U.S. supply of rebel groups during the Soviet-Afghan War). These arms have now fallen into the hands of the IS, Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and other radical groups, thus promoting insurgency and terror in the region. Governments, given a vested interest in the legal arms trade, would be in strong

support of restrictions on the illegal small arms trade, however only if coupled with sanctions against Western influence.

Latin America

Proliferation of SALW has been strongly tied with political instability in Latin American over the last century. Organized militias and drug cartels continue to be in direct conflict for authority with established regimes in the area, thus requiring a significant flow of black market ALW. Over 90% of the illicit arms enter the region through Panama, Colombia and Guatemala, according to a recent Small Arms Survey.

Africa

Especially in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, this continent has had exceptional loss due to the illegal SALW trade. Conflicts of religion, ethnicity and capital that abound in the region have been exacerbated by seemingly open access to arms, such as in the widely reported cases of child soldiers. However, given the varied routes to power that current regimes have had, factions have emerged on the topic of regulation. Whereas many governments push to create restrictions on and task forces on the illicit arms trade, others consider such sanctions to be a violation of national sovereignty and free trade.

Questions to Consider

What are the sources of illicit small arms and light weapons? How do weapons-producing nations secure their arms?

What necessary components of the weapons could be most easily traced and regulated? Parts? Ammunition? Magazines?

How should SALW sanctions take into account national gun laws? How should nations address illegal arms already present within one's borders, but not in the possession of destabilizing entities?

Where does the illicit arms trade and transport take place physically? Can the United Nations crackdown at these choke points?

Topic Two: Use of Autonomous Warfare

Topic Overview

The proliferation of autonomous warfare in offensive capabilities has intensified

debate over their efficacy and standing in International Law. Complete bans on

autonomous weapons, especially those involving biological warfare have been called for

since 2012 by the Human Rights Watch. In 2015, the Future of Life Institute proposed a

ban on offensive autonomous weapons, which was supported by tens of thousands of

signatories, including Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking. Lobbying has led to two "informal

meetings of experts" in Geneva as part of the UN's Convention on Certain Conventional

Weapons (CCW), which has developed a Lethal and Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)

section. Assembling a Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS remains under discussion

for CCW.

Autonomous weapons have deployed in diverse settings with varying human

influence. Experts differentiate autonomous systems by the level of human control:

• *Human-in-the loop* systems require direct human action during decision-making cycles.

• *Human-on-the-loop* devices have a human supervising the decision process, with the

potential to intervene if necessary

• *Human-out-of-the-loop* machines select targets and apply force without human

intervention or oversight.

Autonomous weapons have been deployed mainly in defensive settings for the time being, however upcoming weapons systems are increasingly designed with autonomous settings in mind, such as the British Brimstone and Taranis missiles. Prominent defensive systems include Israel's Iron Dome, the U.S.A.'s Phalanx CIWS mode, and South Korea's "Super aEgis II" along its Demilitarized border.

Proponents of autonomous weapons bans insist that the technology will literally and figuratively dehumanize conflict, thus making it more dangerous for impoverished and invaded nations. First off, without a major risk of military casualties for the aggressor, one of the greater deterrents of going to war could be removed from the equation. In the battlefield itself, machines could be unable to comprehend individuals' emotional states in order to differentiate between an insurgent and a frightened mother running after her children, who stand armed with toy guns, thus leading to heightened civilian casualties. Finally, human soldiers also emphasize personal connections in the regions of conflict with locals, and doing so allows for micro-diplomacies laced with mercy and compassion.

For those advancing these technologies, autonomous weapons represent a method of inserting a heightened level of control into conflict situations. Without emotions, namely a need for self-preservation, autonomous weapons would be able to wait longer than humans to make the kill decision. Even then, it would only have to incapacitate its assailants, rather than directly proceeding to mortal shots to avoid the chance of further fire. Also appreciated is the flexibility that such systems would offer, from accessing hazardous environments, such as minefields, to reducing human involvement in the line of fire.

<u>Bloc Positions</u>

European Union

The European Parliament has investigated the legality and role of unmanned systems since 2012, and passed a resolution on autonomous weapons in 2014. The resolution considers drone strikes outside of declared war and without UN approval to be a violation of international law, and calls for independent investigations into reported incidents. In the same document, the EU Parliament called on other bodies to ban extrajudicial killings and "the development, use, and production of fully autonomous weapons." However, the U.K. has acted independently, producing autonomous missile systems and opposing international bans on autonomous weapons.

United States

The unmanned aerial vehicle programs of the United States, and their deployment in surgical strikes over the last twenty years has sparked a majority of the controversy over autonomous weapons. Although this system is not autonomous, simply remote controlled, a 2012 DoD Task Force report stated that, "while currently fielded unmanned systems are making positive contributions across DoD operations, autonomy technology is being underutilized as a result of material obstacles within the Department that are inhibiting the broad acceptance of autonomy and its ability to more fully realize the benefits of unmanned systems." The United States has had autonomous targeting systems as part of its Phalanx systems since 1978, has developed autonomous patrol vehicles, and has worked jointly on the Iron Dome with Israel.

Questions to Consider

Do past regulations on International Security and rightful aggression cover autonomous weaponry? How do they fit the current laws of war?

What degree would a ban on autonomous weapons take? Would it encompass development, stockpiling, or use?

Are nations entitled to deploy autonomous weapons in their own territory or on their borders?

Should autonomous weapon strikes be considered acts of war, invasions, or war crimes?

Helpful Sources

UN's Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons review of Autonomous Weapons:

http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/8FA3C2562A60FF81C1257CE600

393DF6?OpenDocument

Human Rights' call for a global ban on autonomous weapons:

https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/arms0415_ForUpload_0.pdf

Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, a prominent NGO in the field:

https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/

Ethics and design proposals for autonomous weapons:

http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/A70E329DE7B5C6BCC1257CC2

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