

BratMUN

STUDY GUIDE

DISEC 2018

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Letter from the chairpersons

Distinguished delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2018 Bratislava Model United Nations (BratMUN) conference. It is a great honour to be a part of this event and we hope you enjoy your time participating in it. We will chair the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC).

Before discussing our committee, firstly let us introduce ourselves. Our names are Alex Grygoryshyn and Arkadiy Deliev. Both of us are students of Gymnázium Jura Hronca (GJH) enduring our second and final year in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). Both of us have participated in a handful of Model United Nations conferences, having obtained valuable experience we hope you can gain during BratMUN 2018. Some of the previous conferences we have participated in include BISMUN 2016-18, Apromun 2018 and BiMUN 2018.

Since our childhood, both of us have thrived to be involved in debates and discussions challenging our essential critical thinking skills. In our free time, both of us enjoy producing music and playing various instruments.

Please note that the delegates are expected to send a position paper approximately in the length of 400 to 600 words no later than November 2nd to the email address disec.bratmun18@gmail.com. It should typically contain four sections: Background of Topic, Past International Actions, Country Policy, and Possible Solutions.

We are looking forward to meeting you in Bratislava and wish you the best of luck.

Alex Grygoryshyn & Arkadiy 'Qubit' Deliev

Chairs of the Disarmament and International Security Committee

Disarmament and International Security (First Committee)

The First Committee deals 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.

It considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any other organ of the United Nations; the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; promotion of cooperative arrangements and measures aimed at strengthening stability through lower levels of armaments.

The Committee works in close cooperation with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament. It is the only Main Committee of the General Assembly entitled to verbatim records coverage.¹

¹ "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." United Nations. <http://www.un.org/en/ga/first/>

Topic Description

The discussion surrounding regulation of Biological and Chemical weaponry has been one existing for many decades; in fact, for over a century. The most concerning issue surrounding Biological and Chemical weaponry is the frightening amount of threat they have in achieving mass destruction and damage to many nations and civilians. Since World War I, Chemical weapons have caused more than one million casualties globally.² The most recent case of major scale Chemical weapon use was in the case of the ongoing Syrian civil war, where up to nearly 1,500 civilians have been pronounced to be deceased due to use of Chemical weaponry.³ The case of Syria and its conflict underlines the lack of regulation which is still present to this day regarding the control of Biological and Chemical warfare. The Disarmament and International Security Committee of BratMUN 2018 will aim to make progress regarding the regulation of Chemical and Biological weapons in hopes of protecting civilians and nations worldwide from the threat they pose.

² "Chemical Weapons – UNODA." United Nations. <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/chemical/>

³ Shaheen, K. "'Almost 1,500 Killed in Chemical Weapons Attacks' in Syria." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 14 Mar. 2016, www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/14/syria-chemical-weapons-attacks-almost-1500-killed-report-united-nations

Current situation

Alongside Nuclear weapons, Biological and Chemical weapons are classified as weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). These weapons if used with hostile intent have potential to wipe out nations, this is why their regulation should be treated with significant concern. Despite attempts being made by the U.N prohibiting use of both Biological and Chemical weaponry, cases of Chemical and Biological weaponry usage still occur frequently. As mentioned, the most recent case is presented by al-Assad regime's use of Chemical weapons in Syria. Just in April of 2018, it was suspected that up to another 40 people had died as a consequence of a planned Chemical attack. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) says the initial tests on samples from two sites detected "various chlorinated organic Chemicals", alluding to Chemical weapon use⁴.



The current situation surrounding Biological weaponry whilst by some could be considered to be stable, can be terrifying in the future. Due to their low cost, hard detectability and easy to use mechanic, Biological weapons appeal to terrorists. On top of that, various scientists are in a state of deep concern regarding the recent advances in gene editing technology. This advancement may escalate into usage of such weaponry with hostile intent (bioterrorism). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define bioterrorism as "the intentional release of viruses, bacteria, or other germs that can sicken or

⁴ "Syria War: What We Know about Douma 'chemical Attack'." BBC News. July 10, 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43697084>.

kill people, livestock, or crops". As stated by the Director of National Intelligence, "Research in genome editing conducted by countries with different regulatory or ethical standards than those of Western countries probably increases the risk of the creation of potentially harmful Biological agents or products"⁵.

This is why it is empirical for the international community to ensure compliance with the regulations which must be set. The Disarmament and International Security Committee's main objective is to ensure any threat to international peace is eliminated. Therefore reducing risk of both Biological and Chemical weapon usage at this moment of time and in the future is critical.



Figure 1: The international biological hazard symbol

⁵ "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community"
https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/SASC_Unclassified_2016_ATA_SFR_FINAL.pdf

Past Actions

1899 The Hague Convention

The Hague Convention of 1899 in the Netherlands. During the convention several international agreements were signed by 26 separate signatories, mostly consisting of western countries, forbidding use of poisons and asphyxiating poisonous gases in combat.

1914 – 1918 World War 1

First major case of Chemical weapon usage occurs. During World War 1, France becomes first nation to use Chemical weapons during war using tear gas. Germany follows up and uses irritant gasses. Chemical Warfare (CW) believed to result in an estimated 1.3 million casualties toll during course of WWI.

1925 The Geneva Protocol

The Geneva Protocol prohibits the use of Chemical and Biological weaponry, but not the possession or development of Chemical and Biological weapons. Eventually entered into force on 8th of February 1928.

1939 – 1945 The Geneva Protocol

Mass use of both Chemical and Biological weaponry Nazi Germany uses toxic gas in concentration camps, Japanese Army Air Force release ceramic bombs full of fleas carrying the bubonic plague on Chinese territory, the Western Allies believed to not use any Chemical weaponry during course of WWII.

1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) Opening

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, also recognized as *Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC)*, was submitted by the British and opened for signature on 10th of April 1972. The treaty entered into force in 1975. Became the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning the production of Biological weapons.

1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Opening

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, also recognized as the *Chemical Weapons*

Convention (CWC), is opened for signature on 13 January 1993, Paris. The treaty entered into force in 1997. Simultaneously, *the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)*, a UN implementing body is created. *The Chemical Weapons Convention* is then administered by the *Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*.

2004 Resolution 1540 Is Adopted

On 28th of April 2004, the *United Nations Security Council* unanimously adopted *resolution 1540*. The resolution refrains States from supporting non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).

2012 The First Allegation Of Chemical Weapons Use In The Syrian Conflict Reported

Al Jazeera claims that up to 10 people suffer serious injuries from the chemical attack in Homs. Agent-15, also known as 3-Quinuclidinyl Benzilate, reportedly the chemical used.⁶

2018 (CWC) Conference of the States Parties Adopts Decision Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use

The Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) adopted a decision on addressing the threat from chemical weapons use. Simultaneously it calls upon identifying the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.⁷

⁶ Zeiger, Asher, et al. "Syrian Rebels Claim Recent Alleged Chemical Attack Not the First." *The Times of Israel*, www.timesofisrael.com/syrian-rebels-claim-recent-chemical-attack-not-the-first/.

⁷ "CWC Conference of the States Parties Adopts Decision Addressing the Th..." *Types of Chemical Agent*, www.opcw.org/news/article/cwc-conference-of-the-states-parties-adopts-decision-addressing-the-threat-from-chemical-weapons-use/.

Introduction into subtopics

Syrian Arab Republic adherence to the terms of Chemical Weapons Convention

Although the Syrian Arab Republic formally joined the CWC in October 2013, the majority of represented states blame the use of biochemical weapons in the Syrian Civil War on the Assad regime.

Case studies: suspected chemical attack on a children's hospital (5 April 2017); suspected chemical attack on Douma (9 April 2018).

ISIS mustard gas use

The BBC reported in September 2015 that, according to an unnamed U.S. official, the U.S. believes that ISIS had used powdered mustard agent at least four times in Syria and Iraq, that ISIS had probably manufactured the mustard agent itself, and probably had an active chemical weapons research team. Mustard agent is a relatively simple chemical weapon to manufacture, and given the Syrian government chemical-weapons disarmament, analysts deemed it unlikely that ISIS had acquired the mustard agent from seizing a Syrian government cache. The BBC further stated that a BBC team on the Turkey-Syria border had seen corroborating evidence.

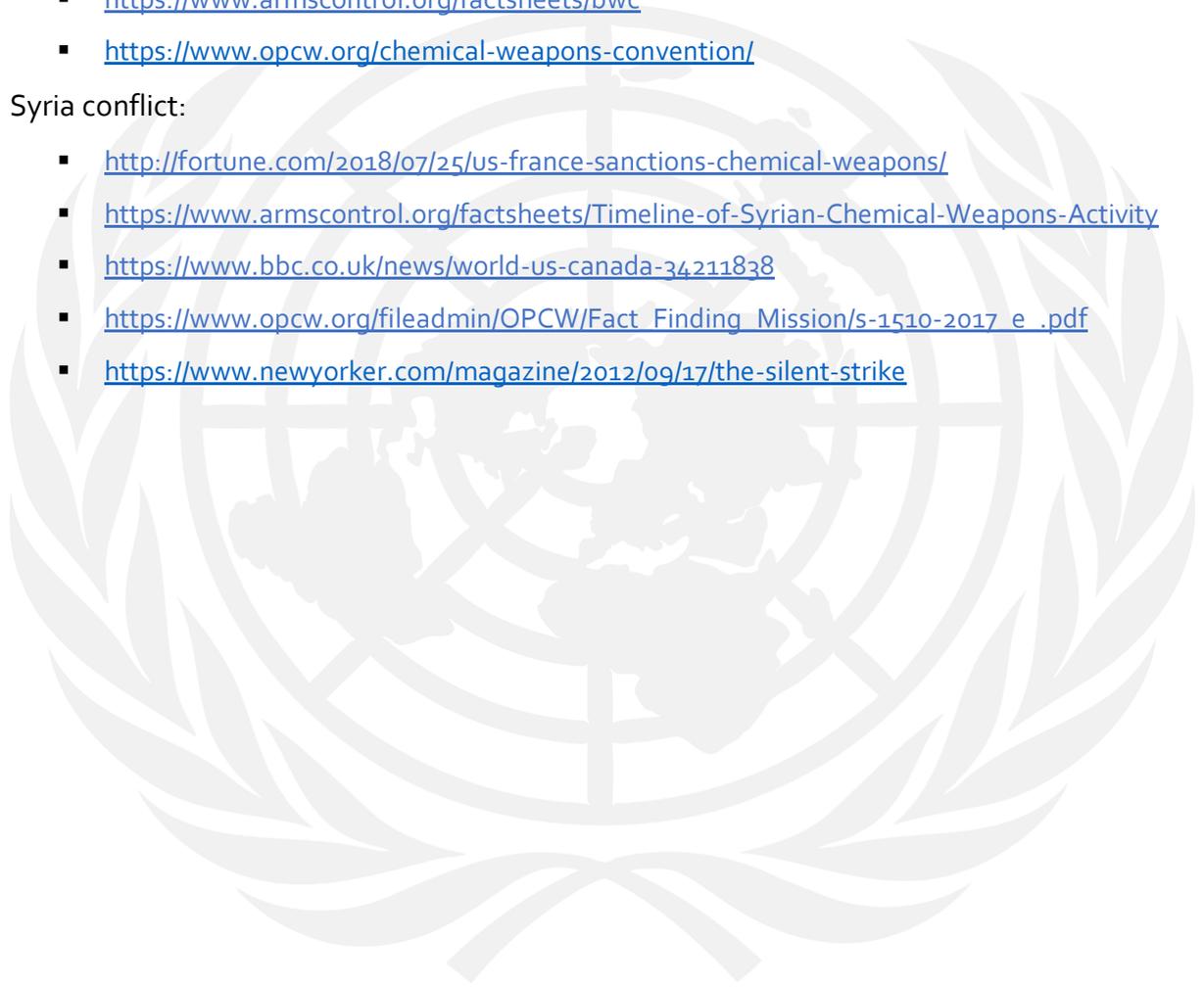
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Essential information

The Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic blame the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Civil War on the Syrian rebels. The rest of the UN states blame the accidents on the Assad regime.

Syria is generally considered not to have biological weapons. However, there are some reports of an active biological weapons research and production program. According to NATO Consultant Dr Jill Dekker⁸, Syria has worked on: anthrax, plague, tularemia, botulism, smallpox, aflatoxin, cholera, ricin and camelpox, and has used Russian help in installing anthrax in missile warheads. She also stated: "they view their biochemical arsenal as part of a normal weapons program".

⁸ "Syria's Bio-Warfare Threat: an Interview with Dr. Jill Dekker." *New English Review*, www.newenglishreview.org/custpage.cfm/frm/13108/sec_id/13108.