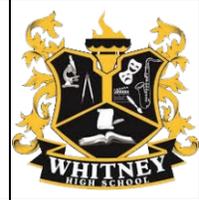


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WHSMUN XX CONFERENCE

January 29, 2022

Novice 1st Disarmament Committee (DISEC)

Illicit Arms Trade in Africa

Chair Introductions

Head Chair

Hey everyone! My name is **Arrim Jung**, and I'm excited to be your Head Chair for this committee! I'm currently a senior and being in MUN has been a truly maturing and strengthening experience that I am grateful to have in my life. In my time outside of MUN, I am a total movie geek and love all genres of music. I enjoy being a golfer in my school's Girls Varsity Golf team, but also in being a part of the family of volunteers at the Aquarium of the Pacific advocating for environmental sustainability. I hope that you will gain from your MUN experience as much as I have and will continue to grow as a strong delegate. I can't wait to see you all at WHSMUN 2022!

Vice Chair

Welcome Delegates! My name **Wenchao Hu** and I am more than excited to be your Vice Chair for this year's DISEC Committee! As a current senior, I have been in MUN for four years now and greatly appreciated every conference I went to as it has taught me confidence and public solving skills. Outside MUN, I took up many hobbies such as golf (like the Head Chair), caring for my growing plant collection, and reading. I have no doubt that I will grow greatly through the experience, and I hope to provide you with the same experience as well!

Legal

Hi delegates! My name is **Michelle Kim** and I'm your Legal for this committee. I am currently a senior as well and having been in MUN for the past 4 years, I have learned so much but I definitely have a lot of room for growth! When I am not in school I spend my free time either playing tennis or lazing around as I read manga. MUN has been an amazing opportunity for me to improve both my public speaking and interpersonal skills so I hope you all will enjoy our conference and be able to learn from it too!



BACKGROUND

The illicit arms trade in Africa with issues of uncontrolled arms, methods of acquisition, and transfer have been a recurring dilemma fueling conflicts, increasing poverty, and decreasing economic development in Africa. According to the 2017 Oxfam Research Reports, 4.3 to 8.4 million people lost their lives in Sudan and Rwanda between 1983-2005 due to armed conflict with vigilantes with uncontrolled arms, and violence is forcing large migration of refugees. There are heavy socio-cultural and psychological impacts on individuals in African countries as gender-based violence (GBV) affects 45.6% of African women, “with an estimated 48 women raped per hour by rebels and Congolese soldiers.” However, the prevalence of uncontrolled arms only exacerbates tension, mistrust, and resort to violence. An estimation of 100 million uncontrolled small arms and light weapons (SALW) are in Africa and were most likely acquired by “non-state actors (militias, warlords, and extremist groups)” by means of state stockpiles, black markets, trafficking, and local production of arms.

Additionally, the trafficking of certain metal ores—whether mined, sold or traded—has been widely reported to play a principal part in regard to fueling armed conflicts and human rights abuses in several of the provinces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). These “conflict minerals” provide armed groups profit derived from direct participation in the said minerals and their commerce. As it is bolstering an extensive black-market cross-border trade—one that is forbidden under United Nation Security Council (UNSC) sanctions pertaining to the DRC—which benefits armed groups, the trafficking of these minerals in the DRC is inciting several conflicts regarding illicit arms trades which, in turn, has resulted in a breakdown of law and order and caused much socio-economic devastation for many who reside in eastern DRC.

Over the past several decades, the illicit arms trade industry throughout Africa has proved to be extremely detrimental to them—socially, economically, and even physically as the illicit weapons trade in small arms has been at least partially to blame for the persistence of wars across the African continent. The extreme lack of cooperation between African security forces throughout the country and its borders has also proved to only fuel this issue. With so many factors already contributing to the prevalence of the illicit arms trafficking throughout the continent of Africa, new and innovative solutions must be formulated to lessen the repercussions of this issue and eventually stop the problem in its tracks.



UN INVOLVEMENT

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). This action united national governments on the same protocol, and aimed to “improve national small arms regulations, strengthen stockpile management, ensure that weapons are properly and reliably marked, improve cooperation in weapons tracing, and engage in regional and international cooperation and assistance.” In 2005, the General Assembly adopted the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), a global instrument for cooperation in weapons tracing.

Within the yearly United Nations conference, in 2005, delegates focused on creating \$1 billion-a-year illicit trade in small arms backed by African speakers who advocated for a global crack-down on illegal arms dealers and tighter arms regulations -- as its lasting effects can contribute to poverty, and stalled development in their fragile countries.

The UN has created numerous organizations/branches which focus on Arms Regulation and have been contributing to resolve the issue at hand. The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR) functions as a sustainable funding mechanism for conventional arms control, including small arms and light weapons, ammunition, arms trade and transparency in armaments. UNSCAR provides funds for focused, quick-impact, short-term activities implemented by civil society organizations, regional organizations and UN partners. The United Nations also makes available the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), which provides practical, authoritative guidance to practitioners and policymakers on a broad range of small arms control issues. The Saving Lives Entity (SALIENT) is a United Nations funding facility, located within the Peacebuilding Fund, which is dedicated to supporting Member States tackle armed violence and illicit small arms and light weapons as part of a comprehensive approach to sustainable security and development in partnership with UNODA and UNDP. SALIENT is currently supported by France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland.



BLOC POSITIONS

Latin American and Caribbean Bloc:

Illicit arms trade is prominent in several nations in this bloc and has been a leading reason for the political turmoil in these regions. As many as two thousand guns cross the border daily between the United States and Mexico, an issue which has greatly contributed to increases in gun violence and gang violence throughout this bloc. On top of all these issues, illicit arms trade is even threatening the economic development of this bloc. As such, it has been at the forefront of efforts in order to create appropriate arms control and disarmament instruments. Some of the many steps this bloc has taken in order to solve their illicit trade issues are signing the Arms Trade Treaty, creating sustainable development goals, and working with the UN and several NGOs in regard to the creation and implementation of more solutions.

African Bloc:

Due to the persistence of wars across the African continent, it greatly contributes to the problem of illicit weapons trade in small arms. Approximately 30 million firearms are currently being circulated through Africa. The primary source of arms come from civilian gun owners whose firearms have been lost or stolen, but many others come from state institutions (police, military, and other government departments). The lack of oversight means that many losses and thefts go unrecorded. For example, the South African government, specifically, has taken steps to control the flow of illegal weapons, through its airfields and porous borders. In 1997, South Africa closed 107 of its 117 international airports and activated radar facilities at Mafikeng, Upington, Ellisras, and Mariepskop in order to monitor flights over Botswana, Namibia, southern Zambia, and Angola. South Africa was also a driving force in the adoption of the 1998 Southern Africa Regional Action Programme on Light Arms and Illicit Trafficking, devised in cooperation with the European Union. The Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPPCO), a body created in 1995 with headquarters in Harare, Zimbabwe, also aims to tackle the problem of illicit arms trade in Africa.

Eastern European Bloc:

Many eastern European countries supply arms to the Middle East: a trade worth more than a billion euros, with the majority of goods going to Saudi Arabia. Most are believed to come from the following countries: Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Montenegro, Serbia and Romania, sent by air or sea to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates or Turkey – then on from there to the war zone. Many of these weapons originate from the 1990s and the period just after the end of the Balkan wars, with individuals simply holding onto their weapons. A confidential document from 2013 obtained by BIRN and OCCRP, describes how arms shipments to Saudi Arabia were rerouted from Serbia to Syria. A detailed analysis of cargo planes provided evidence of more than 70 plane movements that were related to the indirect delivery of weapons to the conflict zone.

Western Bloc:

Many illicit weapons stockpiled in the Western Balkans (including the countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) originated the weapon circulation within the EU and also spread through nearby countries like Africa. In 2005, the EU realized sub-Saharan Africa was one of the most affected countries of small arms and light weapons (SALW) “proliferation and accumulation”. Recognizing the security risk of the problem to neighboring countries as well as local countries, especially with the six million small arms still in the European area from the Paris perpetrators in 2015, the eight European Union (EU) and six Western Balkan countries held a summit in London July 2018. The countries created an action plan for the trafficking of firearms in Europe and local partners such as the UNDP and OSCE are offering training on detecting and deactivating illegal arms. Outside of the EU, Venezuela showed its concern through public awareness campaigns in 2005 and an expert seminar in Caracas with professionals from Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and Sweden to discuss success stories in disarmament. In the 2006 General Assembly’s review of worldwide efforts to implement the Programme of Action, the United States strongly supported the Programme of Action and its implementation regarding export controls, destruction of excess, and tracing instruments, but did not agree to restricting civilians of their right of possessing a firearm.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What might some underlying reasons for the abundance of trade of illicit arms specifically in Africa? Consider the war conflict and how that may contribute to this problem.
2. How does the illicit arms trade in Africa influence other countries?
3. How is mineral trafficking related to illicit arms, and how might this influence solutions to the issue?
4. What have been some of the repercussions endured by the public as a result of the resolutions passed against illicit arms trade, especially by government interference in African nations?
5. What past actions have been taken to help lessen the illicit arms trade in Africa, and why have they not been effective?
6. How have other countries contained the trade of illicit arms?

7. What are some short term and long term solutions for the situation of uncontrolled small arms and light weapons?



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