

Question of: Child Soldiers

Committee: DISEC II

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Introduction:

Approximately 10,000 children are recruited by armed groups for military purposes. This is an unfortunate reality which we have faced throughout history and is still present today. The ease at which children are manipulated and their trust in adults is their greatest enemy, as some are convinced to join these armed groups because of the words used by the commanders to describe the experience.

It is later a long and hard process of reintegration into society, as they require physical, mental and emotional help to overcome this traumatic. This is an issue that is not given much thought and taking into account that children are the future, we must work to solve it immediately.

The Issue:

Who are child soldiers?

Children are defined as people who are below 18 years old. Child soldiers are children who recruited or used by armed forces for military and other purposes. They are children of all ages of both genders who are used in battle for fighting, killing, or committing other acts of violence. They are also used for sexual purposes as well as other tasks such as cooking, or as spies or messengers.

How do they become involved with armed forces?

Children can be recruited in many ways. They can be forcibly recruited- abducted, threatened or coerced into joining. This usually occurs in war zones where children are separated from their families or even at schools or hospitals, places where children were supposed to be protected, but are being subjected to attacks recently. Some are enticed to join with money, drugs, or in other ways. Many children also join of their own accord, often as a result of economic or social pressures or protection. Some older children join armed forces to fight for a cause that they and/or their family support. They can also join as a way of making up for the loss of family or a lack of education. Children who have been separated from their parents in battle may also be recruited.

How does this affect children?

Recruiting children affects them in many aspects.

For one, it affects them physically, as they can be harmed during battle, as well as being victims of sexual abuse (specially girls), which could potentially lead to serious sexually transmitted diseases as well as pregnancy which could result in social rejection by their families. Also, those injured may live with disabilities for the rest of their lives. Furthermore these experiences are most likely to lead to social and psychological issues later in life.

Boys, like girls, are also victims of sexual abuse and activities, being forced to commit rapes directly by their commanders or indirectly by sheer pressure, or being sold for prostitution.

Moreover, witnessing killing and far worse taking part in it, is very harmful for a child. It has come to a point where the most recent use of them for killing, is by placing children as young as 8 or 9 years old as suicide bombers. Some even appear in messages sent by armed group defending the groups ideology.

Even if they do not take part in battle, they are also affected by other actions. Military training designed to break down children psychologically until they obey without questioning or reluctance, as well as bullying, physical violence and sexual harassment, which are common in a military environment, can alter their personality and disrupt their mental health and well-being. These experiences may not only lead to mental diseases, but also to other illnesses due to the environment they are in. Further, children are bound by military regulations that would be unlawful in civilian employment, and which can leave them with no right to leave for several years.

Where are they?

Although child recruitment is gradually being outlawed in several countries, 50 still allow it. Children are also recruited by non-state actors. The UN Secretary General publishes an annual list in which he states the countries where children are still being recruited for military purposes. On the 2016 list are the armed forces of seven countries (Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen). 51 non-state armed groups appear on the list for the same reason. The Taliban in Afghanistan and 'Islamic State' in Iraq and Syria use children on a large scale, including for suicide bombings.

Afghanistan

The number of verified cases of recruitment and use of children more than doubled compared with 2014. A total of 116 cases were documented during the reporting period, of which 48 were verified. Thirteen verified recruitment cases were attributed to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: including the Local Police, the National Police and the National Army. The majority of verified cases were attributed to non-state armed forces: the Taliban and other armed groups.

42% of the number of child casualties in Afghanistan in 2015 were attributed to armed groups and 23% to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and pro-Government militias. A total of 55 child casualties were attributed to international forces. There were also a number of verified cases of sexual violence and attacks on schools and hospitals.

In spite of these events, the government took initiative and signed the Safe Schools Declaration, aimed at protecting education facilities from military use during conflict. Unfortunately, the use of schools by parties to the conflict continued, with 24 cases attributed to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and 11 to armed groups.

Central African Republic

The UN documented 40 cases of child recruitment and use by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and by the former Séléka faction, Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC).

A total of 52 children were verified to have been abducted: 25 by LRA, 15 by anti-balaka elements and the remainder by unidentified armed men.

The United Nations engaged with some former Séléka factions, local anti-balaka commanders and other armed groups, which resulted in the signing of an agreement by 10 armed groups on the margins of the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation, to end and prevent the recruitment and use of, and other grave violations against, children. Since the agreement was signed, 1,446 children have been separated from armed groups and space has opened for the United Nations to discuss commitments to end grave violations, especially with a number of the former Séléka factions.

In total, 2,679 children were separated from armed groups: almost 89% from anti-balaka elements and 10 per cent from former Séléka elements. UNICEF and its partners developed community-based approaches to reintegrate these children back into society.

DR Congo

The UN verified 2,549 violations against children, a significant increase compared with 2014. Nearly 40 per cent were attributed to the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR). The new recruitment of 488 children, of whom 30% were under 15 years of age when recruited was verified by the UN, which is more than twice the number of documented cases in 2014. The UN engaged with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), which indicated that it had suspended the suspected commanding officers and initiated an investigation.

254 child victims of sexual violence were verified. Armed groups were responsible for the majority of incidents, in particular the Forces de résistance patriotiques en Ituri (FRPI).

Further, a total of 195 reports of abductions were received, and some 40% of the children still missing. LRA continued to abduct children.

Fortunately, military pressure and radio messages encouraging children to escape contributed to 2,045 children being separated from armed groups, which is twice the number separated in the previous year.

Throughout 2015, the Government maintained its commitment to implementing the action plan signed with the United Nations in 2012. Moreover, to accelerate the process, three new provincial joint technical working groups were established. However, it remains a concern that FARDC may not be able to identify minors without assistance.

Iraq

The intensified military operations against ISIL had a devastating impact on civilians and infrastructure. Limited access, especially with the intensification of conflict, and fear of retaliation impeded the monitoring and reporting of grave violations. The UN verified the recruitment and use of 37 children. The cases were attributed to ISIL, the Kurdish Workers Party and other Kurdish armed groups and to groups under the umbrella of the popular mobilization forces, which have been under the authorization of the Prime Minister since April 2015. Furthermore, recruitment by ISIL was reported with child soldiers portrayed in social media, including as executioners.

As of December, at least 314 children remained in detention on charges under the Anti Terrorism Law of 2005.

The killing and maiming of children remained the most reported violation with 268 incidents recorded, resulting in 809 child casualties of which 152 were verified.

The UN received reports of sexual violence against girls, in particular against members of in ISIL-controlled areas. However these were difficult to verify

The UN received many reports of abduction of children, primarily by ISIL. In two incidents in June and September, more than 1,000 children were reportedly abducted by ISIL from Mosul district.

In collaboration with the UN, the Kurdistan Regional Government established a task force on justice for children to follow up on children in conflict with the law, including those detained on charges relating to national security.

Israel and the State of Palestine

Palestinian and Israeli children were affected by the prevailing situation of military occupation, conflict and the blockade. In 2015, 30 Palestinian children were killed and at least 1,735 injured, predominantly in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. These were attributed to Israeli forces, one to Israeli settlers and one to both Israeli forces and settlers. A total of 13 Israeli children were injured by Palestinians.

Limited information is available about the recruitment or use of children. The Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades reportedly ran a military camp for 25,000 children and young people between 15 and 21 years of age in Gaza.

Unfortunately, there has been no progress in ending this matter.

Lebanon

The UN continued to document cases of recruitment and use of children by local and foreign armed groups, including of boys between 15 and 17 years of age who were sent to the Syrian Arab Republic. The majority of incidents were related to the Nusra Front; however, children were reportedly also recruited by other armed groups, including Hizbullah, supporting the Syrian government forces. Furthermore, the United Nations documented the recruitment and use of boys and girls between 15 and 17 years of age by Palestinian armed factions and other armed groups within Lebanon. Reportedly, boys were used to man checkpoints or as guards, while girls were used in support roles. Moreover, these are held in pretrial detention under military jurisdiction on charges relating to national security.

Libya

Groups affiliated with ISIL reportedly operated training camps south of Sirte, with a graduation ceremony for 85 children under 16 years of age reportedly held in December. It has been reported that children have been exposed to sexual violence during their association with armed groups. At least 60 children were reportedly casualties of indiscriminate shelling of residential areas, air strikes, suicide bombings and crossfire.

In the context of the breakdown of law and order, there was a rise in the abduction of children by armed groups, militias and criminal organizations.

The United Nations engaged with the Constitution Drafting Assembly to include guarantees of children's rights in the draft constitution.

Mali

A total of 127 cases of recruitment and use of children by armed groups were received, with 30 verified. In addition, 27 cases of recruitment and use of children by the Groupe d'autodéfense des Touaregs Imghad et leurs alliés were verified in March 2016 in Ineggar, Gao region, and 47 other alleged cases were received. Further, the UN verified the killing of 12 children and the maiming of 39 during rocket attacks and crossfire.

22 cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence against children were verified, comprising 3 by the Malian defense and security forces.

In the light of these recent events, the UN worked with the government to end and prevent grave violations against children and steps were taken to develop an action plan with the Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad.

Myanmar

Reports of 217 cases of recruitment, of which 95 were verified attributed to the government armed forces (Tatmadaw) and to the Kachin Independence Army. However, the government indicated that action had been taken against 382 military personnel, including 73 officers, for failing to adhere to recruitment procedures.

The UN documented 37 incidents of killing and maiming, of which 23 were verified and which resulted in the killing of 15 children and injury of 37.

Further, there were three verified cases of sexual violence against girls, aged between 5 and 10 years, by Tatmadaw soldiers. In a grievous case, an 8-year-old girl was raped by a soldier and died after being taken to hospital.

Five incidents of abduction were verified, with three leading to the disappearance of 11 children, attributed to the Tatmadaw, and two incidents involving three children attributed to the Kachin Independence Army.

Positive steps were taken by the government to advance the implementation of the joint action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children. In 2015, 146 former child soldiers, including 28 still under 18 years of age, were released and reintegrated into their families and communities. Myanmar is also a signatory to the OPAC.

Somalia

The situation, which involved frequent attacks by armed groups, resulted in a spike in the number of grave violations against children, with an increase of almost 50% compared with 2014. The recruitment and use of 903 children was documented, with 60 per cent of the cases (555) attributed to Al-Shabaab. The Somali National Army also recruited a high number of children (218), who were used for various tasks, such as manning checkpoints. Recruitment was also attributed to clan militias, Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a and Galmudug forces.

A total of 474 incidents of killing and maiming were documented, affecting 753 children, and attributed mostly to unknown armed elements, as well as the armed groups mentioned previously. Further, 164 incidents of sexual violence affecting 174 children, with the majority committed by clan militias and unknown armed groups were documented. A pattern of abduction was observed. Numbers spiked compared with 2014 with a total of 458 boys and 65 girls were abducted, with nearly 95% by Al-Shabaab, but also by clan militias.

Regarding separation, UNICEF supported the reintegration of 749 children through community-based programs. The UN also provided technical support to the Child Protection Unit

of the Somali National Army. In another positive development, the Government ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 1 October.

South Sudan

A total of 1,051 incidents affecting 28,788 children were documented. 159 incidents of recruitment and use, affecting 2,596 children with nearly 70% being attributed to Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other government security forces and allied forces including the South Sudan National Police Service, SPLM/A in Opposition were verified.

The Cobra faction of the South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army released 1,755 children in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area following advocacy by the United Nations. Some joined reintegration programs, but others were reportedly recruited.

Child protection provisions were included in the peace agreement signed in August, but United Nations engagement with the parties to conflict yielded few results. Other commitments to protect children were forthcoming, however, and, in January, South Sudan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Sudan

In the areas of Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei, the UN documented four cases of recruitment and use of children by the Sudanese Armed Forces. 28 incidents of killing and maiming, mostly perpetrated by the Sudanese Armed Forces and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) were documented. Sexual violence against children remained a grave concern and the numbers are believed to be underreported owing to a lack of access. The United Nations documented the abduction of eight children, fortunately, the children were released and reunited with their families following engagement by the United Nations.

In Darfur, another Sudanese region, the recruitment of four boys by the Sudanese Armed Forces in West Darfur was verified. Killing and maiming accounted for the majority of verified violations (196).Forty-five incidents of sexual violence affecting 60 children, including a boy, were verified and attributed to unidentified armed men and militias.

In March 2016, the signing of an action plan by the Government to end and prevent child recruitment and use in its security forces took place in Sudan. Also, the country task force on monitoring and reporting provided technical support to government personnel and local communities and although impunity for grave violations continued to be a concern, there was progress, with arrests being made for sexual violence and the killing and maiming of children.

Syria

A total of A total of 362 cases of recruitment and use of children were verified and the vast majority were attributed to ISIL. 56% involved children under 15 years of age, a significant increase compared with 2014. The payment of salaries and ideology continued to be major influencing factors.

The massive recruitment and use of children by ISIL continued. The UN verified the existence of centers that provided military training to at least 124 boys between 10 and 15 years of age.

The UN also verified the recruitment and use of children as young as 9 years of age by the Free Syrian Army, and the recruitment of 11 Syrian refugee children from neighboring countries. Recruitment and use by pro-Government groups was also verified.

The Government continued to detain children for their alleged association with armed opposition groups. Children were tortured during detention, and one incident resulted in the child's death. Also children were deprived from their liberty.

There was a significant increase in the number of verified cases of children killed and maimed as a result of their association with armed groups, including while participating in combat.

Children continued to be abducted by the parties to conflict and continued to be indoctrinated and recruited by ISIL by means of education. Further, Parties to the conflict, in particular the Government, ISIL, the Nusra Front and armed opposition groups, continued to use siege and starvation as a tactic of war. No progress has been made, unfortunately.

Yemen

The United Nations documented a fivefold increase in cases of recruitment and use of children by armed groups. 762 verified cases of recruitment of children were reported, attributed to the Houthis, the pro government popular committees and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. A shift was observed from largely voluntary enlistment towards forced recruitment through coercion.

The UN verified a sixfold increase in the number of children killed and maimed compared with 2014, totalling 1,953 child casualties. More than 70% were boys. Casualties were mainly related to Saudi Arabia-led coalition and to the Houthis, although there was an improvised attack by ISIL which killed 7 children and injured 6.

11 abductions were verified, all of which were attributed to the Houthis, with the exception of a case attributed to Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

In May 2014, the Government signed an action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children. However, implementation did not advance in the light of the escalation of conflict.

The countries listed are on the Security Council Agenda for child soldiers. They are Colombia, Pakistan, India, Nigeria, The Philippines and Thailand. However there are still some countries where child soldiers being recruited. Most of these have stopped using children in armed conflict, but still recruit them. Fortunately progress has been made in these nations. But there are some which still recruit and use children for armed conflict:

Nigeria

The UN verified the recruitment and use of 278 children by Boko Haram and the Civilian Joint Task Force. Twenty-one girls were used in suicide attacks claimed by Boko Haram, 11 of which were documented in the fourth quarter. Children were used in suicide attacks not only in Nigeria, but also in Cameroon and Chad, with cases also reported early in 2016.

At least 5,480 persons were reportedly killed in 352 incidents, a decrease of 26% compared with 2014. The United Nations verified the killing of 244 children and the maiming of 112.

In May and June, 253 children encountered during military operations participated in an "deradicalization programme" run by the Office of the National Security Adviser. The Office reported pregnancies of girls of as young as 5 years old who were previously raped or wives of

Boko Haram members. Also, abduction by Boko Haram continued, with 162 cases documented, of which only 26 were verified.

Engagement with the Nigerian authorities continued, including on the handover of children encountered during operations by the Nigerian security forces to civilian authorities.

The Philippines

The UN verified the recruitment and use of 17 children, including 15 children used as human shields, by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters in one incident, and two recruited by NPA. Two cases of detention of children for their alleged association with armed groups were verified.

In an encouraging development, in 2015, UNICEF renewed engagement with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines/NPA on its declaration and program of action for the rights, protection and welfare of children.

The United Nations continues to work with the Armed Forces of the Philippines on its 2012 strategic plan on prevention and response to grave child rights violations

Previous attempts to solve the issue:

Security Council

The UN Security Council (SC) held its first ever open debate on children and armed conflict in 1998. However it was not until 1999 when the first resolution on children and armed conflict placed the issue on the SC agenda.

In the following years, with the adoption of resolutions and presidential statements, the SC has developed important tools to better protect children and to bring perpetrators into compliance with international standards. First, the establishment of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism to gather information on the six grave violations against children. Then, identifying and naming parties to conflict by requesting the Secretary General to list them in his annual report on children and armed conflict. Furthermore, committing to action plans which are designed to end and prevent violations against children for which parties to conflict are listed. In order to be removed from the list, parties to conflict must engage in dialogue with the UN to develop and fully implement the action plan. Also, the creation of the SC Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict which evaluates reports and recommends how to better protect children. And finally, imposing sanctions upon against perpetrators of grave violations developed over time.

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

The Protocol was adopted by the General Assembly on 25 May 2000 and entered into force on 12 February 2002. At present, 166 countries have both signed and ratified the protocol, 13 have signed but are yet to ratify and 18 have done neither. It is a commitment which states that States will not recruit children under the age of 18 to send them to the battlefield, will not conscript soldiers below 18 and should take all possible measures to prevent such recruitment. They also have the duty to demobilize anyone under 18 conscripted or used in hostilities and will provide physical, psychological recovery services and help their social reintegration. Further, armed groups distinct

from the armed forces of a country should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities anyone under 18.

The UN Secretary General launched a campaign to support OPAC, and supporting his campaign is the Zero under 18 campaign aimed at achieving universal ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC).

SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals take into account and advocate for children's rights. Children, who represent roughly half the world's population affected by conflict, largely remain invisible victims. They are, without a doubt, among the most vulnerable and have been left the furthest behind.

Boys and girls affected by armed conflict are also much more than victims of incredibly difficult circumstances. They are key to building the peaceful, strong societies envisioned by the new development agenda. To fulfill the promise of the SDGs, it is essential to protect children and safeguard their future. The SDGs aim to achieve a world with education for children who are free and are not involved in any dangerous labor or conflict.

NGOs

There are many NGOs which advocate for children's rights and child soldiers. Some even assist the UN in designing protocols and programs for children.

Possible solutions:

Taking into account that children continue to be used in armed conflict for different purposes despite all previous efforts, it is essential to take stronger measures of child protection, specially in the countries listed above.

1. Reinforcing monitorings and action programs within a nation's government as well as with other armed groups.
2. Establishing stricter laws and patrols around the territories where armed groups are based in.
3. Request the assistance of international organizations to ensure the best reintegration of children into society

This could be the basis of future solutions to solve this problem.

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Royal Russell Model United Nations 2017

Committee: DISEC II

Topic: The question of reducing tension in the region of the Baltic States

History:



At the beginning of November 2015, it was reported that U.S. military planners are worried that the Baltics might be the next targets of Russian military aggression. After Russia had just invaded the Crimea, Eastern-Ukraine made the statement that Putin would soon target the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Ever since then the warning that Russia may do this has been echoed through groups such as the news media, Baltic government officials, E.U. officials and by U.S. and NATO military officials. Like Ukraine, the Baltics have large ethnic Russian minorities leaving the Baltic regions to feel quite vulnerable.

Latvia's population is approximately 26 percent Russian, while the corresponding figures for Estonia and Lithuania are 24 percent and 6 percent, respectively. Furthermore, these Russian populations have a long history of grievances over language, citizenship and cultural policies. Russia also has a province, called Kaliningrad, which, whilst still part of Russia, is separated from the Russian mainland by Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus. This province is the headquarters of Russia's Baltic Fleet and many nations feel that Putin may have plans to, with the help of his Belarusian ally, Alexander Lukashenko, try to cut through and seize a transit route to Kaliningrad. No Baltic or Western government has ever made serious attempts to block Russian access to the exclave of Kaliningrad, though Lithuanian officials have recognized their theoretical ability to do so. But actually, following through on the threat to cut railways, roadways and utilities to Kaliningrad would almost certainly provoke a Russian military response and guarantee a dangerous escalation with nuclear implications. So, no country has even attempted this.



The Current Situation:

Civilians who live in Baltic countries are preparing for the worst, for example projects teaching guerrilla warfare courses and young people learning counterinsurgency tactics. Most recently, the United States shipped hundreds of tanks, armored vehicles, and other military equipments to

Bremerhaven, Germany, to be disseminated to Baltic states and other Eastern European NATO members demonstrating a military presence within the Baltic nations. In regards to the 2016 U.S. presidential election, tensions between Russia and the United States have escalated, and NATO has revamped its military presence in the Baltic region, putting over 300,000 ground troops on high alert as tensions on Russia amount making this the biggest military build-up in the Baltics since the Cold War, thus showing that the Baltics are willing to defend themselves if needs be.

However, a US think-tank has said it believes Russia could overrun NATO's current military force in the Baltic states in a matter of hours, if a conflict began. This increased militarization comes in response to Russian attempts to influence politics in Baltic states and incite civil disorder. "We need a credible deterrence policy in the Baltic region to influence the Russian calculus to make the costs of interference too high," is what Estonia's President Toomas Hendrik Ilves warned. However, the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, has insisted that he has no intention of attacking a NATO member country and doesn't think it to be a wise idea in the quote, "I think that only an insane person and only in a dream can imagine that Russia would suddenly attack NATO".

Logistics:

Even the Baltic sea itself is proving to cause friction between the Baltic nations. In 2008, Baltic ports handled more than 800 million tons of cargo. Some countries surrounding the Baltic sea are particularly dependent on it for trade. For example, 90% of Finnish trade exports and 80% of its trade imports come through the Baltic sea and as one can imagine this maritime area is highly sought after by many countries. The nations who currently have direct access to the sea are; Denmark, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia (Whom are all members of NATO), as well as the two militarily non-aligned countries of Sweden and Finland and also Russia. However, Russia is only able to access the Baltic sea through the Kaliningrad exclave and through the Gulf of Finland, increasing the attractiveness of the prospect of Russia wanting to have a direct route to the region of Kaliningrad.



Another source of tension seems to be some form of arms race between the Baltic nations while the NATO countries do have support of the NATO in their navy, putting them at a great advantage, there is still competition between the nations as to which nation can have the biggest army at their disposal to defend their shipments crossing the Baltic sea. With Poland set to complete a full modernisation of their army in 2030 along with Sweden's well-equipped navy of six submarines, twenty-one patrol and coastal combatants, and 140 amphibious vessels, appearing quite sizeable in comparison to the rest of the Baltic region, there is definitely some apparent tension around this area.

The Kaliningrad exclave, which has been part of Russia since the end of the Second World War, may allow the latter to deploy an A2/AD strategy, thus disrupting the current balance of power in the Baltic Sea. Currently armed with S-400 air defence system missiles and nuclear capable SS-26 Iskanders, with respective reaches of approximately 400 and 500 kilometres, Kaliningrad could control

the passage of ships and planes in the Baltic Sea, posing a huge risk to all Baltic nations which use the Baltic Sea as a main transport route for their goods and supplies. However, with Russia's region of Kaliningrad surrounded by NATO countries the decision to implement an A2/AD strategy could completely backfire on Russia, as NATO Navies have the potential to blockade Russian oil exports while countering the actions of its Baltic fleet outside the reach of Kaliningrad's missile, therefore leading to a conflict escalation with NATO and the European Union, demonstrating how fragile and how tense the situation in the Baltics actually is. A direct confrontation between NATO and Russia in the Baltic sea seems unlikely in the medium term. However, unclear naval operations and un-calibrated deployments of forces too close to Russian territory may lead to increased tensions.

Potential Solutions:

So far there haven't been many solutions to this issue other than the recommendation that all Baltic nations are to be crystal clear about their military actions around other countries and possibly a meeting of some sort may also be required to establish clarity on matters regarding the Baltic sea.

Question of: Stockpiles of Chemical Weapons

Committee: DISEC II

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Introduction:

Many nations continue to stockpile and/or research chemical weapons in spite of all the numerous attempts to eliminate them. These are toxic chemicals which have been used as weapons of mass destruction in many occasions and cause irreversible damages in the human body and even death. Therefore, there is a clear threat in keeping stockpiles of such chemicals.

This is why measures were taken to put an end to this issue by introducing treaties such as the Geneva Protocol or creating the Chemical Weapons Convention which obligates all nations which signed and ratified it or acceded to it to eliminate their chemical weapons stockpiles and production facilities. Nevertheless, some nations are still suspected of developing chemical weapons programs in spite of knowing the potential of these weapons and the terrible consequences of their use. The main concern now lies in the present use of these weapons, no matter what purpose. Speakers at the First Committee of the United Nations, already expressed their outrage on this matter. It is time to bring it to an end.

The Issue:

Chemical weapons

WHAT IS A CHEMICAL WEAPON?

In Article II of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) the term “chemical weapon” refers to all toxic chemicals and their precursors, except those intended for purposes allowed by the CWC, which are peaceful purposes, protection against toxic chemicals, military purposes not related to the use of toxic chemicals as a method of warfare and law enforcement. The munition or devices specially designed to release these toxic chemicals, as well as any equipment specifically designed for use with such munitions or devices are also identified as chemical weapons (CW) in the Convention.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS: HISTORY

Commonly CW have been used at times of war resulting in many deaths and even more casualties leaving the victims incapacitated for life.

CW as we know them were first used during WW1, concretely chlorine and phosgene gases were manufactured in large quantities and were then released from canisters on the battlefield and

dispersed by the wind. By the end of World War I, 124,000 tones of chemical agent had been expended which claimed over 90000 lives and resulted in over one million casualties. The same situation took place in WWII, and after they concluded many nations were left with a legacy of old and abandoned chemical weapons, which still presents a problem for many countries.

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union both maintained enormous stockpiles of chemical weapons, amounting to tens of thousands of tons, which was enough to destroy much of the human and animal life on Earth.

Chemical weapons were again used during the 1980–1988 Iran-Iraq War and then in Syria (in 2013) and were alleged to have been used on numerous other occasions

The most recent chemical attack occurred in Syria, on the town of Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib Province, which left scores dead and hundreds sickened in one of the worst atrocities so far in the six-year-old Syria war. It is still unclear whether the Syrian government or its enemies carried out the attack.

The devastating impact chemical weapons have had in the past, and the potential for the use of modern—even more deadly—chemical agents not only by States at war but in other violent conflicts and by non-State actors, provide the imperative for the international effort to uphold the ban on such weapons and to work towards the complete, global elimination of chemical weapons.

TYPES OF CW

CW can be presented in binary or unitary form. Binary munitions contain two separated non-lethal chemicals that react to produce a lethal chemical when mixed during battlefield delivery. Unitary weapons, representing the by far largest quantity of the stockpile, contain a single lethal chemical in munitions. CW can be fitted into four types depending on their effect the human body: nerve agents, choking agents, blood agents and blister agents.

1. NERVE AGENTS

These are chemical weapons are usually manmade compounds, concretely organophosphates, which disrupt normal functioning of the nervous system. They are highly volatile.

The first nerve agents were developed in Germany during WWI and were referred to as “the G series”. The G series include the following agents: GA or tabun, which is the least toxic and also the first nerve agent to be obtained, GB or sarin and GD or soman. Later in 1940 the V series were developed in England among which the VX agent was obtained, the deadliest agent of all .They all are extremely dangerous and act quite rapidly on the body, although some act faster than others.

2. BLISTER AGENTS

These manmade agents are very volatile and can be present in both gas and liquid state. They produce painful blistering, although they are generally not lethal. These agents access the

body either by inhalation or by contact with the skin or the eyes. They accounted for the greatest number of casualties in WWI, although only less than 5% died.

3. CHOKING AGENTS

Chemicals categorized as choking agents act on the lungs, causing difficulty in breathing and, potentially, permanent lung damage. Examples of these include chlorine, ammonia, and phosgene. They are generally gases, have marked odors, and may color the surrounding air.

Choking agents were manufactured for wartime use, and were extensively used during World War I. They injure their victims through inhalation. While exposure to low chemical concentrations only causes chest discomfort or shortness of breath, exposure to high agent concentrations may quickly cause swelling of the lungs, respiratory failure, and possibly death.

4. BLOOD AGENTS

Chemicals categorized as such interfere with oxygen utilization at the cellular level. This category includes hydrogen cyanide and cyanide salts. Hydrogen cyanide is a very volatile gas, smelling of almonds, while cyanide salts are odorless solids.

Blood agents act through inhalation or ingestion and impair cellular oxygen use. The central nervous system is especially susceptible to this effect. The effects are mild when exposed to low concentrations, including nausea and coughing. However, exposure to very high concentrations may lead to powerful gasping for breath, violent convulsions, and cardiac failure within a few minutes.

Stockpiles

The current threat that many leaders fear is that these stockpiles are accessed by terrorists or warlords promoting violence and warfare. This is why it is crucial to address this problem as soon as possible.

Many nations have declared that they have been in possession of chemical weapons and have been stockpiling them. And, as it has been mentioned before, other nations are still suspected of running CW research programs and/or possessing them. Below are the nations which have been in possession of such weapons and their current statuses or are allegedly in possession of them.

Albania

Albania signed the CWC in 1994 and was found to be in possession of 16 metric tons of mustard agent as well as small quantities of lewisite and other chemicals. The destruction of the stockpile was completed in July 2007 and was verified by the CWC.

China

China signed the CWC in 1994. In 1997, China declared that it had been in possession of Small offensive CW program that has now been dismantled (verified by OPCW). China has also destroyed all former production facilities and arsenals.

However, in 2003 the US alleged that China had advanced chemical weapons research and development program. After this allegation there have been no suspicions on this matter by the US and the State Department's 2017 report on compliance with the CWC cited no such concerns.

Nevertheless there are recent concerns about China sharing CW expertise with Syria and Iran with nerve and mustard agents.

Egypt

Egypt is not a signatory of the CWC. The possession of CW is unclear, however, there is strong evidence to support this suspicion. There is Strong evidence indicating the use of bombs and artillery shells during Yemen Civil War (1963 – 1967). Further, Egypt is believed to have supplied Syria and Iran with nerve and mustard agents.

India

India is a signatory to the CWC since 1993 and since then the government declared that it had possessed a CW stockpile of 1,044 metric tons of mustard agent. However, it was destroyed completely in 2007.

Iran

Iran signed the CWC in 1993. In spite of this, before 2003 allegations by the US intelligence assessments stated that Iran had a stockpile of CW which is thought to have included blister, blood, and choking agents and probably nerve agents. After 2003 these allegations ended. Nevertheless, currently Iran supposedly maintains at least two major facilities for the research and production of chemical weapon agents.

The Iranian government denies allegations of having clandestine CW program in violation of CWC. In the official declaration submitted to OPCW Iranian government admitted that it had produced mustard gas in 1980s but that ceased the offensive program and destroyed the stockpiles of operational weapons after the end of war with Iraq.

Iraq

Iraq signed the CWC in 1993 and declared that Iraq had an extensive chemical weapons program before the Persian Gulf War dating back to the 1960's under which it produced and stockpiled mustard, tabun, sarin, and VX. Iraq delivered chemical agents against Iranian forces during the Iran-Iraq War. In 1998, Iraq dismantled all its chemical weapons in partnership with the UN Special Commission established for that purpose.

Iraq also possesses an unknown amount of CW which are kept in two bunkers at the Muthanna State Establishment. The first, Bunker 13, which may contain 15,000 liters of sarin in various states of decay is the main concern currently. It was bombed during the Gulf War and it was significantly damaged. The second bunker, Number 41, was used to store chemical munitions left over after the post-war destruction effort. Due to the dangerous state of these two facilities, they were concreted over by Iraqi personnel working under the supervision of U.N. personnel. The chemical agents will have decayed in the past 16 years since being secured, but still present a formidable hazard and disposal challenge. Iraq had initially committed to destroying these bunkers in 2014, but due to an unstable security situation Iraq was unable to do so in 2014 and 2015.

Israel

As of December 2004, Israel has signed but not ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, and according to the Russian Federation Foreign Intelligence Service, Israel has significant stores of chemical weapons of its own manufacture.

In 1992, El AL Flight 1862 flying to Tel Aviv crashed outside Amsterdam. Amongst the plane's cargo was fifty gallons of dimethyl methylphosphonate a chemical that can be used in the production of the nerve agent sarin. According to Israeli officials, the substance was only for defensive research purposes, to test filters for gas masks.

According to more recent analyses, there is no evidence of production or stockpiling the chemical weapons by Israel. The offensive CW program almost certainly existed in the past but its current status is unknown.

Lybia

In 2003, Libya announced it would be abandoning its CW program and in 2004 it declared possession of chemical agents and facilities. Lybia stockpiled 24.7 metric tons of mustard agent in bulk containers. In addition, it declared one inactivated chemical weapons production facility and two chemical weapons storage sites along with other storage sights. With assistance from the OPCW and other member states, Libya removed all of the remaining chemical weapons from its territory for destruction in August 2016.

North Korea

North Korea is widely believed to possess a large chemical stockpile including nerve, blister, choking, and blood agents. The 2012 unclassified intelligence assessment provided to Congress states that North Korea has a "long standing CW program" and "possesses a large stockpile of agents." In February 2017, North Korean agents used VX, a nerve agent, to assassinate Kim Jong Nam, the half-brother of Kim Jong Un in Malaysia.

Russia

Russia possessed the world's largest chemical weapons stockpile: 40,000 metric tons of chemical agent. Russia has declared this to the OPCW and has commenced destruction. Along with the United States, Russia received an extension when it was unable to complete destruction by the 2012 deadline imposed by the CWC. A OPCW report indicated that as of 2015, Russia had destroyed about 92% of its stockpile and is scheduled to complete chemical weapon destruction by December 2020.

South Korea

South Korea declared a chemical weapons stockpile of unspecified agents when it joined the CWC in 1997 and completed destruction of its declared arsenal on July 10, 2008.

South Sudan

In February 2016, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition accused the South Sudanese government of attacking them with chemical weapons in the ongoing South Sudanese Civil War

Sudan

After acceding to the CWC in 1999, Sudan declared only a small selection of unspecified riot control agents. Allegations: There are unconfirmed reports that Sudan developed and used CW in the past. The US bombed an alleged CW factory in 1998. There have been no serious allegations in recent years. The US Department of State claims that it lacks sufficient evidence to determine whether Sudan is engaged in activities prohibited by CWC.

Syria

In September 2013, the United States and Russia agreed to the Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons which calls for the elimination of Syria's chemical weapon stockpiles by mid-2014. Apart from this, there is also a UN Security Council resolution (2118) requires Syria to assume responsibility for and follow a timeline for the destruction of its chemical weapons and its chemical weapon production facilities. Syria officially acceded to the CWC in 2013. It is believed Syria first received chemical weapons in 1973 from Egypt in the form of artillery shells and since then it is thought Syria has one of the most advanced chemical weapons programs in the Middle East.

In September, 2013, Syria submitted a declaration of its chemical weapons and facilities to the OPCW after years of denying the program's existence. The OPCW announced that the entirety of Syria's declared stockpile had been destroyed. However, reports continue to surface of chemical weapon use in Syria, raising questions about the accuracy of its initial declaration.

There have been various allegations regarding CW in Syria. Syria had an extensive program producing a variety of agents, including nerve agents and nerve agents according to governments and media sources. A 2016 UN-OPCW report found that the Syrian government was responsible for chlorine gas attacks in April 2014, March 2015 and March 2016 and that the Islamic State was responsible for a sulfur mustard attack in August 2015.

Taiwan

U.S. Congress was informed in 1989 that Taiwan could have acquired offensive chemical weapons capability, including stockpiles of sarin. Taiwan has declared that it possesses small quantities of CW for research but denies any weapons possession.

The United States

The United States declared a large chemical arsenal of 27,770 metric tons to the OPCW after the CWC came into force in 1997. Along with Russia, the United States received an extension when it was unable to complete destruction of its chemical stockpiles by 2012. The United States has destroyed approximately 90% of the chemical weapons stockpile it had declared as the CWC entered into force.

In 2010, Russia alleged that the United States has legislation which could inhibit inspections and investigations of U.S. chemical facilities. Russia has also accused the United States of not fully reporting chemical agents removed from Iraq between 2003 and 2008 and sent to the United States for testing and subsequent destruction.

Previous attempts to solve the issue:

THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

The CWC is an arms control treaty which entered into force in 1997. The Convention aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties. These, in turn, must take the steps necessary to enforce that prohibition in respect of persons (natural or legal) within their jurisdiction. The treaty is the first one to ever include a time frame for the eliminations of various chemical weapons and it is also the first multilateral arms control treaty to incorporate an extensive verification regime. It currently has 192 states-parties. One state has signed but not ratified (Israel). Three states have neither signed nor ratified (Egypt, North Korea, and South Sudan).

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

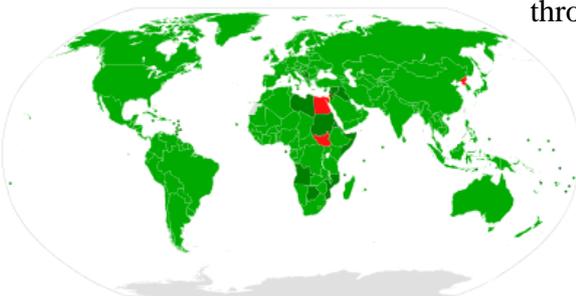
The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The OPCW currently has 192 Member States and its goal is to prevent chemistry from ever again being used for warfare, thereby strengthening international security.

THE 1925 GENEVA PROTOCOL- Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare

The 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibits the use of chemical and biological weapons in war. The Protocol was drawn up and signed at a conference which was held in Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations from 4 May to 17 June 1925, and it entered into force on 8 February 1928.

THE AUSTRALIA GROUP

Established in 1985, the Australia Group is a voluntary, informal, export-control arrangement through which 41 countries, as well as the European Union, coordinate their national export controls to limit the supply of chemicals and biological agents—as well as related equipment, technologies, and knowledge—to countries and nonstate entities suspected of pursuing chemical or biological weapons (CBW) capabilities.



SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2118

Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), and called on all States with chemical weapons to destroy their stocks within the agreed timeframe.

Possible solutions:

There are various treaties and organizations that deal with the elimination of CW and the destruction process. Here are some possible solutions which would help eliminate chemical weapons and prevent their use:

- I. Eliminate CW with a new strategy called Silver II introduced by a British company instead of traditional methods such as incineration or. It consists in the use of silver ions and nitric acid to break the organic material from which chemical weapons are made down to carbon dioxide, water and inorganic salts., which is either vented to the atmosphere, recycled or disposed of as industrial waste. This would replace traditional solutions such as incineration which pollute the environment.
- II. Establish stricter verification measures and ensure transparency by having regular inspections by the OPCW. This would ensure that no nation is using any chemical agents as a weapon and that the purpose of their use are those stated in the convention.
- III. Establish protective measures and secure remaining stockpiles or CW production facilities in order not to jeopardize any surrounding dwellings.
- IV. Raise awareness about the potential of these weapons among nations by creating media campaigns.
- V. Create an organization which would support and work in cooperation with the OPCW to ensure more transparency and would reinforce its action.
- VI. Urge all nations to work with the OPCW and in compliance with the CWC to promote the CWC.

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