

ISTMUN



DISEC

**INFLUENCE OF WEAPON MARKETING DRIVEN BY
FOREIGN COUNTRIES IN THE YEMEN CONFLICT**

WELCOMING LETTER

Esteemed delegates,

As presidents of the Disarmament and Security committee, we are delighted to welcome you to the first version of ISTMUN and it will be an honor to serve you in everything you'll need during the development of the committee. We find ourselves convinced that it will be a chance to discover the wonder of learning, the courage of persevering, and the joy of growing in mind and spirit. Seeing that, remember not only discipline is needed in order to reach your goals as delegates, but also a lot of drive; you must study, investigate, ask, observe and be creative. Don't believe in what you have done, but rather in what you can do. Your words and ideas should focus on justice, teamwork and patience. This honorable committee was created specifically for true leaders who care for others and speak wisely. As a result, delegates should craft and relay meaningful arguments, not simply drown out contesting opinions. As your guides, we have grand expectations for each and everyone one of you. We believe in hard work and thorough research. We believe in a world asking for young minds to search for solutions and stability. We believe in the topic to be discussed as an opportunity for changing lives. We believe in strategy and fair play. But, most importantly, we believe in you!

Moreover, having confidence that you will find the Models of United Nations just as charming as we have, please do not hesitate on contacting us for any advice concerning ISTMUN or any other future model. As your mentors and family, you have our full availability and effort to assure a great committee.

All the best,

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

Historical background of the committee

The Disarmament and International Security Committee was created on 1993, as a replacement for two committees (the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments), products of the final impact left by the Second World War with the atomic bombs that attacked Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The catastrophe created a world threatened by new military and armed superpower, which needed to be controlled and measured. At first, the commission treated matters related to international security, geopolitical conditions and weaponry issues. Subsequently, after a cold war were multiple committees flourished due to the number of topics to be studied, its emphasis turned to disarmament situations, in order to ensure peace for all the countries and its inhabitants.

Functions of the committee

Bearing in mind that the definition for disarmament is to reduce, limit or abolish the harmful use of weapons in certain territories, the Disarmament and International Security Committee takes care of specific measures that need to be taken on behalf of international safety and survival that concern weapons misuse and armed conflicts. "The General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both [...] to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources." (Chapter IV, Article 11, United Nations Charter). It is important to highlight as well how DISEC is not in the power of authorizing the intervention of arms or imposing sanctions, unlike the Security Council.

TOPIC'S DEVELOPMENT

Influence of weapon marketing driven by foreign countries in the Yemen conflict.

Recommended source: <https://yemen.liveuamap.com/>

Geographic location

The Republic of Yemen possesses a 1,085 kilometers perimeter extension. Its lands limit -to the eastern side- with Oman; to the north, with Saudi Arabia; to the west with the Red Sea; and, looking south, with the Gulf of Aden.

“Oman lies east of Yemen, the border’s length of 179 miles makes it the shorter of Yemen’s two international borders. Oman has a barrier built on its border with Yemen in response to the insecurity threats caused by the ongoing Yemen Civil War. However, cross-border movement on the Oman-Yemen border still takes places despite the increased surveillance by Omani security agencies” (World Atlas, 2018)



“Saudi Arabia had outlined numerous reasons to show the need for a barrier on its border with Yemen. First, Saudi Arabia had stated that Yemen was a probable source of illegal drugs which were smuggled across the porous border. Insecurity was another factor that Saudi Arabia pointed out, stating that many terrorist elements in Saudi Arabia had Yemeni origins. Saudi Arabia claimed that the weapons smuggled across the border were used by radical insurgents in the country to execute terrorist attacks. The terrorist attacks on Saudi Arabia witnessed in the 1990s were often pointed out as an example of terrorist attacks enabled by the smuggling of weapons across the border. Riyadh compound bombings of 2003 which killed 35 people in Saudi’s capital also raised the alarm on the need of a border barrier” (World Atlas, 2018)



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Timeline of the Yemen conflict

2014: Houthi rebels take the territory of Sanaa and reject draft constitution government had thought a viable solution.

February 2015: President Hadi is forced to escape to southern stronghold of Aden after Houthis order his replacement.

March 2015: 137 people killed in Sanaa as a consequence of two suicide bombings devised by the Islamic State.

Civil war breaks out in earnest as Saudi-led coalition of mainly Gulf Arab states launches air strikes against Houthi targets and imposes naval blockade, in order to halt their advance on Aden. (BBC, 2018)

June 2015: Al Qaeda leader is killed in a US indirect military intervention (drone) in Yemen.

June 2016: 40 arm recruits killed in Aden, presumably by Islamic State.

June 2017: Outbreak of cholera kills 2,100 and affects almost 900,000 others, medical agencies say. (BBC, 2018)

December 2017: Ali Abdullah Saleh is killed after fight in Sanaa.

January 2018: United Arab Emirates support Southern Yemeni separatists during the seizure of Aden.

November 2018: US calls for cease-fire, after months of fighting around the key Houthi-held port of Hudaydah.

What is the Houthi movement?

The Zaydi (a Shia sect) Houthi movement (also Ansar Allah or Shabaab al-Mumanin), is a revivalist movement that emerged in the northern governorate of Saada in the 1990s, in response to growing Salafi influence in north Yemen. It was led by a Zaydi sayyid (descendant of the Prophet Mohammad) and a member of parliament, Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi. (Institute for Global Change, 2016)

The Houthi movement started with an innocent slogan: "believe in youth". It was after it started to gain more supporters in order to promote the Zaydi culture, that the slogan transformed in a fierce menace: "God is Great; Death to America; Death to Israel; Damnation to the Jews; Victory to Islam".

With these words, the Houthis created a great tension with the government, as the country was currently receiving help from The United States of America on international security matters concerning terrorism. The rising strain led to al-Houthi's arrest and further death, starting an age of civil war between the government and the Houthis. The government, even now, still asks themselves where the Houthi military and economic support comes from; it has been speculated that Iran is to blame, although former president Saleh is suspected as well. No matter where the movement had its power bank, the Arab Spring and ensuing political instability in Yemen undermined the regime's fight against the Houthi movement. Soon enough, Houthis learnt the wonder of power and began attacking and occupying several Yemeni territories as rebel acts. After warnings from the Hadi government, the Houthis announced in February 2015 that they had dissolved parliament and were working to establish a transitional government to rule for two years. After escaping from a month-long house arrest in Sanaa and retracting his resignation, the president founded a rival capital in Yemen's city of Aden, which has come under increasing military pressure from Houthi forces. In March of that year, Hadi fled Aden to Saudi Arabia as the Houthis advanced on the south. Finally, Houthis dismissed a UN peace plan for the country, stating any agreement would need to be comprehensive and not postpone a resolution on major issues.

Why is there a war?

The conflict has its roots in the failure of a political transition supposed to bring stability to Yemen following an Arab Spring uprising that forced its longtime authoritarian president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to hand over power to his deputy Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, in 2011. (BBC, 2018)



WEAPONS MARKETING

Role of foreign powers in the conflict

In Yemen, both the Houthis and the Yemeni government get most of their equipment from exterior forces. For example, just as the Saudi Arabian government provides weapons to the Yemeni government, the Houthi presumably get most of their equipment from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran and Saudi Arabia have political interests that make them rivals. They may not be in a direct war, but they find themselves financing opposite factions in the Yemen conflict. This is why most of the media tends to refer to the Yemeni's conflict as the "middle east cold war". Other countries are also involved in the conflict on the side of Yemeni government. Notably, the U.S.A. and the UK have both provided direct and indirect support. For example, the U.S.A supplies weapons to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which in turn are used in the Yemeni conflict. At the same time, the U.S.A directly provides logistical support and drone operations for the Yemen conflict.

Weapons so far used in the Yemen conflict

The most common type of weapons that have been commercialized in the Yemen conflict are Small Arms and Light Weapons, which are very effective, taking into account the relationship between lethality and cost. Vehicles such as Tanks and military Humvees have been bought and provided by Saudi Arabia in order to help the Yemeni government.

Legal and illegal weapon marketing in the Yemen conflict

The only ones that have been known for certain to use the Black market are the Houthi.

Al-Qaeda also plays a huge role on the illegal weapon distribution against the government. Most of the legal weapon marketing is directed to the Yemeni government, however, what has been question about this is the excessive use of force by the government. In any case, both parts of the conflict have shown violations to the human rights and to international weapon agreements, and delegates have the obligation to analyze the causes and consequences of the actions taken.

Bloc analysis

One of the facts that this honorable committee addresses is to encourage each delegation to research its role as a country in the conflict. In short, some general positions will be shown that will cooperate for a clear strategy in the development of the sessions:

YEMENI SUPPORT BLOCK

The Yemeni block is composed mainly of countries that provide weapons to the government (directly or indirectly). Each country's motivations vary for arming the Yemeni state. For example, the U.S.A has interests in fighting extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda.

HOUTHİ SUPPORT BLOCK

The Houthi support block consists of state and non-state actors (Such as Al-Qaeda) that wish to contest both Saudi Arabian and Sunni Hegemony in the region. This actors mainly feel threatened by the growth of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

NEUTRAL COUNTRIES

The neutral countries regarding the conflict in Yemen, must act according to the nation's interest (such as allies) and always bearing in mind that promoting peace is their principal key during the debate.

EXTRACTS TO BEAR IN MIND FROM THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

The Charter of The United Nations and Statute of The International court of justice has, as main objective, to maintain international security and peace. Some important facts agreed in the document, on behalf of the topic to be treated, are: firstly, in the document it is clearly established that international cooperation is needed in order to solve conflicts. "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion;" (United Nations, 1945) The latter is essential for an international conclusion and, as being part of DISEC, delegates must be united just so to be able to identify what can be done by the UN, taking a weapon use approach, for reducing and, that is, in a near future, eradicating the Yemeni problematic.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION: The propensity of aid coming from the international scope for a certain project.

CASUALTIES: Deaths of noncombatant civilians. Casualties are usually unintended.

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS: Referring to weapons that can be carried by one-person, Small arms concern firearms such as rifles and machineguns, while light weapons.

WEAPON MARKETING: The sale and purchase of armaments.

ARMED GROUP: A group of people who rise up in arms under an ideological goal.

FACTION: Side of a conflict differentiated from another depending on the actions and interests.

BLACK MARKET: Market based on clandestine economic exchange.

FIREPOWER: the capacity as of a military unit to deliver effective fire on a target. (Merriam-Webster, 2018)

QARMAS

- What should the international community do in order to measure the weapon marketing in developed countries?
- What measurements should be taken in order to prevent Yemen from buying illegal weapons?
- Where is this excessive firepower that Yemen has coming from?
- Will another international agreement be effective against this problematic?
- Is the current agreement being effective in its own parameters (GAT)?
- Can weapon reduction measurements also take down the number of civilian casualties?
- Which countries provide the most arsenal to the Houthis and to the Yemeni recognized government?
- Are both parties equally responsible for the conflict?

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