

Forum: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Issue #29-02: Measures to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Written by: Hannah Baker and Daniel Johnson

Chairs: Hannah Baker and Daniel Johnson



Guiding Questions as you Read

What are weapons of Mass destruction?

How many of these weapons does your country have?

Does your country have any enemies that possess these weapons?

How do these weapons affect your country?

Introduction

Key Terms

Atomic bomb

Weapons of
Mass destruction.

Hiroshima and
Nagasaki

Arsenal

In 1938 the first **atomic bomb** was created by German physicists, ultimately leading to the opening of a 'pandora's box' of weapons of mass destruction. The proliferation of **weapons of mass destruction** is the spread of the actual weapons themselves, the development of these weapons, the purchase of these weapons, and the knowledge to create and develop weapons of mass destruction.

The first use of a weapon of mass destruction was seen in World War 2 by the United States. The United States used atomic bombs against the Japanese, killing a total of 210,000 people as they dropped them in **Hiroshima and Nagasaki**. As World War 2 concluded the 'Arms Race' began between the two global superpowers at the time; the United States and Soviet Russia. At the beginning of the 21st century, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction began to take the world by storm as multiple countries started to feel the need

to build their **arsenal** as other countries were doing the same. Due to countries building their arsenals, security concerns started to rise, leading to war in the Middle East multiple times and tensions with North Korea that never seem to go away. With multiple countries having the power to send a weapon of mass destruction anywhere in the world, how will global parties stop the proliferation of these weapons?

Comprehension Question(s): Why is this issue important to your country? How has your country been targeted in the past?

Definition of Key Terms

Atomic bomb: An atomic bomb (also called a nuke) is a weapon of mass destruction that causes a chain reaction of atoms. This means that by 1 bomb, a huge explosion takes place that kills hundreds of thousands of people. It proceeds to emit radiation for a long period after the explosion.

Weapons of Mass destruction: Weapons of mass destruction come in three forms: Chemical weapons, Biological weapons, and Nuclear weapons. These weapons are designed to harm many people at once.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the 2 targets for the dropping of the US-controlled atomic bomb towards the end of WW2. The total death toll after 1 year of dropping the bomb is estimated to be around 200,000.

Arsenal: An arsenal is defined as a storage facility for a large number of weapons where they are built, maintained, and stored.

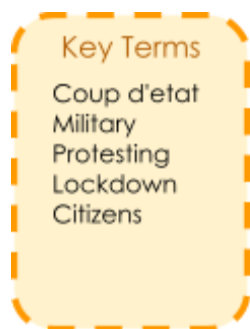
Chemical weapons: Chemical weapons are those that release a certain gas or toxin into the air used to harm somebody. An example of a chemical weapon is tear gas, which causes excruciating pain and inflammation of the mouth, eyes,

and lungs.

Biological weapons: Biological weapons are those that when deployed, release a certain bacteria into the air (such as anthrax) that is used to plague an enemy.

Nuclear weapons: Nuclear weapons (also called atomic weapons) are those that cause a chain reaction in atoms. That means that a small bomb can do much more damage than it seems.

Current Situation



Weapons of mass destruction are owned by many countries including The United States, Russia, China, North Korea, India, and the United Kingdom which is severely worrying. In the world, there are estimated to be around 9,000 of these weapons, and one of them can wipe out an entire city. Although some countries are keen to get rid of these weapons, others see them as their greatest pride. Although measures have been taken in the past to curb the number of weapons, there are still far too many. After the United States bombed Japan, there was an international scramble for these weapons, with an estimated 60,000 weapons existing. That figure has been reduced exponentially. The worry now is extremist (terrorist) groups getting a hand of these weapons and using that threat to dictate the world. With proper planning, knowledge, and raw materials, these weapons are easy enough to make and that is a serious threat to the world.

The cold war was a combination of geopolitical tensions between the United States and Soviet Russia. Geopolitical tensions are tensions over territorial claims. After world war 2, the soviet army called the red army liberated small countries that had been occupied by the Nazis and helped formed 'democratic' governments. This was a way of Stalin manipulating small countries

and becoming a world superpower, which the west spotted and tried to do the same. The cold war was also synonymous with the production of more nuclear weapons by both sides, after the bombing of Japan.

Although many countries were ordered by the Security Council to destroy stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, the fear is that terrorist/extremist groups now get ahold of such weapons. Terrorist groups are groups with a firm political ideology, often against their country's government/the west and use violence to express their views. The most tragic and famous example is 9/11 where terrorists from Al-Qaeda hijacked 2 US planes and flew them into the twin towers, killing thousands. If terrorists get access to weapons of mass destruction there would be world tyranny.

Weapons of mass destruction can't be made at home. They are highly scientific and some countries have openly stated they have production plants for weapons. These plants must be shut down to avoid the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Comprehension Question(s): How and why do these weapons affect the world? Why are they so dangerous?

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United States

The United States has made it very clear that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is unacceptable and should be at the top of the United Nations' priorities to prevent the spread of these weapons. The United States is also in favor of an all-out ban on nuclear weapons, even willing to give up their own arms to carry out this ban. The United Nations are also in favor of the United Nations being able to use military force to stop the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction.

Russia

Russia has been against the proliferation of nuclear weapons since the early 2000s, trying to make deals to reduce the number of nuclear warheads with the United States, but those deals never were settled. On the other hand in recent years there have been allegations towards Russia stating that they helped North Korea's Nuclear Program, by selling equipment, storage, and transportation of nuclear materials.

China

China has the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world sitting at a total of 320 nuclear weapons, ahead of China is Russia by almost a 5,500 weapon margin. China allegedly helped start the Pakistani nuclear program before it signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1992. Due to these mixed signals, it is hard to concur if China is Pro-Proliferation or against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

North Korea (DPRK)

North Korea has the 9th largest nuclear arsenal sitting at 30-40 weapons, an exact number of weapons is unclear due to their nation's secrecy. We can confidently say that North Korea is pro-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as in 2003 North Korea departed from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has continuously built its nuclear program. On top of this North Korea has seen tense moments with other states in the past decade leading to sanctions and other penalties to the state.

Timeline of Events

Date	Event	Effect on issue
1939-1941	The investigation into nuclear weapons begins, as fission was recently discovered.	This can be seen as a pandora's box of some sorts as it was the beginning of the evolution of weapons of mass destruction; the theory of an atomic bomb became a reality.
1941-1944	The development of the atomic bomb, and the start of multiple projects in multiple countries, that are trying to create an atomic bomb.	This shows how multiple countries are trying to secure themselves an atomic bomb to become a global superpower in a crucial period as it was in the middle of World War II.
March 1945	The successful creation of the first atomic bomb.	On March 9, 1945, the United States successfully built an atomic bomb and planned to use it to end World War II.
August 1945	The United States ended World War II by bombing two cities in Japan; Hiroshima & Nagasaki from Aug 6, 1945 – Aug 9, 1945	This shows the power of destruction these weapons of mass destruction have as they completely decimated two cities and ultimately ended a world war.
1960-1991	There was a cold war between the two global superpowers; the United States and Soviet Russia	Presents the problem of global security as these two superpowers are paranoid of one another as they both have the power to decimate the other.

1992-Present	The proliferation of nuclear arms as multiple countries started to build their nuclear arsenals.	This also presents the issue of global security as 10+ countries have a nuclear arsenal.
2017	United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs treaty in General Assembly	United Nations cements its stance on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Past International Action

UNODA: Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons/conventional weapons

The United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs noted a treaty in the 2017 General Assembly, the provisions this treaty includes; not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. The treaty was later approved by the general assembly and the general secretariat.

Sanctions on countries that proliferate nuclear arms

Most of the international community is against the proliferation of nuclear arms, for that reason, multiple countries place sanctions on countries that do not follow the treaty's guidelines. An example of this is the sanctions that were once placed on North Korea as they continued to expand their nuclear program and threaten multiple countries with these weapons.

Possible Solutions

As the United Nations Security Council, your biggest responsibility is to keep the international community safe, and one of its biggest threats is weapons of mass destruction. Throughout this debate, you must make sure that any resolution does not escalate tensions with countries that own nuclear weapons and

prevent any conflict while solving the issue. Keep in mind that you are representing your country's point of view, not yours.

Some possible solutions include the decrease of the presence of such weapons through treaties, conventions, sanctions, and more. This is the best way to remove these weapons as it does it diplomatically and avoids tensions.

To make sure terrorist or extremist groups don't get hold of ingredients of these materials, make sure they are difficult to get and properly guarded.

Eliminate them in your country, and other nations won't see you as hypocritical. This is because if you are telling other countries to get rid of their weapons and you still use them, they are likely not to listen to you.

UN involvement:

The United Nations has 3 groups that primarily take responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. These are:

- a) United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
- b) Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)
- c) United Nations Office for disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

These 3 groups work tirelessly to decrease global conflict, prevent wars and maintain international peace and security. Aside from the formation and operation of these groups, there have been direct treaties to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They are:

- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
 - Specifically targets avoiding the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and all member states of the United Nations signed it. It was extended indefinitely. **Recommended that delegates research more about this treaty.**
- Partial Test Ban Treaty

- Specifically bans all testing of nuclear weapons unless the tests are conducted underground. **Recommended that delegates research more about this treaty.**
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
 - Bans all testing of nuclear weapons, in all environments. Signed in 1963 but has yet to come into effect.

Furthermore, the United Nations was established for the very purpose of evitating war and saving lives. The United Nations was first created after the Second World war where around 50,000,000 people died.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- This relates to the political issue because weapons of mass destruction can cause an end to peace, justice, and strong institutions. With that said, weapons of mass destruction are possibly the factor that is holding the polarized global world back from becoming a more interconnected society.

3: Good Health And Well-Being

- This SDG relates to Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions because weapons of mass destruction can comprise the health of hundreds of thousands of people at one time. To have good health and well-being, countries must stop producing weapons of mass destruction as they would be more likely to use them.

Appendix

I. Links

- A. <https://www.britannica.com/technology/weapon-of-mass-destruction>
 - 1. This link is a general overview of weapons of mass destruction from Britannica. It will provide you with quick facts but if you scroll down you will find articles about nearly everything weapon-related.
- B. [The infographics show- Video](#)
 - 1. This link is a short youtube video on the worst weapons that have already been banned in war. It is 10 minutes but extremely captivating and is highly recommended that you watch. Made by the infographics show.
- C. [Un treaty on certain conventional weapons](#)
 - 1. This is one of the most direct solutions to this problem. The treaty on certain conventional weapons outlines banned weapons, how to use certain weapons etc.

II. Tips

- A. **Resource your country thoroughly.** Many countries own weapons of mass destruction but this information is not so easy to find. You will want to use **reliable sources**, government websites and be prepared to spend lots of time searching through governmental websites to find this information if any. Also, make sure to know who your country has tensions with and if they own nuclear weapons.
- B. **Be highly sensitive when talking about this topic.** Throughout the debate, you will be exploring highly sensitive and confidential subjects and a small comment can be perceived as a threat. As the security council, your job is to mitigate violence, not incite it.
- C. **Research pre-existing groups, treaties, and conventions.** This issue has been discussed at the UN since its creation so many treaties have already been passed, make sure when writing resolutions that you are not writing something that has already been done. Also research multi-nation military groups, such as NATO, and whether they use or have these weapons.

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