



Disarmament and
International Security
Committee

DISEC



MUNUC 36

Model United Nations at the University of Chicago

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CHAIR LETTER

Hi there!

We are Alex and Marcos and we will serve as your Chairs for DISEC! Before introducing the committee and our expectations, we want to take the time to introduce ourselves to you all.

To start, I'm Marcos! I'm a fourth-year in the College pursuing a BS/MS in Biological Chemistry and Chemistry. While I like to consider myself a lifelong Chicagoan the "true" Chicagoans never fail shout me down once they find out I'm from the "distant" western suburbs of Chicago. As some of you may remember, I served as the USG of General Assemblies at last year's MUNUC, Chaired the IAEA the year prior, and Moderated for DISEC my first year. I remain involved in UChicago's "MUNiverse" by serving as an Exec for the Ad Hoc at ChoMUN, UChicago's collegiate conference, and compete in GAs on the college circuit (and am a big fan of fun acronyms!). I also conduct my thesis research in an immunology lab on campus where I work on making vaccines for cancer and DJ at our local campus radio station. Outside of school I make weekly runs to the local comic shop near campus, hang out with friends, and listen to way too much Daft Punk.

I'm Alex, and I'm a third-year in the college majoring in Math and Economics. Although I consider myself Chicagoan as well, I'm actually from the Northern suburbs near Northwestern (booooo!). For both last year's MUNUC and the year before that I was the moderator for DISEC. I also participated in DISEC through all of high school meaning this marks my 7th DISEC. In the general MUN community at UChicago, I'm an EAC for a crisis committee for ChoMUN, and this year I'm chairing a crisis with our USG of General Assemblies. Outside of Model UN, I'm currently working on a few economics projects in the general area of policy (specifically banking oversight, climate change effects, and taxation) and am an active member of the chess club (which is really 95% poker).

Before getting into the topics, we want to set a few expectations ahead of the weekend as to what we are looking for from delegates in committee. We want to bring all the excitement that comes from participating in a GA while providing a learning experience for both new and experienced delegates. To that end, we will be looking for delegates in the committee who will throw themselves into the committee and try to take an active role in the committee's proceedings throughout the weekend of the conference. Specifically, we value delegates who bring unique solutions, are looking to speak often, and who collaborate well with the other delegates in the committee. In particular, we want to emphasize that we will be looking for delegates who lead through inclusion, not discrimination. More broadly, inappropriate behavior like bullying, harassment,

or just generally being mean will not be tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly. We intend to treat all of you as the mature and responsible students that we know you are; however, offensive or charged language will not be tolerated in committee, irrespective of whether it is “in service” of your country’s national policy. In particular, given the nature of the topics we have selected, we ask that you all please review the sensitivity statement that immediately follows this letter.

This committee is special to us for two different reasons. For Alex, he may be the only person who can claim to have been a part of seven DISECs over the course of his high school and college years and this will be his first time Chairing. For Marcos, the DISEC has always been his dream committee since he stepped away from running committees to serve as the USG last year. We have selected two topics that are broad in scope but nuanced in approach. While this background guide is our attempt at a concise overview of some hefty international issues, we recognize that we have selected two difficult topics and encourage you to reach out to marcoslopezii@uchicago.edu and agordon73@uchicago.edu with any questions you have about the content included in the background guide. Also feel free to reach out with any difficulties you may encounter while researching or just to say hello. We look forward to seeing you all in February, but until then, best of luck!

Best,

Marcos Lopez II

Alex Gordon

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HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) holds a significant role as the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Established in 1945, DISEC stands as one of the primary bodies within the UN General Assembly, offering participation to all 193 Member States.¹ With its focus centered on disarmament and security matters, DISEC engages in vibrant debates and the drafting of resolutions to address global challenges and uphold peace worldwide.

During the recent 77th session of the UN, DISEC's agenda encompassed critical topics, including nuclear weapons proliferation, the role of technology in international security, and the accumulation of conventional weapons.² Additionally, DISEC oversees two bodies dedicated to disarmament: the Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament (CD).³ Although resolutions passed by DISEC do not hold legal binding authority over UN Member States, they carry substantial weight within the international community. These resolutions provide vital direction and guidance in effectively confronting global threats to peace.

¹ United Nations. 2015. "Functions and Powers of the General Assembly." [www.un.org](https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml). 2015. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>.

² United Nations. "General Assembly of the United Nations." n.d. [www.un.org](https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/index.shtml). <https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/index.shtml>.

³ Ibid.

TOPIC A: WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Statement Of The Problem



A member of the Vermont National Guard's 15th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) maneuvering equipment during a decontamination training exercise at Edward F. Knapp State Airport, Barre, Vt. July 30, 2015.⁴

Weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), encompassing chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, pose a grave threat to international peace and security. These destructive technologies have the capacity to cause mass casualties within minutes, making their regulation and complete elimination an utmost priority for the global community. However, despite the collective efforts of nations to develop protocols and agreements to address the proliferation of WMDs, there are growing concerns that existing

measures may not be sufficient to deter their use in conflicts. Moreover, the continuous advancements in research and technology raise the possibility of the development of even more dangerous and sophisticated weapons, further exacerbating these concerns.

Chemical Weapons

Historical records show that ancient civilizations used poisonous substances, such as arsenic and plant-derived toxins, on arrows and other weapons to inflict harm on enemies. During World War I (1914-1918), modern chemical warfare was introduced on a large scale. The use of chlorine gas by the Germans in 1915 at the Second Battle of Ypres marked the first major deployment of chemical weapons. This was followed by the use of other agents such as mustard gas and phosgene, causing widespread suffering and death among soldiers⁵. After World War I, several countries continued researching and developing chemical weapons. Despite attempts to ban chemical warfare through the **Geneva Protocol** of 1925, which prohibited the use of chemical and biological weapons, the development and stockpiling of these weapons

⁴ Cunningham, Avery. 2015. *Civil Support Team Decontamination Training*. Online Image. Defense Visual Information Distribution Service. <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/2103893/civil-support-team-decontamination-training>.

⁵ Fitzgerald, Gerard J. "Chemical Warfare and Medical Response During World War I." *NCBI*, 2008, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2376985/>.

persisted. Chemical weapons were used sporadically during World War II, with limited deployment by various nations. However, the devastating impact of World War I chemical warfare led to a general aversion to their use in major conflicts. During the Cold War (1947-1991), both the United States and the Soviet Union expanded their chemical weapons programs. The threat of chemical warfare added another dimension to the arms race, leading to increased research, production, and stockpiling of these weapons. Following the end of the Cold War, efforts were made to control and eliminate chemical weapons.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was opened for signature in 1993 and entered into force in 1997. The CWC is a landmark treaty aimed at the complete elimination of chemical weapons and the prevention of their proliferation. The CWC has resulted in the destruction of large quantities of declared chemical weapons stockpiles.⁶ However, there have been instances of chemical weapons use in the 21st century, most notably in the Syrian civil war, where the Syrian government has been accused of using chemical agents against civilians⁷.

⁶ “History | OPCW.” *Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*, <https://www.opcw.org/about-us/history>.

⁷ Masterson, Julia, and Leanne Quinn. “Timeline of Syrian Chemical Weapons Activity, 2012-2022.” Arms Control Association,

Types of Chemical Weapons

Chemical weapons are deadly devices that use toxic chemicals to cause harm to people, animals, and the environment. These weapons are classified into several types based on their mode of delivery and effects on the target. What follows is an overview of several notable chemical weapons and their immediate effects on victims when deployed.

Nerve agents are among the most lethal chemical weapons. They interfere with the nervous system, disrupting the transmission of nerve impulses and causing severe symptoms. Nerve agents, such as sarin, VX, and soman, can lead to convulsions, respiratory failure, and death within minutes to hours after exposure.⁸

Blister agents, also known as vesicants, cause painful blistering and burning of the skin and respiratory tract. Mustard gas and lewisite are examples of blister agents. These weapons cause significant pain, long-term injuries, and can be lethal depending on the level of exposure.⁹

<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Timeline-of-Syrian-Chemical-Weapons-Activity>.

⁸ New York State Department of Health. 2004. “Facts about Nerve Agents.” Health.ny.gov. July 23, 2004.

https://health.ny.gov/environmental/emergency/chemical_terrorism/nerve_agents_general.htm.

⁹ Virginia Department of Health. “Blister Agents.” n.d. Virginia Department of Health. <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-preparedness/public-preparedness-guidance/chemical-agents/blister-agents/>.

Blood agents, like hydrogen cyanide and cyanogen chloride, interfere with the body's ability to use oxygen, leading to rapid suffocation and death. These chemicals are usually inhaled and act rapidly, making them particularly dangerous.¹⁰

Choking agents, such as chlorine and phosgene, cause severe irritation and damage to the respiratory system, resulting in choking, coughing, and pulmonary edema. These chemicals are often released as gasses and can cause widespread casualties in confined spaces.¹¹

Riot control agents, also known as tear gas, are used for crowd dispersal and law enforcement purposes. These chemicals cause irritation to the eyes, nose, and respiratory system, leading to temporary discomfort and incapacitation.¹²

Effects of Chemical Weapons

Depending on the type of chemical agent and the level of exposure, victims of chemical weapons may experience symptoms such as eye irritation, difficulty breathing, vomiting, and skin burns shortly after exposure. Exposure to chemical

weapons can lead to severe and long-term health consequences. Survivors may suffer from chronic respiratory problems, skin disorders, and lasting neurological damage.¹³

Chemical weapons can cause significant environmental damage. Chemical agents released into the air, water, or soil can contaminate the environment, leading to health risks for both humans and wildlife¹⁴. They also have a profound psychological impact on affected individuals and communities. The fear of future attacks and the uncertainty about the safety of the environment can create lasting trauma and anxiety.

Usage by State Actors

In recent years, there have been alarming instances of chemical weapons use by state actors, raising serious concerns about their proliferation and the flagrant disregard for international norms and treaties. One notable case is the attempted assassination of Sergei Skripal, a former Russian spy, and his daughter Yulia, in Salisbury, England, in March 2018. The United Kingdom accused Russia of using the nerve agent Novichok in the attack, resulting in a major international crisis

¹⁰ "CDC Blood Agents | Emergency Preparedness & Response." *CDC Emergency Preparedness*, <https://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/blood/index.asp>.

¹¹ "Choking/Lung/Pulmonary Agents (Irritant/Corrosive - Inhalation Toxidrome)." *CHEMM*, 16 11 2022, <https://chemm.hhs.gov/lungagents.htm>.

¹² "CDC Riot Control Agents | Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response." *CDC Emergency Preparedness*, 4 4 2018, <https://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/riotcontrol/>.

¹³ "Chemical Agents." CT.gov, <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/BT/Chemical-Agents>. Accessed 21 August 2023.

¹⁴ "Environmental Agents." *National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences*, <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/index.cfm>.

and diplomatic fallout.¹⁵ Additionally, North Korea, a country known for its secretive and provocative actions, has been accused of using chemical weapons against its own citizens and in acts of aggression. The 2017 assassination of Kim Jong-nam, the half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport using the nerve agent VX, further underscored the serious threat posed by chemical weapons in the hands of state actors.¹⁶

The Syrian civil war has served as a stark illustration of the challenges and limitations faced by the international community in intervening effectively in cases of chemical weapons use. Throughout the conflict, there have been numerous reports of chemical attacks, leading to significant loss of civilian lives and severe humanitarian consequences. Despite widespread condemnation and international efforts to hold those responsible accountable, the complexities of the conflict and geopolitical interests have

hindered cohesive action.¹⁷ The Syrian government has been accused of using chemical weapons, while non-state actors have also been implicated. The situation in Syria underscores the need for stronger mechanisms to prevent the use of chemical weapons and enforce international norms. It highlights the difficulty in establishing clear responsibility and the urgency to foster greater international cooperation and coordination to address such heinous acts of warfare effectively.¹⁸

Usage by Non-State Actors

Recent use of chemical weapons by non-state actors has raised serious concerns about the potential for these deadly weapons to fall into the hands of extremist groups and terrorist organizations. Such acts of chemical warfare, whether in the context of armed conflicts or targeted attacks, highlight the urgent need for robust international efforts to prevent the proliferation of these weapons and ensure accountability for their use. The use of chemical agents by non-state actors not only poses significant risks to civilian populations but also challenges the international community in effectively responding to and deterring such

¹⁵ “Putin’s poisons: 2018 attack on Sergei Skripal - U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Italy.” U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Italy, 11 April 2022, <https://it.usembassy.gov/putins-poisons-2018-attack-on-sergei-skripal/>.

¹⁶ Brock, Joe, et al. “Murder at the airport: the brazen attack on Kim Jong Nam.” *Reuters*, 31 March 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-malaysia-kim-murder-idUSKCN1RD185>.

¹⁷ Brooks, Julia, et al. “Responding to chemical weapons violations in Syria: legal, health, and humanitarian recommendations - Conflict and Health.” *Conflict and Health*, 19 February 2018, <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-018-0143-3>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

egregious violations of international norms and treaties. As the global threat of chemical weapons persists, collective action and cooperation among nations become paramount in addressing this pressing security issue.

Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese doomsday cult, conducted several attacks using chemical weapons. In 1994, they released sarin gas in the Japanese city of Matsumoto, killing seven people and injuring hundreds. Their most infamous attack occurred in 1995 when they released sarin gas in the Tokyo subway system during rush hour, resulting in 13 deaths and injuring over a thousand people.¹⁹

The Islamic State (ISIS) used chemical weapons in both Iraq and Syria during its territorial control. They were responsible for several attacks, including the use of mustard gas and chlorine gas. In 2016, ISIS used chemical weapons against Kurdish forces in Iraq, and in 2017, they launched a series of chemical attacks on civilian areas in Mosul.²⁰

¹⁹Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. 2001. "The Sarin Gas Attack in Japan and the Related Forensic Investigation." OPCW. June 1, 2001.
<http://opcw.org/media-centre/news/2001/06/sarin-gas-attack-japan-and-related-forensic-investigation>.

²⁰ Strack, Columb. "The Evolution of the Islamic State's Chemical Weapons Efforts – Combating Terrorism Center at West Point." *Combating Terrorism Center*, 10 2017,
<https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-evolution-of-the-islamic-states-chemical-weapons-efforts/>.

Biological Weapons

The origins of biological warfare can be traced back to ancient times when civilizations used to contaminate water supplies with pathogens. However, the modern era of biological weapons began during World War I with the use of various pathogens and toxins as instruments of war, which paved the way for exploring the potential of biological agents as weapons. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 banned the use of biological weapons, but unfortunately, that did not put an end to their development and deployment.²¹

Types of Biological Weapons

Biological weapons come in various forms, ranging from bacteria and viruses to toxins derived from living organisms. Bacteria such as anthrax (*Bacillus anthracis*) and plague (*Yersinia pestis*) have been weaponized due to their ability to cause severe illness and death. Viruses like smallpox (*Variola major*) and Ebola (Ebola virus) have also been studied as potential biological weapons due to their high mortality rates and potential for widespread transmission.

Additionally, toxins such as botulinum toxin and ricin, derived from bacteria and plants respectively, have been harnessed for their lethal effects.²²

²¹Riedel, Stefan. "Biological warfare and bioterrorism: a historical review." NCBI, 10 2004,
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1200679/>.

²² "What are Biological Weapons?" *UNODA*, 2 October 2022,

Effects and Usage of Biological Weapons

The threats posed by biological weapons are multifaceted and alarming. First and foremost, their potential for mass casualties is a significant concern. Pathogens can be engineered or selected to enhance their virulence, making them highly lethal and difficult to treat. Moreover, biological weapons can be designed to exploit vulnerabilities in medical infrastructure, overwhelming healthcare systems and causing widespread panic. Another challenging aspect of biological weapons is their ability to be concealed and clandestinely deployed. Unlike conventional weapons, which leave a visible footprint, biological agents can be disseminated covertly, making it difficult to detect and respond in a timely manner. Moreover, they can be highly contagious, leading to rapid and uncontrolled outbreaks. The potential for misuse or accidental release is also a major threat²³.

The proliferation of knowledge and technology has made it easier for non-state actors and rogue nations to acquire and develop biological weapons. The dual-use nature of biotechnology poses a challenge in distinguishing legitimate research from weapons development²⁴. Additionally, accidents in laboratories or

mishandling of biological agents can lead to unintentional releases, posing significant risks to public health.

The threats posed by biological weapons necessitate strong international cooperation, robust surveillance systems, and stringent biosecurity measures. Multilateral treaties and agreements, such as the **Biological Weapons Convention**, play a crucial role in prohibiting the development, production, and stockpiling of biological weapons²⁵. Additionally, investment in research and development of countermeasures, early warning systems, and effective response strategies is imperative to mitigate the risks associated with biological weapons and safeguard global health security.

<https://disarmament.unoda.org/biological-weapons/about/what-are-biological-weapons>.

²³Cole, Leonard A. "The problem of biological weapons - PMC." NCBI, 25 2005, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1087188/>.

²⁴ "Dual-use research." *Bureau Biosecurity*, <https://www.bureaubiosecurity.nl/en/dual-use>.

²⁵ "What are Biological Weapons?" *UNODA*, 2 October 2022, <https://disarmament.unoda.org/biological-weapons/about/what-are-biological-weapons>.

Nuclear Weapons

"I am become death, destroyer of worlds" - J. Robert Oppenheimer



An atomic bomb is detonated underwater in the lagoon of Bikini Atoll, 1946.²⁶

Overview of Nuclear Weapons

The first nuclear weapons were developed during the Manhattan Project, a top-secret research and development effort led by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada during World War II.²⁷ In 1945, the U.S. dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, resulting in unprecedented destruction and loss of life. These bombings marked the first and only instances of nuclear weapons being used in warfare.²⁸

The post-war period saw a nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, leading to the development of larger and more sophisticated nuclear arsenals.²⁹ Both superpowers built up their nuclear stockpiles, introducing increasingly advanced warhead designs and delivery systems, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the development of thermonuclear or hydrogen bombs, capable of vastly greater destructive power than early atomic bombs, escalated the arms race. The fusion reactions in thermonuclear weapons result in much larger yields, measured in megatons, vastly surpassing the kiloton yields of fission-based atomic bombs.³⁰

In the 1960s and 1970s, both the U.S. and Soviet Union developed MIRV technology, allowing a single missile to carry multiple warheads that could target separate locations independently.³¹

²⁶ U.S. National Park Service. 1945. *An Atomic Bomb Is Detonated Underwater in the Lagoon of Bikini Atoll, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, 1946*. Image. U.S. National Park Service. <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/6e448a040afb49c39c9ec01c4b069ea8#>.

²⁷ Streifer, Bill, and Kenneth N. Ricci. "Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki - 1945 - Nuclear Museum." *Atomic Heritage Foundation*, 5 6 2014, <https://ahf.nuclearmuseum.org/ahf/history/bombings-hiroshima-and-nagasaki-1945/>.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ "Timeline: U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Control." Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-russia-nuclear-arms-control>.

³⁰ "Fact Sheet: Thermonuclear Weapons." *Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation*, 18 November 2022, <https://armscontrolcenter.org/fact-sheet-thermonuclear-weapons/>.

³¹ "Fact Sheet: Multiple Independently-targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRV)." *Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation*, 28 August 2017, <https://armscontrolcenter.org/multiple-independently-targetable-reentry-vehicle-mirv/>.

This capability significantly increased the destructive potential of each missile, further heightened global tensions.

While the total number of nuclear weapons has decreased since the height of the Cold War, multiple countries still maintain substantial nuclear arsenals. Additionally, advancements in delivery systems and the miniaturization of warheads have made nuclear weapons more mobile and potentially easier to deploy³².

Effects of Nuclear Weapons

Prior to the advent of nuclear weapons, the most destructive weapons were conventional explosives, which had already proven devastating in previous wars. However, nuclear weapons harnessed the power of atomic and thermonuclear reactions to unleash a magnitude of destruction never before witnessed. During this period of nuclear weapons development in the years after WWII, the concept of "**mutually assured destruction**" (MAD) emerged, emphasizing that any large-scale nuclear conflict between major powers would lead to the assured destruction of both sides³³. The prospect of such

catastrophic consequences served as a deterrent to prevent open conflict between the nuclear-armed superpowers.

Additionally, during the early years of the nuclear age, numerous countries conducted a significant number of nuclear tests to advance their nuclear weapons programs. These tests were crucial for developing and refining the design and performance of nuclear warheads. The tests provided vital data on the behavior of nuclear explosions, the efficiency of weapon designs, and the feasibility of different delivery systems, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and strategic bombers. However, the extensive nuclear testing carried out during this period had devastating environmental and health consequences³⁴.

The detonation of nuclear devices released substantial amounts of radioactive materials into the atmosphere, soil, and water. The radioactive fallout from these tests spread over vast areas, contaminating the environment and posing serious health risks to both humans and the ecosystem. The most severe impact of nuclear testing was on the individuals living in the vicinity of test sites. Communities near nuclear test sites experienced higher rates of cancer and other radiation-related illnesses due to exposure

³²Brumfiel, Geoff. 2017. "North Korea Has Miniaturized a Nuclear Warhead, U.S. Intelligence Says." NPR. August 8, 2017.
<https://www.npr.org/2017/08/08/542286036/north-korea-has-miniaturized-a-nuclear-warhead-u-s-intelligence-says>.

³³"Mutual assured destruction | Definition, History, & Cold War." Britannica, 9 August 2023,
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/mutual-assured-destruction>.

³⁴Prăvălie, Remus. "Nuclear Weapons Tests and Environmental Consequences: A Global Perspective." NCBI, 10 2014,
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4165831/>.

to radioactive particles. Downwinders, those living downwind of test sites, were particularly vulnerable to these health risks³⁵.

The radioactive fallout also had far-reaching environmental implications. The deposited radioactive particles entered the food chain, contaminating crops, water sources, and wildlife. This led to bioaccumulation, where radioactive materials accumulated in organisms, increasing their concentration as they moved up the food chain. As a result, humans who consumed contaminated food faced additional health risks³⁶. Furthermore, atmospheric nuclear testing led to the global dispersion of radioactive isotopes, impacting regions far beyond the test sites³⁷. International concern over the health and environmental consequences of nuclear testing contributed to mounting pressure for arms control and disarmament efforts.

Nuclear Energy

³⁵ Ryerson, Jade. "Trinity Test Downwinders." *National Park Service*, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/trinity-test-downwinders.htm>.

³⁶ Simon, Steven, et al. "RADIATION DOSES AND CANCER RISKS IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT FROM BIKINI AND ENEWETAK NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS: SUMMARY." NCBI, 3 6 2014, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4042840/>.

³⁷ "Radioactive Fallout From Nuclear Weapons Testing | US EPA." EPA, 3 July 2023, <https://www.epa.gov/radtown/radioactive-fallout-nuclear-weapons-testing>.

Balancing nuclear energy with the risks associated with nuclear weapons is a complex challenge that demands a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. Nuclear energy, as a low-carbon and reliable source of electricity, has the potential to play a significant role in addressing the world's growing energy demands while reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.³⁸ However, promoting nuclear energy must go hand in hand with robust non-proliferation efforts and disarmament commitments to prevent the misuse of nuclear technology for military purposes. Striking this balance requires international cooperation, strengthened verification mechanisms, and a commitment from nuclear-armed states to reduce their arsenals.

Potential for Usage by Non State Actors

The challenge of nuclear weapons in the hands of non-state actors represents one of the gravest threats to global security. Non-state actors, such as terrorist groups or extremist organizations, lack the accountability, transparency, and adherence to international norms that states are expected to uphold. This makes the prospect of nuclear proliferation to these groups highly concerning.

³⁸ "Nuclear Power in a Clean Energy System – Analysis - IEA." International Energy Agency, 5 2019, <https://www.iea.org/reports/nuclear-power-in-a-clean-energy-system>.

The acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-state actors poses several alarming risks.³⁹

Non-state actors might not be susceptible to traditional deterrence strategies, as they are not tied to territorial assets or populations that can be held accountable for their actions. The use of nuclear weapons by these groups could be motivated by ideological, apocalyptic, or indiscriminate objectives, making traditional nuclear deterrence ineffective.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the use of a nuclear weapon by a non-state actor could lead to catastrophic consequences, such as mass casualties, widespread destruction, and long-term environmental damage. These groups may have limited knowledge of nuclear weapon safety and control, increasing the risk of accidental or unauthorized detonations.⁴¹

Non-state actors often operate covertly and can exploit the vulnerabilities of states to obtain nuclear materials or technology. Their ability to evade detection and hide in the shadows makes it challenging to track and prevent potential nuclear threats. Furthermore, unlike states with established diplomatic channels, non-state actors lack formal communication channels, making crisis management and conflict resolution more challenging in the event of a nuclear incident.

³⁹ Litwak, Robert. *Detering Nuclear Terrorism*. Wilson Center, 2016.
<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/detering-nuclear-terrorism>. Accessed 21 August 2023.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Challenges to Non Proliferation

The recent example of Ukraine serves as a cautionary tale for smaller countries regarding the risks and implications of giving up nuclear weapons or forgoing their pursuit. Ukraine's decision to relinquish its nuclear arsenal in the early 1990s, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, was made in exchange for security assurances from major powers, particularly the United States, Russia, and the United Kingdom. These assurances were outlined in the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances.⁴²

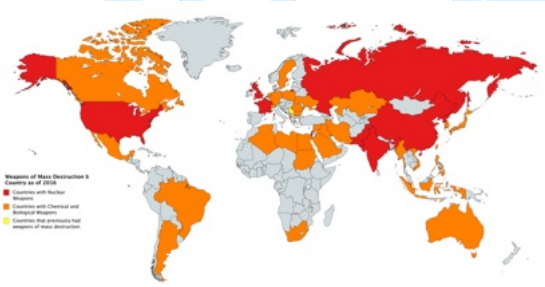
However, in 2014, Russia's annexation of Crimea and its subsequent invasion of Ukraine in 2022 shattered the trust in the security assurances provided to Ukraine. The international community condemned Russia's actions, but the annexation highlighted the limitations of security guarantees and the potential vulnerability of smaller countries relying solely on diplomatic assurances for their security⁴³. The situation in Ukraine has several implications for smaller countries considering their nuclear stance.

⁴² United Nations. 1994. "Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons." *Treaties.un.org*. May 12, 1994.
<https://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=0800000280401fbb>.

⁴³ Stelzenmüller, Constanze, et al. "Lessons from Ukraine | Brookings." Brookings Institution, 24 February 2023,
<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/lessons-from-ukraine/>.

The example of Ukraine demonstrates that relying solely on international assurances may not be enough to safeguard a country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Smaller countries may perceive nuclear weapons as a means of deterring potential aggression from larger adversaries. Nuclear weapons can provide smaller countries with a degree of deterrence and leverage on the global stage. Possessing nuclear capabilities or aligning with nuclear-armed alliances might bolster their influence in diplomatic negotiations and enhance their security posture. Smaller countries may view the possession of nuclear weapons as a way to balance the global power dynamics and gain equal footing with major nuclear-armed states.

History Of The Problem



*Weapons of Mass Destruction by Country as of 2016.*⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Wikimedia Commons. 2017. *Weapons of Mass Destruction by Country as of 2016*. Online Image. Wikipedia.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Weapons_of_Mass_Destruction_by_Country_as_of_2016.png.

Chemical Weapons



*Irish Guards troops performing a respirator drill to protect against poison gas attacks during World War I, 1916.*⁴⁵

World War I, also known as the Great War, marked a grim turning point in the history of warfare with the large-scale use of chemical weapons. Chlorine, mustard gas, and phosgene were among the deadly agents introduced during the conflict, unleashing unprecedented suffering on the battlefield. Chlorine gas, initially used by the German Army at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915, caused severe respiratory distress, leading to agonizing deaths and debilitating injuries for soldiers who were exposed.⁴⁶ The introduction of mustard gas, later in the war, was even more devastating, causing blistering of the

⁴⁵ Warwick Brooke, John. 2019. *Irish Guards Troops during Respirator Drill, Battle of the Somme, 1916*. Image. Wikimedia Commons.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Guards_Gas_Warfare_Battle_of_the_Somme.jpg.

⁴⁶ Patton, James. "Gas in The Great War." University of Kansas Medical Center,
<https://www.kumc.edu/school-of-medicine/academics/departments/history-and-philosophy-of-medicine/archives/wwi/essays/medicine/gas-in-the-great-war.html>

skin, respiratory issues, and temporary blindness. This indiscriminate and horrific form of warfare resulted in over 1 million casualties, with tens of thousands suffering long-term health issues and disabilities.⁴⁷

The horrors of chemical attacks during World War I deeply impacted public sentiment and rattled the international community. The use of chemical weapons was perceived as an egregious breach of the established norms of warfare and elicited widespread outrage. The indiscriminate nature of these agents, affecting combatants and civilians alike, added a new dimension of horror to the war and challenged the idea of "civilized" warfare.

In response to the international outcry, diplomats and leaders from various nations recognized the urgency of addressing the issue of chemical weapons. The use of these deadly agents during World War I led to the convening of the 1925 Geneva Conference, where a significant diplomatic breakthrough occurred. The outcome was the adoption of the **Geneva Protocol**, a historic agreement that sought to prohibit the use of chemical and biological weapons in warfare. Though not an outright ban on the production or stockpiling of such weapons, the protocol represented a critical step forward in arms control, promoting the notion that certain

weapons were too inhumane and morally repugnant for use in conflicts.⁴⁸

The Geneva Protocol laid the groundwork for further arms control agreements and initiatives aimed at restricting the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. Despite its limitations, it established an important precedent and underscored the need for international cooperation to prevent the resurgence of chemical warfare in future conflicts. This landmark agreement helped to foster greater awareness of the catastrophic consequences of chemical weapons, leading to the development of subsequent treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993, which aimed to comprehensively ban the use, development, production, and stockpiling of chemical weapons.⁴⁹

Case Study: Iran-Iraq War, 1980-1988

During the Iran-Iraq War, both Iran and Iraq employed chemical weapons, marking one of the most devastating episodes of chemical warfare in modern history. This brutal conflict between the neighboring countries saw the use of various

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸ "The Geneva Conventions and their Commentaries." *International Committee of the Red Cross*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions>.

⁴⁹ "Chemical Weapons Convention | OPCW." *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*, <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention>.

chemical agents, causing widespread human suffering and leaving a lasting impact on the region. Iraq, under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, was the first to use chemical weapons in the war. In 1983, Iraqi forces launched mustard gas attacks on Iranian troops, and in 1984, they escalated to using nerve agents, such as sarin and tabun, against Iranian forces and Kurdish civilian populations in northern Iraq.

The chemical attacks were often indiscriminate, targeting not only military installations but also civilian areas, leading to thousands of casualties and long-term health issues for survivors. In response to Iraq's use of chemical weapons, Iran began developing its own chemical weapons program. Iranian forces also employed chemical weapons, most notably during a large-scale offensive in 1988 known as the "Operation Mersad." This offensive saw the use of blister agents, choking agents, and cyanide against Iraqi troops. The use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War led to a significant international outcry and condemnation. The United Nations and the international community were deeply concerned about the escalation of chemical warfare and the horrifying impact on civilian populations. Despite this, the response from the international community was limited, with major powers providing diplomatic and political support to both sides while refraining from

taking decisive action against the use of chemical weapons.⁵⁰

The Iran-Iraq War finally ended in 1988 with a UN-brokered ceasefire, but the legacy of chemical weapons use continued to haunt the region. Thousands of people suffered from severe health issues, and many continue to experience the long-term effects of exposure to these deadly agents. The war also left deep scars on the environment, as chemical residues contaminated soil and water sources, affecting agriculture and public health. The use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War prompted international efforts to strengthen disarmament and arms control mechanisms. The experience of the war contributed to the establishment of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993, which aimed to comprehensively ban the use, development, production, stockpiling, and transfer of chemical weapons. The CWC has been a critical instrument in reducing the threat of chemical weapons use and ensuring accountability for violators.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ali, Javed. "NPR81: Chemical Weapons and the Iran-Iraq War: A Case Study in Noncompliance." *James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies*, <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/81ali.pdf>.

⁵¹ "Chemical Weapons Convention | OPCW." *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*, <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention>.

Case Study: Tokyo Subway Sarin Gas Attack, 1995

The Tokyo Subway Sarin Gas Attack, also known as the Aum Shinrikyo Attack, stands as one of the most notorious acts of domestic terrorism in modern history. On March 20, 1995, members of the Japanese doomsday cult Aum Shinrikyo executed a coordinated attack involving the release of sarin gas in Tokyo's subway system. The incident resulted in significant casualties and widespread panic, leaving a lasting impact on Japanese society and raising global concerns about the potential use of chemical weapons by non-state actors.

Aum Shinrikyo, led by Shoko Asahara, emerged in the 1980s as a doomsday cult blending elements of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity with apocalyptic beliefs. The cult amassed a considerable following, attracting individuals disillusioned with mainstream society and seeking spiritual enlightenment. Over time, Aum Shinrikyo's ideology evolved to incorporate extremist and violent tendencies.

On the morning of March 20, 1995, five teams of cult members acting in a synchronized manner released the deadly nerve agent sarin on five different subway lines in Tokyo. The attackers punctured plastic bags containing sarin with sharpened umbrella tips and left them on subway trains before exiting. As the sarin gas spread through the confined subway cars and stations, it

caused immediate symptoms in passengers, such as respiratory distress, vomiting, and convulsions.

The Tokyo Subway Sarin Gas Attack resulted in the death of 13 people and caused injuries to more than a thousand others. The attack created a state of panic and confusion among Tokyo's population, and the scenes of victims collapsing in subway stations shocked the nation and the world. Emergency services were overwhelmed, struggling to provide prompt medical assistance to the large number of affected individuals.

In the aftermath of the attack, Japanese authorities launched a massive investigation to apprehend the perpetrators. Within days, authorities arrested several Aum Shinrikyo members, including Shoko Asahara, who was found guilty of masterminding the attack and other acts of terrorism. Asahara and several other cult members were later sentenced to death.

The Tokyo Subway Sarin Gas Attack served as a wake-up call for governments and security agencies worldwide, highlighting the potential for non-state actors to acquire and deploy chemical weapons for acts of terrorism. The attack underscored the importance of robust intelligence gathering, interagency cooperation, and public vigilance in combating such threats. It also emphasized the need for international collaboration to prevent the proliferation of

chemical weapons and raise awareness about the dangers of extremist ideologies.⁵²

Case Study: Syrian Civil War, 2011-Present

The Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011, has been a devastating conflict with profound humanitarian consequences. Amid the already intense fighting between the Syrian government and various opposition groups, a new level of horror emerged with the use of chemical weapons. The United Nations and other organizations investigated and documented evidence of chemical attacks in Syria. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was tasked with investigating and verifying the use of chemical weapons, and it confirmed multiple instances of chemical attacks in Syria which are detailed below.⁵³

The Ghouta Sarin Gas Attack (2013): On August 21, 2013, the world recoiled in horror as reports of a chemical attack in the Ghouta region, near Damascus, emerged. The attack targeted residential areas, leading to the loss of hundreds

of lives, including many women and children, and injuring thousands more. The chemical agent used in the attack was later confirmed to be sarin gas, a deadly nerve agent that causes severe respiratory distress and paralysis, leading to an agonizing death.⁵⁴ The international community reacted with outrage, demanding accountability for the use of chemical weapons. The Syrian government and rebel forces engaged in a blame game, with each side accusing the other of responsibility for the attack. Despite the apparent evidence implicating the Syrian government, they denied any involvement and attributed the incident to rebel groups seeking to provoke international intervention.

The Khan Sheikhoun Chemical Attack (2017): On April 4, 2017, the town of Khan Sheikhoun in Idlib province suffered a horrific chemical attack that resulted in a substantial loss of civilian lives. The attack targeted a marketplace and residential areas, releasing deadly sarin gas yet again. The immediate aftermath of the attack was captured in haunting images and videos of lifeless bodies, including those of children, shaking the world's conscience.

International outrage intensified, with calls for immediate action to hold the perpetrators accountable. In response to the chemical attack,

⁵² Simmons, Erica. "Faith, Fanaticism, and Fear: Aum Shinrikyo--The Birth and Death of a Terrorist Organization." *Office of Justice Programs*, 2006, <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/faith-fanaticism-and-fear-aum-shinrikyo-birth-and-death-terrorist>.

⁵³ Brandt, Philippe. "Syria and the OPCW | OPCW." *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*, <https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/featured-topics/opcw-and-syria>.

⁵⁴ "Attacks on Ghouta: Analysis of Alleged Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria | HRW." *Human Rights Watch*, 10 September 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/09/10/attacks-ghouta/analysis-alleged-use-chemical-weapons-syria>.

the United States launched a targeted missile strike on the Syrian Shayrat Airbase, where the attack was believed to have originated. This airstrike was seen as a message of condemnation and a warning against further chemical attacks.⁵⁵

The Syrian civil war's use of chemical weapons has posed significant challenges for the international community. One major obstacle lies in attributing responsibility accurately. In the fog of war, obtaining credible evidence to definitively identify the perpetrators can be challenging, leading to potential exploitation of the situation by parties involved in the conflict.⁵⁶ Moreover, the inability to prevent the use of chemical weapons in Syria raises concerns about the efficacy of international agreements such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which aims to eliminate these deadly weapons. While Syria is a signatory to the CWC and agreed to dismantle its chemical weapons stockpile under international supervision in 2013, these attacks suggest that chemical weapons might have been retained or developed clandestinely.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ "Syria: A Year On, Chemical Weapons Attacks Persist." Human Rights Watch, 4 April 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/04/syria-year-chemical-weapons-attacks-persist>.

⁵⁶ Laub, Zachary. "Syria's War and the Descent Into Horror." Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/article/syrias-civil-war>

⁵⁷ Wittes, Tamara. "War in Syria: Next steps to mitigate the crisis | Brookings." Brookings Institution, 17 May 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/war-in-syria-next-steps-to-mitigate-the-crisis/>.

Biological Weapons



A member of the United States 2nd Munitions Squadron dressed in chemical-biological warfare gear adjusting a fuse on a general purpose bomb, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, 1986.⁵⁸

The history of biological weapons use is a grim testament to humanity's willingness to exploit the power of disease for military and political gain. The origins of biological warfare can be traced back to ancient times when various civilizations used rudimentary forms of biological agents to contaminate water supplies or unleash diseases upon their enemies. For example, in the 6th century B.C., the Assyrians poisoned enemy wells with rye ergot, a fungus containing toxic alkaloids. Similarly, during the Middle Ages, there are accounts of besieged cities catapulting dead

⁵⁸ Schmitten, Phil. 1986. *A Member of the 2nd Munitions Maintenance Squadron, Dressed in Chemical-Biological Warfare Gear, Adjusts the Fuse of a General Purpose Bomb during an Operational Readiness Inspection by the Strategic Air Command Inspector General Team*. Image. U.S. National Archives Catalog. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6415114>.

animals or plague-infected corpses into enemy territories to spread disease.

The inception of biological weapons was marked by a blend of government initiatives and private endeavors. In North America, Sir Frederick Banting, revered for his Nobel Prize-winning discovery of insulin, ventured into the realm of biological weaponry by establishing what could be considered the world's first privately-funded bioweapons research center in 1940.⁵⁹ With backing from corporate sponsors, Banting's efforts marked a disturbing intersection between scientific innovation and the potential for mass destruction.

At the same time, the Japanese military began their own bioweapons program led by radical nationalist Shiro Ishii. Ishii's vision for the program hinged on exploiting the formidable capabilities of biological agents to advance Japan's imperialistic ambitions. Commencing in 1930 at the Tokyo Army Medical School, the program evolved into a vast endeavor during World War II, involving extensive human experimentation and the deadly testing of various disease-causing agents on prisoners and unsuspecting civilians.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ "Banting and the Second World War." 2016. Banting House. July 15, 2016. <https://bantinghousenhs.ca/2016/07/15/banting-and-the-second-world-war/>.

⁶⁰ PBS. n.d. "Shiro Ishii | American Experience | PBS." www.pbs.org. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/weapon-biography-shiro-ishii/>.

Under Ishii's leadership, Japan's bioweapons program employed over 5,000 individuals and facilitated the deaths of up to 600 prisoners annually in its various research centers. The Japanese military further poisoned more than a thousand water wells in Chinese villages, inciting cholera and typhus outbreaks. The devastating epidemics persisted for years, haunting the Chinese populace long after Japan's surrender at the conclusion of World War II. The program's brazen disregard for humanity and ethical norms was further highlighted by the release of plague-infested fleas over Chinese cities and the distribution of these vectors via saboteurs in strategic locations.⁶¹

In response to international threats and the need to protect their interests, both the United States and the Soviet Union delved into bioweapons research. The US initiated its own bioweapons endeavors in 1941, initially with a defensive focus. However, as World War II progressed, the program swelled to encompass over 5,000 personnel by 1945. The primary goal was to develop countermeasures against potential Japanese bioweapons attacks.⁶² Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's bioweapons program remained shrouded in impenetrable secrecy. Biopreparat, a massive project employing more than 50,000

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Frischknecht, Friedrich. "The history of biological warfare - PMC." *NCBI*, 2003, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1326439/>.

individuals, became a hub for producing and stockpiling deadly agents such as anthrax and smallpox. The program's extent was staggering, including the engineering of multidrug-resistant bacteria and research on hemorrhagic fever viruses, some of the most lethal pathogens known to humanity.⁶³

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), signed in 1972, attempted to curtail the development and deployment of biological weapons by prohibiting research. However, verification mechanisms were lacking, allowing the Soviet program's existence to evade international scrutiny.⁶⁴ The ease with which individuals and groups can obtain dangerous agents, as evidenced by real-life cases involving the spread of hepatitis and parasitic infections, raises alarming concerns about the potential for non-state actors to engage in bioterrorism.

While the collapse of the Soviet Union led to the cessation of many bioweapons programs, suspicions linger about the true extent of their eradication. The uncertain fate of existing stockpiles and the potential for their dispersion into unauthorized hands fuel fears of future bioweapons use.

The specter of biological weapons resurfaced in the 20th century, with notable incidents highlighting their potential impact. The Aum

Shinrikyo cult's attempted use of anthrax in Japan in 1993, the deliberate release of anthrax spores through the U.S. postal system in 2001, and the discovery of Iraq's extensive biological weapons program during the 1990s are alarming reminders of the persistent danger.⁶⁵

While efforts to prevent the use of biological weapons have been made through international treaties, inspections, and intelligence sharing, the evolving nature of biotechnology poses challenges. The dual-use nature of many biological agents, with legitimate scientific and medical applications, blurs the line between defensive research and offensive capabilities.⁶⁶

Nuclear Weapons

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the culmination of the Manhattan Project, a top-secret research and development program initiated by the United States during World War II.

The project's primary objective was to develop an atomic bomb before Nazi Germany could do so.

The program was authorized by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939, following the discovery of nuclear fission by German scientists. Led by physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the Manhattan Project involved some of the brightest

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "Biosecurity and Dual-Use Research in the Life Sciences." *NCBI*, 2007, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK11496/>.

scientific minds of the time, including Albert Einstein and Enrico Fermi. The project faced immense challenges, from obtaining sufficient enriched uranium and plutonium to overcoming scientific and engineering obstacles in building a functional nuclear weapon.

The first successful test of the atomic bomb occurred on July 16, 1945, in a remote area of New Mexico known as the Trinity Test Site. The success of this test confirmed the viability of the bomb and marked a pivotal moment in human history. The world now possessed a weapon of unparalleled destructive power.

As World War II raged on, the United States faced a critical decision on how to use this new weapon. In the face of the war's protracted nature and the high casualties expected in an invasion of Japan, President Harry S. Truman and his advisors chose to deploy the atomic bombs against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.⁶⁷ The bombings resulted in an unprecedented loss of life and devastation. The immediate impact of the explosions killed tens of thousands of people, and the subsequent effects of radiation exposure caused widespread illness, suffering, and long-term health issues for survivors.⁶⁸ The bombings also caused immense psychological

trauma and marked the dawn of a new era of fear and uncertainty regarding the future of humanity.

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki not only brought the fighting in the Pacific Theater of World War II to a swift conclusion but also fundamentally altered the course of international relations. The realization of the devastating power of nuclear weapons created a sense of urgency within the international community to prevent their unrestrained use in future conflicts. In response to the threat of nuclear proliferation, the United Nations was established in 1945, with one of its primary objectives being the promotion of international peace and security. This new global forum provided a platform for addressing issues related to nuclear weapons and disarmament.⁶⁹

In 1968, the international community took a significant step towards preventing the spread of nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The treaty aimed to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promote disarmament among nuclear-armed states. It also affirmed the right of non-nuclear-weapon states to access and develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, subject to safeguards to prevent diversion to military use.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ "The Manhattan Project - Nuclear Museum." *Atomic Heritage Foundation*, 12 May 2017, <https://ahf.nuclearmuseum.org/ahf/history/manhattan-project/>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) | IAEA." *International Atomic*

Case Study: North Korea

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons has been a significant global concern in the 21st century. The secretive regime has conducted several nuclear tests, escalating regional tensions and prompting international sanctions and diplomatic efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. North Korea's nuclear ambitions pose complex challenges to international security, necessitating sustained diplomatic efforts to prevent the further development and potential use of nuclear weapons.

The origins of North Korea's nuclear program can be traced back to the 1950s when the Soviet Union provided assistance in the development of civilian nuclear energy. However, it was not until the 1980s and 1990s that concerns about North Korea's nuclear ambitions intensified. In 1993, North Korea announced its withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), signaling its intention to pursue a nuclear weapons program.⁷¹

The first tangible evidence of North Korea's nuclear ambitions came in 2002 when the United States accused the regime of secretly pursuing a uranium enrichment program in violation of

international agreements. This revelation further heightened global concerns about the potential proliferation of nuclear weapons and the destabilizing impact on the region.⁷² In October 2006, North Korea conducted its first underground nuclear test, marking a significant escalation in its nuclear program. This provocative act was met with widespread international condemnation, leading to the imposition of United Nations sanctions aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear and missile activities.

Despite the imposition of sanctions, North Korea continued to advance its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The country conducted multiple nuclear tests and tested various ballistic missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of reaching the continental United States. These developments heightened regional tensions and led to a series of international efforts to address the North Korean nuclear threat.⁷³

Numerous rounds of diplomatic negotiations, known as the Six-Party Talks, involving North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States, were initiated in an attempt to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. However, these talks experienced frequent setbacks, with North Korea showing a pattern of agreeing to

Energy Agency,
<https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/npt>.

⁷¹ Hecker, Siegfried, et al. "DPRK History." *Center for International Security and Cooperation*,
<https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/content/cisac-north-korea>.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

denuclearization measures and subsequently reneging on its commitments.⁷⁴

The year 2018 saw a significant shift in North Korea's approach when leader Kim Jong-un expressed a willingness to engage in diplomatic talks with the international community. A series of high-profile summits took place between Kim Jong-un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and U.S. President Donald Trump. These summits provided opportunities for dialogue and efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the nuclear issue.⁷⁵ While there were moments of optimism and diplomatic progress, achieving a comprehensive denuclearization agreement remained elusive. Negotiations hit roadblocks, as North Korea sought sanctions relief without taking sufficient steps towards complete denuclearization. As a result, the prospects for a lasting resolution remained uncertain.⁷⁶

Throughout these developments, the international community maintained a dual-track approach, combining diplomatic engagement with North Korea and maintaining pressure through sanctions to encourage compliance with disarmament goals. The United Nations Security Council imposed a series of increasingly stringent

sanctions targeting North Korea's economy, trade, and financial transactions to deter its nuclear and missile activities.⁷⁷

Case Study: India-Pakistan Nuclear Rivalry

The nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan is one of the most contentious and volatile security dilemmas in the contemporary world. This case study delves into the nuclear programs of both countries, examining the historical context, security concerns, and the implications for regional stability. The emergence of nuclear weapons in South Asia has had far-reaching consequences on international relations, arms control efforts, and the global non-proliferation regime.

India's journey towards acquiring nuclear capabilities began in the 1940s, and it conducted its first peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974 (Smiling Buddha). This development raised concerns among regional neighbors and the international community about the spread of nuclear weapons technology. Pakistan, feeling threatened by India's conventional military superiority and its nuclear aspirations, embarked on its own quest for nuclear weapons in the 1970s and 1980s.⁷⁸ The situation escalated with India's successful nuclear tests in 1998

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ "Timeline: North Korean Nuclear Negotiations." *Council on Foreign Relations*, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/north-korean-nuclear-negotiations>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "India and Pakistan." *Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation*, <https://armscontrolcenter.org/countries/india-and-pakistan/>.

(Pokhran-II), followed by Pakistan's tit-for-tat response with its nuclear tests (Chagai-I).

The nuclear standoff between India and Pakistan has its roots in historical animosities, territorial disputes, and unresolved conflicts. Both countries' nuclear weapons serve as a deterrent against large-scale conventional conflicts, yet they also raise concerns about the potential for accidental or miscalculated nuclear use.⁷⁹ The lack of effective communication channels and crisis management mechanisms between the two nuclear-armed adversaries further adds to the risk of nuclear escalation.

The India-Pakistan nuclear rivalry has contributed to an arms race in South Asia, diverting resources from socio-economic development and exacerbating regional tensions. The deployment of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles has heightened the risk of misunderstandings, raising the stakes for any potential conflict. The ongoing Kashmir dispute remains a persistent flashpoint that could potentially trigger a larger crisis.⁸⁰

The India-Pakistan nuclear standoff has presented significant challenges to global non-proliferation efforts. The two countries' acquisition of nuclear weapons has underscored the limitations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other disarmament

agreements. It has also created complexities for the international community in balancing engagement with these nuclear-armed states while upholding non-proliferation norms.⁸¹

Past Actions

UNSC Resolution 1540

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540) represents a significant response by the international community to the ever-growing threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) falling into the hands of non-state actors, particularly terrorist organizations.

The resolution acknowledges the serious risks posed by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and aims to address this menace comprehensively. One of the key elements of UNSCR 1540 is the binding obligation it imposes on all UN member states to take concrete and effective measures to prevent the proliferation of WMDs and related materials.

This includes adopting and enforcing national laws and regulations that criminalize the possession, acquisition, and transfer of WMDs to non-state actors. By making these measures legally binding, the resolution seeks to hold states accountable for their actions or lack thereof in combating WMD proliferation. Moreover, UNSCR 1540 emphasizes the importance of

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

reporting and transparency in the implementation process. States are required to submit regular reports outlining the steps they have taken to fulfill their obligations under the resolution. These reports serve as an essential tool for monitoring and assessing the progress made by states in strengthening their non-proliferation efforts.

In addition to national efforts, the resolution encourages international cooperation and assistance among states in preventing WMD proliferation. It recognizes that combating this global threat requires a collective and cooperative approach. States are encouraged to share best practices, provide technical assistance, and engage in capacity-building initiatives to enhance each other's abilities to prevent the illicit acquisition of WMDs by non-state actors. UNSCR 1540 also acknowledges the crucial role of the private sector in WMD non-proliferation efforts. By engaging with industries that deal with materials, technologies, or equipment that could be used in WMD development, states can raise awareness and ensure that companies are aware of their responsibilities to prevent their products from being misused.

While UNSCR 1540 has undoubtedly had a positive impact on strengthening global non-proliferation efforts, challenges remain. Some states face resource constraints and capacity limitations, making it difficult to fully implement the resolution's provisions. Additionally, new and

emerging threats, such as cyber-attacks and bioterrorism, demand further adaptation and development of measures to address the evolving landscape of WMD proliferation.⁸²

Chemical Weapons Convention (1992)



A U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot Toxic Material Handler marks a pallet of 155mm munitions for processing, 2020.⁸³

The **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)** is an international arms control treaty that aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction: chemical weapons. Adopted in 1992, the CWC entered into force on April 29, 1997. As of 2021, the treaty has been ratified by 193 countries, making it one of the most comprehensive and widely supported disarmament agreements in history.

⁸² United Nations. "Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) - Office for Disarmament Affairs." Office for Disarmament Affairs - Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, May 26, 2016. <https://www.unrcpd.org/wmd/1540-2/>.

⁸³ PEO ACWA. 2020. *Pueblo Chemical Depot Toxic Material Handlers*. Image. *Flickr.com*. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/acwa/49669568056>.

The CWC categorically bans the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer, and use of chemical weapons. The treaty defines chemical weapons as toxic chemicals and their precursors specifically designed for use in warfare or terrorism.

CWC member states possessing chemical weapons at the time of the treaty's entry into force commit to destroy their entire stockpiles. Destruction is to be conducted under the strict supervision and verification of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the treaty's implementing body. The CWC establishes a rigorous regime for verification and inspections to ensure compliance. The OPCW has the authority to conduct on-site inspections at declared chemical facilities to verify compliance with the treaty's provisions.

States parties are required to submit comprehensive declarations of their chemical weapons stockpiles, production facilities, and relevant activities to the OPCW. Regular updates and transparency regarding chemical industry activities help prevent clandestine chemical weapons development.

The CWC promotes international cooperation in providing assistance and protection to state parties in case of chemical weapons attacks or incidents involving toxic chemicals. The treaty emphasizes the importance of cooperation in disaster response and medical assistance.

The Chemical Weapons Convention has had significant effects on the global efforts to prevent the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. The CWC has led to the destruction of around 98% of the world's declared chemical weapons stockpiles. **States party** to the CWC, including major possessors like the United States and Russia, have made substantial progress in destroying their chemical arsenals. The CWC has also effectively deterred countries from acquiring or developing chemical weapons, as the treaty establishes strict prohibitions and robust verification mechanisms. It has made it increasingly difficult for non-state actors or rogue states to access or produce these deadly weapons.

The CWC fosters international cooperation and trust among states parties, as they work together to achieve the shared goal of eliminating chemical weapons. The treaty's collaborative spirit has enhanced disaster response capabilities, the sharing of expertise in peaceful uses of chemistry, and scientific research on toxic chemicals, their effects, and medical treatments. This research has been essential in developing antidotes and protective measures against chemical weapons attacks and ensuring the safe handling of hazardous chemicals.

While the CWC has been successful overall, challenges remain. Some countries, particularly those outside the treaty, have been accused of using chemical weapons in violation of the CWC. The OPCW has faced difficulties accessing

certain regions for inspection, making it challenging to verify compliance fully.⁸⁴

The Biological Weapons Convention (1972)



*Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense (CBRN) Soldiers from 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), inspect for biological warfare agents during a portion of the 1st SFC Validation Exercise on February 05, 2020, at Dugway Proving Grounds, Utah.*⁸⁵

The 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC/BTWC) is an international treaty that prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, and use of biological weapons. It

represents a landmark achievement in global efforts to prevent the spread and use of biological agents for military purposes. The BWC was opened for signature on April 10, 1972, and entered into force on March 26, 1975.⁸⁶

The BWC unequivocally bans the development, production, acquisition, retention, transfer, and use of biological agents and toxins that have no peaceful purposes. It applies to both state parties and non-state actors.⁸⁷ The BWC does not include a formal verification regime like the one in the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Instead, it relies on confidence-building measures, information exchange, and cooperation among states party to the BWC to strengthen transparency and ensure compliance.⁸⁸

State parties are responsible for enacting domestic legislation to implement the provisions of the BWC within their territories and take necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons.⁸⁹ The BWC encourages states parties to assist each other in strengthening their capabilities to combat the spread of diseases and prevent biological weapon threats. The BWC also

⁸⁴“Chemical Weapons Convention | OPCW.” *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*, <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention>.

⁸⁵ Broady-Chin, Iman. 2020. *1st Special Forces Command Validates Special Operations CBRN Soldiers*. Online Image. *Defense Visual Information Distribution Service*. <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6117910/1st-special-forces-command-validates-special-operations-cbrn-soldiers>.

⁸⁶ “Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).” *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <https://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/convention-prohibition-development-production-and-stockpiling-bacteriological-biological-and-toxin-weapons-btwc>.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

serves to foster international cooperation in scientific research, disease surveillance, and emergency response measures.

State parties hold annual meetings to review the implementation of the BWC, exchange information, and discuss issues related to biological weapons and biotechnology developments. Review conferences are held every five years to assess the operation and effectiveness of the BWC and address emerging challenges.⁹⁰ These conferences offer opportunities to strengthen the treaty and explore new ways to enhance its implementation.

The Biological Weapons Convention is a critical instrument in preventing the use of biological weapons. By establishing a norm against biological weapons, the BWC contributes to global security and stability. However, challenges remain in fully realizing the BWC's goals:

Unlike the CWC, the BWC lacks a robust verification mechanism, which makes it difficult to verify compliance effectively. It relies heavily on the willingness of state parties to declare their activities and share information. In the absence of a formal verification mechanism, enforcement measures for non-compliance are limited. Addressing cases of suspected non-compliance remains a challenge for the international community.⁹¹

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

Advances in biotechnology and genetic engineering raise concerns about potential misuse for weaponization purposes. Keeping the BWC relevant and adapting it to address these new developments is a challenge. Furthermore, many biological agents and technologies have legitimate civilian applications, making it challenging to differentiate between peaceful research and potential weaponization efforts.

Universalization: Some countries have not joined the BWC, and others may not fully adhere to its provisions, which undermines its effectiveness in preventing the proliferation of biological weapons.

Treaty On The Non-Proliferation Of Nuclear Weapons (1968)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an international treaty aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and promoting nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It was opened for signature on July 1, 1968, and entered into force on March 5, 1970. The NPT has been widely regarded as a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, with 191 parties as of 2021, making it one of the most widely supported arms control treaties in history.

The NPT establishes a division between states that possess nuclear weapons at the time of the treaty's entry into force (Nuclear Weapon States or NWS) and those that do not (Non-Nuclear

Weapon States or NNWS). The NWS are the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council: the United States, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom.

Article VI of the NPT emphasizes the commitment of NWS to pursue negotiations in good faith toward nuclear disarmament. The treaty recognizes the eventual goal of complete nuclear disarmament, although the timeframe and specific steps for achieving this objective remain subjects of ongoing debate.

NNWS parties to the NPT agree to not acquire or develop nuclear weapons or seek assistance in doing so. The treaty aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons technology to additional countries and create a strong disincentive for states to pursue nuclear weapons programs.

The NPT recognizes the right of all parties to develop, research, produce, and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, such as energy generation, medicine, and agriculture. It is one of the treaty's core elements, aimed at facilitating access to nuclear technology while ensuring its use is not diverted for military purposes.

The NPT mandates that NNWS parties adopt **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** safeguards on their nuclear activities. These safeguards involve inspections and monitoring to ensure that declared nuclear activities are used solely for peaceful purposes and not for nuclear weapons development. The IAEA's safeguards

and verification mechanisms have enhanced transparency and trust among states. Regular inspections help ensure compliance with non-proliferation commitments, contributing to regional and global security.

The NPT has had significant effects on nuclear proliferation and international security, playing a crucial role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons to additional countries. It has served as a strong normative framework and legal barrier, deterring states from acquiring nuclear weapons due to the political and economic consequences of violating the treaty.

By recognizing the right of NNWS to access nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, the NPT has facilitated international cooperation in nuclear energy research, development, and trade. It has contributed to advancements in nuclear medicine, agriculture, and power generation while promoting confidence-building measures between states.

The NPT's emphasis on nuclear disarmament has led to several bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements and treaties. Although progress has been uneven, substantial reductions in the number of nuclear weapons have been achieved between major nuclear powers.

Despite its successes, the NPT faces challenges, including the modernization of existing nuclear arsenals, the emergence of new nuclear powers (e.g., North Korea), and concerns about access to

nuclear technology for peaceful purposes potentially leading to proliferation risks. Additionally, some non-nuclear-weapon states argue that the NWS have not made sufficient progress toward disarmament, leading to calls for more decisive action.⁹²

Case Study: History of Nuclear Test Ban Treaties

The history of nuclear testing is a reflection of the global struggle for nuclear supremacy during the Cold War and the subsequent efforts to control the spread of nuclear weapons and mitigate their harmful effects on the environment and human health. This case study delves into the key milestones and treaties that have shaped the trajectory of nuclear testing and arms control, highlighting the significance of international cooperation in addressing the threats posed by nuclear weapons.

Early Nuclear Testing (1945-1958): The dawn of nuclear testing began with the successful detonation of the first atomic bomb, codenamed "Trinity," on July 16, 1945, as part of the U.S. Manhattan Project. This marked the beginning of an era where nuclear powers sought to demonstrate their military might. Subsequently, the United States conducted numerous nuclear

tests in various locations, including the Pacific Ocean and the Nevada Test Site. In response to the American tests, the Soviet Union conducted its first nuclear test, known as "Joe-1," in August 1949, escalating the arms race between the two superpowers.⁹³

Atmospheric Nuclear Testing and the Downwinders (1951-1963): During the early years of nuclear testing, many detonations occurred in the atmosphere, leading to the dispersion of radioactive fallout over large areas. This atmospheric testing had devastating consequences for nearby communities, known as "downwinders," as they suffered from alarming rates of cancer and other health issues due to exposure to radioactive particles. The devastating effects on human health and the environment prompted international concern and calls for a ban on atmospheric testing.⁹⁴

Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963): Responding to public protests and growing concerns about nuclear fallout, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom signed the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) in 1963. The treaty prohibited nuclear testing in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space. This pivotal agreement represented a crucial step

⁹² "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) | IAEA." *International Atomic Energy Agency*, <https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/npt>.

⁹³ "End Nuclear Tests Day - History | United Nations." *United Nations*, <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-nuclear-tests-day/history>.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

towards curbing nuclear testing and addressing the humanitarian and environmental impacts associated with it.⁹⁵

Threshold Test Ban Treaty (1974): Building on the success of the PTBT, the Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty (PNET) were signed in 1974. The TTBT aimed to further restrict nuclear testing by banning underground tests with yields exceeding 150 kilotons, while the PNET sought to control the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, such as mining and engineering projects. These treaties demonstrated the continued commitment of the international community to limit nuclear weapons testing and prevent its escalation.⁹⁶

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT): In the early 1990s, as the Cold War came to an end, negotiations for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) commenced. The goal was to establish a complete ban on all nuclear explosions for both military and peaceful purposes. The CTBT was opened for signature in 1996 and has been signed by 185 countries and ratified by 170. However, its entry into force has been hampered by the non-ratification of some nuclear-armed states, including the United States, China, and North Korea. Despite this, the CTBT remains a

vital objective for global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

Moratorium on Nuclear Testing (1992-1996): Prior to the CTBT negotiations, a de facto moratorium on nuclear testing was observed by most nuclear powers. The last underground nuclear test conducted by a nuclear-weapon state was by China in 1996. Since then, nuclear testing has been primarily limited to North Korea, which conducted several underground nuclear tests in defiance of international norms, sparking regional and global security concerns.⁹⁷

To ensure compliance with nuclear testing bans, international monitoring and verification mechanisms play a critical role. The International Monitoring System (IMS) established by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) consists of a global network of seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound, and radionuclide monitoring stations. These stations detect and analyze seismic waves, underwater sounds, infrasound waves, and radioactive particles associated with nuclear explosions, enabling prompt detection and verification of any illicit testing.⁹⁸

Case Study: Non Proliferation - Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, 2015

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed in 2015, represented a

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

landmark diplomatic achievement in efforts to address Iran's nuclear program.⁹⁹ This case study explores the genesis, key provisions, implementation, and the subsequent challenges faced by the JCPOA. As a complex multilateral agreement involving various stakeholders, the JCPOA's trajectory offers valuable insights into the complexities of nuclear diplomacy and arms control in the modern world.

For years, concerns over Iran's nuclear program and suspicions of possible military dimensions had raised tensions and triggered international sanctions. In response to these concerns, negotiations began in 2013 between Iran and the P5+1 group (United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom, France, and Germany) to address the issue. The goal was to ensure Iran's nuclear program remained exclusively peaceful, thus fostering regional stability and global non-proliferation efforts.¹⁰⁰

The JCPOA, finalized in July 2015, entailed a comprehensive set of provisions and restrictions on Iran's nuclear activities. It required Iran to reduce its uranium enrichment capacity, redesign its Arak heavy-water reactor, and submit to a robust inspection regime conducted by the IAEA. In return, the P5+1 group agreed to lift

nuclear-related economic sanctions against Iran, allowing for enhanced economic engagement.

In January 2016, Iran began fulfilling its obligations under the JCPOA, leading to the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions. The initial stages of implementation showcased the agreement's potential to foster confidence and cooperation. The IAEA verified Iran's compliance with the agreed-upon restrictions, reinforcing the credibility of the inspection regime.¹⁰¹

Despite its early successes, the JCPOA encountered significant challenges. The change in the United States' political landscape, with the 2016 election of President Donald Trump, created uncertainty surrounding the agreement's future. President Trump's skepticism towards the JCPOA culminated in the U.S. withdrawal from the accord in May 2018. The reimposition of sanctions on Iran, coupled with growing tensions between Iran and the United States, strained the agreement's integrity. The withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA and the subsequent reimposition of sanctions adversely affected regional dynamics. Iran's economic difficulties and the lack of tangible benefits from the agreement led to increased tensions and concerns over Iran's compliance with its commitments.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Robinson, Kali. "What Is the Iran Nuclear Deal?" *Council on Foreign Relations*, <https://www.cfr.org/background/what-iran-nuclear-deal>.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

As of the date of this case study, the JCPOA remains in a precarious state. Iran, while continuing to engage with the IAEA, has gradually resumed some nuclear activities limited by the agreement, leading to concerns over potential violations. European signatories and other stakeholders have expressed their commitment to salvaging the JCPOA, while Iran seeks tangible economic benefits promised under the deal.¹⁰³

United Nations Secretary General Boutros

Boutros-Ghal attends the 1993 signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Paris, France.¹⁰⁴

To enhance the effectiveness of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) treaties, robust verification and monitoring mechanisms are essential.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) plays a central role in implementing the CWC. It conducts inspections of declared chemical facilities, monitors trade and transfers of chemical-related materials, and investigates alleged use or breaches of the convention. Similarly, the BWC Implementation Support Unit works to promote compliance and facilitate cooperation among member states. Strengthening the capabilities of these international organizations is crucial to ensure thorough and accurate monitoring of compliance with the CWC and the BWC. States should provide adequate resources and support to enhance the expertise and capacity of the OPCW and the BWC Implementation Support

Possible Solutions

Expanding Chemical And Biological Weapons Bans:



¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Claude, Michel, and the United Nations. 2009. *Secretary-General of the United Nations Attends Signing of the Chemical Weapons Treaty*. Image. *Flickr.com*.

https://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/4211846420.

Unit in conducting inspections, analyzing data, and investigating reported incidents.¹⁰⁵

Promoting international cooperation is another key aspect of effectively countering chemical and biological threats. Information sharing on best practices, technologies, and scientific advancements can enhance preparedness and response capabilities. Regular exercises and joint training among member states can improve coordination and interoperability in case of a chemical or biological emergency. Moreover, capacity-building initiatives can assist states with limited resources in fulfilling their obligations under the conventions. Providing technical assistance and support to help countries develop effective national implementation measures can strengthen their ability to combat chemical and biological threats.

Public awareness and education about the dangers of chemical and biological weapons are crucial in reinforcing the norms against their use. Governments, non-governmental organizations, and international bodies should collaborate to raise public awareness about the consequences of

these weapons, discouraging potential users and promoting a culture of disarmament.¹⁰⁶

Strengthening Security Guarantees And International Agreements

Strengthening security guarantees, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is a vital strategy to promote nuclear non-proliferation and discourage countries from pursuing nuclear weapons. Security guarantees effectively replace the protection via mutually assured destruction to smaller states by providing assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states that they will not be subjected to nuclear threats or attacks from nuclear-armed states. By enhancing security assurances, nuclear-armed countries can create an environment of trust and reduce the incentives for non-nuclear-weapon states to seek their own nuclear arsenals. One approach to strengthening security guarantees is through formal bilateral or multilateral agreements. Nuclear-weapon states can commit to refraining from the use or threat of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states that are party to these agreements. These assurances can be incorporated into legally binding treaties, providing countries

¹⁰⁵ Walker, John R. "Strengthening the BTWC - PMC." NCBI, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1326441/>.

¹⁰⁶ "Center for Health Security Experts Attend Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) 9th Review Conference, Urge Endorsement of Tianjin Biosecurity Guidelines." *Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security*, 30 November 2022, <https://centerforhealthsecurity.org/2022/chs-experts-attend-bwc-9th-review-conference-0>.

with a higher level of confidence in their security.¹⁰⁷

Preventing WMD Usage By Non State Actors

Strengthening security measures around WMDs involves enhancing physical protection, preventing unauthorized access, and securing transportation routes for nuclear, chemical, and biological materials. Robust security protocols at research facilities, storage sites, and borders can minimize the risk of theft or diversion to non-state actors. Additionally, an increased focus on strengthening export controls and technology transfer regulations related to WMD-sensitive materials, equipment, and technologies could help prevent the illicit spread of WMD-related knowledge and capabilities. Simultaneously, fostering closer intelligence sharing among countries can facilitate timely detection of suspicious activities and potential threats related to WMDs. Sharing actionable intelligence on proliferators, trafficking networks, and non-state actors' activities can lead to effective preventive actions and prompt responses. By combining increased security measures and intelligence sharing, the international community can bolster its collective efforts to prevent and deter the use

of WMDs, safeguarding global peace and security.

Nuclear Energy



A nuclear power plant operating in 2005 located in Cattenom, France.¹⁰⁸

Encouraging research and development in nuclear technology can lead to advanced reactor designs that prioritize safety, waste management, and proliferation resistance. Next-generation nuclear technologies, such as small modular reactors (SMRs) and thorium reactors, represent innovative advancements in nuclear energy that offer potential benefits in terms of safety, sustainability, and proliferation resistance.¹⁰⁹ SMRs are smaller, scalable nuclear reactors that can be assembled off-site and transported to their intended location. Unlike traditional large-scale reactors, SMRs offer enhanced safety features and

¹⁰⁷“Negative Security Assurances (NSAs).” *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, <https://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/proposed-internationally-legally-binding-negative-security-assurances/>.

¹⁰⁸ Kuhn, Stefan. 2005. *Nuclear Power Plant Cattenom*. Online Image. *Wikimedia Commons*. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nuclear_Power_Plant_Cattenom.jpg.

¹⁰⁹ “Advanced Reactor Technologies.” *Department of Energy*, <https://www.energy.gov/ne/advanced-reactor-technologies>.

can operate independently or be deployed in clusters, providing flexibility and improved efficiency. Their compact design reduces the potential for catastrophic accidents, and they can utilize passive safety systems that do not rely on external power sources to shut down safely in emergencies. Moreover, SMRs can be deployed in remote or isolated regions, providing a reliable source of clean energy to communities where large-scale infrastructure may not be feasible.¹¹⁰

Thorium reactors, on the other hand, use thorium as a nuclear fuel instead of uranium. Thorium is more abundant in nature than uranium and produces less long-lived radioactive waste. Furthermore, thorium reactors are less prone to the proliferation risk associated with weapons-grade materials, making them potentially more proliferation-resistant. While thorium reactors are still in the early stages of development and face technical challenges, they hold promise as a sustainable and efficient alternative to traditional uranium-based reactors.

¹¹¹

The international community can work together to harness the potential of these next-generation nuclear technologies through cooperation, information sharing, and joint research and development efforts. Collaboration among

countries can help accelerate the development and commercialization of SMRs and thorium reactors by pooling resources, expertise, and funding. The international community can play a vital role in facilitating knowledge exchange and providing technical assistance to countries interested in adopting these advanced nuclear technologies. They can develop safety standards and guidelines for the deployment and operation of SMRs and thorium reactors to ensure that they meet the highest safety and non-proliferation standards. Furthermore, collaborative initiatives and joint demonstration projects can provide a platform for countries to test and validate the performance and safety of next-generation nuclear technologies in real-world settings.

These pilot projects can help build confidence in the viability of these technologies and attract investment from both public and private sectors. Additionally, the international community can encourage policies and incentives to promote the adoption of next-generation nuclear technologies. Governments can support research and development through grants and funding programs, while providing regulatory frameworks that support the safe and responsible deployment of these technologies.

Monitoring Nuclear Threats

Monitoring nuclear threats is a crucial aspect of global security, and it involves employing

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹“Thorium.” *World Nuclear Association*, <https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/current-and-future-generation/thorium.aspx>.

advanced technical systems to detect, assess, and respond to potential risks. One of the primary technical components of nuclear threat monitoring is the use of nuclear detection systems, which can detect and identify radioactive materials that may be associated with nuclear weapons or nuclear activities. These systems, including radiation detectors, spectroscopy devices, and radiation portal monitors, are deployed at ports, borders, and key transportation hubs to screen cargo, vehicles, and passengers for any illicit nuclear materials. Additionally, remote sensing technologies such as satellites equipped with gamma-ray spectrometers can monitor large areas from space and provide real-time data on potential nuclear activities. Moreover, the International Monitoring System (IMS) established by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) comprises an extensive network of seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound, and radionuclide monitoring stations that can detect and identify nuclear explosions anywhere in the world. This multi-layered technical approach to monitoring nuclear threats enhances global situational awareness and facilitates timely responses to potential nuclear risks, helping to maintain international security and peace.¹¹²

Advanced monitoring of nuclear threats has witnessed remarkable technological advancements, bolstering global security measures against the proliferation and potential use of nuclear weapons. One such innovation is the development of remote sensing and satellite technologies equipped with sophisticated detectors capable of identifying and tracking nuclear activities. These satellites utilize gamma-ray spectrometers and other specialized sensors to detect and analyze radiation signatures, enabling comprehensive surveillance of nuclear facilities and suspected sites. Additionally, advancements in artificial intelligence and machine learning have revolutionized nuclear threat monitoring by enabling more efficient data analysis, pattern recognition, and anomaly detection. These stations can detect and locate underground nuclear tests, seismic events, and atmospheric radioactivity, providing invaluable data for timely verification and response. Furthermore, advancements in drone technology have expanded monitoring capabilities by allowing for aerial surveillance of remote and challenging terrains, providing enhanced visual and data collection capabilities. These cutting-edge technical solutions not only improve the accuracy and reliability of nuclear threat monitoring but also foster international

¹¹² Starr, Andrea. "Nuclear Explosion Monitoring | PNNL." *Pacific Northwest National Laboratory*, <https://www.pnnl.gov/nuclear-explosion-monitoring>.

cooperation and coordination in safeguarding global peace and security.¹¹³

International cooperation is crucial to the development of these efforts. Sharing technical expertise, data, and best practices to enhance the collective monitoring capabilities can have a large impact on non proliferation. Collaboration can take the form of joint research and development projects, information sharing agreements, and joint exercises to improve response and coordination in case of nuclear incidents.

Increasing Cyber Security

The growing reliance on digital systems and networks in the operation and management of sensitive nuclear and WMD-related facilities has raised serious cyber-security concerns. International resolutions can play a pivotal role in addressing these vulnerabilities by urging states to enhance their cyber-security measures. To safeguard WMD facilities from cyber-attacks, countries can adopt comprehensive cyber-security strategies that encompass prevention, detection, response, and recovery measures.

¹¹³ International Atomic Energy Agency. 2013. "Advanced Surveillance, Diagnostic and Prognostic Techniques in Monitoring Structures, Systems and Components in Nuclear Power Plants." [www.iaea.org](https://www.iaea.org/publications/8763/advanced-surveillance-diagnostic-and-prognostic-techniques-in-monitoring-structures-systems-and-components-in-nuclear-power-plants). 2013.

Preventive measures involve implementing robust cyber-security policies, procedures, and protocols at all levels of WMD-related operations. This includes conducting regular security assessments and risk analyses to identify and address potential weaknesses in the cyber infrastructure.¹¹⁴ States should prioritize staff training and awareness to ensure personnel are well-informed about cyber threats and best practices for preventing attacks. Detection capabilities are equally important in identifying and mitigating cyber-attacks before they cause significant harm. Governments should invest in advanced intrusion detection systems and real-time monitoring tools to swiftly detect any unusual or unauthorized activities in their networks. Implementing effective threat intelligence sharing mechanisms with other countries and international organizations can also bolster early detection efforts. In the event of a cyber-attack, a rapid and coordinated response is critical to minimizing damage and preventing escalation.¹¹⁵

The international community can encourage states to develop robust incident response plans and establish dedicated teams capable of responding to cyber-security incidents. Promptly sharing information about cyber incidents with

¹¹⁴ Smith, Shane. "PROCEEDINGS." *Institute for National Strategic Studies*, 1 June 2021, <https://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/wmd-proceedings/CSWMD%20Proceedings%20Jun%2021%20PQ.pdf>.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

other affected nations and international bodies can facilitate joint efforts to address the threat effectively. Furthermore, investing in cyber-security research and development is essential to stay ahead of evolving cyber threats. International resolutions can promote collaborative initiatives to foster the sharing of expertise, best practices, and technological innovations among nations. This cooperation can help states improve their cyber-security capabilities collectively.¹¹⁶

Bloc Positions

The global arena is characterized by an overarching consensus that transcends borders: the need to prevent the use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. This shared commitment underscores the universal recognition of the catastrophic potential these weapons hold, capable of inflicting untold suffering and irreparable damage on humanity and the environment alike. However, despite this collective goal, the divergence in strategies for prevention among nations is both expected and complex. Each country's approach to prevention is invariably shaped by its unique geopolitical, historical, and cultural context, as well as its assessment of the security landscape. Disparities in economic capabilities, technological prowess, and military strength also play a pivotal role in

influencing a nation's stance on prevention techniques. While some nations advocate for stringent international treaties and robust arms control regimes, others may prioritize a more assertive and militarized posture, aiming to dissuade potential aggressors through the demonstration of strength. The intricate interplay between these multifaceted factors ultimately culminates in a tapestry of differing perspectives on how best to ensure a world free from the specter of these devastating weapons.

Nuclear Proliferation

The pursuit of nuclear weapons by certain nations is often driven by a perceived need to safeguard their borders and ensure their national security. This strategic calculus arises from a multitude of factors that converge to shape a country's decision-making process. Foremost among these considerations is the concept of deterrence, a foundational principle in the realm of nuclear strategy. Nations that perceive themselves to be under the shadow of potential external threats may believe that possessing a credible nuclear deterrent can dissuade adversaries from launching aggression or any hostile actions. For some countries, the possession of nuclear weapons represents a means of leveling the playing field, particularly in the face of more militarily powerful opponents. This pursuit is often motivated by historical experiences of vulnerability, territorial disputes,

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

or the absence of viable alternatives for defense against formidable adversaries. The belief in the coercive power of nuclear capabilities to forestall conflict and secure national sovereignty can be deeply rooted in the psyche of policymakers.

Nuclear Non Proliferation

Nations possessing nuclear weapons often find themselves confronted with a complex and delicate balancing act: while maintaining their own nuclear capabilities as a means of national security, they simultaneously recognize the importance of limiting the proliferation of these powerful weapons to other countries. This intricate dance between self-preservation and global security stems from a deep awareness of the potential consequences of an unchecked spread of nuclear arms. The rationale behind countries with nuclear weapons advocating for non-proliferation is multifaceted. First and foremost, these nations understand the inherent dangers posed by the expansion of the nuclear club. More countries possessing nuclear weapons not only increases the risk of conflict but also raises concerns about the potential for these weapons to fall into the hands of non-state actors, terrorist groups, or rogue regimes, with catastrophic consequences for global stability. Furthermore, nations with established nuclear arsenals often recognize the benefits of stability and predictability that come from a controlled number of nuclear powers. The balance of power

between a limited set of responsible actors can help prevent miscalculations, inadvertent escalations, and the erosion of the delicate equilibrium that has kept the world from experiencing large-scale nuclear conflict since the end of World War II.

Nuclear Disarmament

The aspiration of certain nations to achieve full nuclear disarmament represents a stance that envisions a world free from the shadow of nuclear annihilation. This commitment to disarmament is rooted in a profound understanding of the catastrophic potential of nuclear weapons and a moral imperative to ensure the survival and well-being of humanity. Such countries view the possession of nuclear arsenals as inherently risky and destabilizing, with the potential to undermine global security, perpetuate arms races, and divert resources away from pressing social and economic needs. The pursuit of complete nuclear disarmament is often framed within the context of broader international efforts to promote peace, prevent conflicts, and address the underlying root causes of insecurity. These countries recognize that disarmament is not merely about relinquishing weapons, but about addressing the underlying factors that contribute to the perceived need for nuclear deterrents in the first place. This might involve strengthening diplomatic ties, fostering cooperative security

arrangements, and investing in conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms.

Nuances Of Chemical And Biological Disarmament

At its core, chemical and biological disarmament seeks to mitigate the potential horrors that these agents can unleash. Chemical weapons, historically used in warfare with devastating consequences, possess the capacity to cause mass casualties and irreparable harm to both human beings and the environment. Biological agents, similarly, have the potential to spark deadly pandemics and inflict widespread suffering. The push for disarmament is grounded in the recognition that the uncontrolled proliferation of these weapons poses a grave threat to global security and humanity as a whole.

However, the nuances arise from the dual-use nature of the technologies and knowledge underpinning chemical and biological agents. The same scientific advancements that hold the promise of medical breakthroughs and agricultural advancements can also be harnessed to develop weapons of mass destruction. This dual-use conundrum complicates disarmament efforts, as it requires discerning between legitimate, peaceful applications and malicious intentions.

There are only a small number of non-signatories to the Biological Weapons Convention and

Chemical Weapons Convention. Of these parties, most are far into the process of signing both agreements. The countries that have yet to initiate that process have largely cited political reasons, such as waiting for other countries to sign different proposals, for not becoming signatories. However these countries are in geopolitical positions where they may require significant deterrence mechanisms. Similar to nuclear weapons, some countries may see the deterrence capabilities of chemical and biological warfare as an important component of their national defense strategy.

Glossary

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) - An international arms control treaty banning the production, development, stockpiling, and usage of biological weapons for States parties. Entered into force in 1975.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) - An international arms control treaty banning the production, development, stockpiling and usage of chemical weapons for States parties. Entered into force in 1997.

Geneva Protocol - A foundational treaty entered into force by the League of Nations in 1925 prohibiting the usage of biological and chemical weapons in armed warfare.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - The Intergovernmental organization under the United Nations that aims to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and restrict the usage of nuclear weapons in warfare.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - Also known as the Iran Nuclear Deal, an international agreement between the P5+1 (United States, United Kingdom, China, Russia, France, plus Germany) with the goal of nuclear non-proliferation within Iran.

Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) - An international relations and military strategy concept that theorizes that nuclear powers will not deploy nuclear weapons against another nuclear power for fear of retaliation resulting in complete nuclear destruction.

States Party - A country that has ratified or acceded to a treaty or international agreement.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) - A chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapon capable of causing mass destruction and loss of life.

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TOPIC B: STATE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE

Statement Of The Problem

State-sponsored violence, broadly, refers to acts committed by governments, or organizations acting with the support of governments, that seek to do harm to citizens of that country. This type of violence manifests in many different ways. Governments will use the tools available to them as leaders of a nation in order to execute agendas which often run contrary to the wellbeing of the citizens they are supposed to protect and represent. Oftentimes, state-sponsored violence is directed at particular group(s) of people within a country—whether based on religion, ethnicity, educational status, or some other metric. Depending upon the goals of the oppressive government, state-sponsored violence can include acts such as **extrajudicial arrests, forced disappearances, espionage activities, states of emergency**, and much more.

It is difficult to come up with one definition which could be considered all encompassing for state-sponsored violence that has occurred, is occurring, and will occur. What is important to recognize about state-sponsored violence is the way that governments leverage power they alone hold over their citizens to enact repressive measures. While a well-meaning government enacts rules and regulations out of the desire for all citizens to abide, governments are far too often

willing to resort to violence to enforce unpopular rules.¹¹⁷ Particularly when rules and legislation are clearly morally wrong, states would prefer to use quiet violence—silencing individuals outside the view of the public eye through methods like extrajudicial arrests and forced disappearances—to enforce these measures. But as citizens catch on to these schemes, governments will intensify their violent tactics. Citizens will inevitably begin to resist more greatly as well, requiring the further escalation of violence to enact oppressive policies. This often manifests itself through the creation of police-military states where governments forego hiding their oppressive measures in favor of public displays of power and violence. In particular, governments will declare states of emergency to give themselves greater legislative power in order to curtail the supposed widespread disorder and chaos. It should be noted that higher levels of state-sponsored violence against citizens “greatly [increases] risks associated with violent extremism.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Delgado, Melvin. *State-Sanctioned Violence: Advancing a Social Work Social Justice Agenda*, 2020.
<https://academic.oup.com/book/36627/chapter-abstract/321618955?redirectedFrom=fulltext&login=true>.

¹¹⁸ Piccone, Ted. “Democracy and Terrorism.” Think Tank Website. Brookings Institute. Brookings Institute, September 2017.

While there are numerous reasons why states will resort to violence to enact their policies, most cases of state-sponsored violence feature political and ideological dimensions as their critical axes. By this, we mean that state-sponsored violence often features political and/or ideological undertones which motivate the state to take the course of action they are implementing. While the political dimensions are often self-evident—silencing opposition parties, suppressing unfavorable journalistic viewpoints—ideological dimensions are often harder to spot until it is too late. By ideology, we are specifically referring to the ways in which countries actively seek to silence religious, minority, or other under-represented groups within a country. These are often based on prejudiced views or reactionary politics which seek to place the problems of a country on one group of people rather than addressing the structural issues facing a country. This background guide will provide numerous case studies to provide context to the ways countries around the world have, and are still currently, enacting violence against their citizens for their own ends.

Extrajudicial Arrests

Extrajudicial arrests, sometimes also referred to as arbitrary or unlawful detention, occur when individuals are “arrested and detained by a

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/democracy-and-terrorism-2/>.

government without due process and without the legal protections of a fair trial.”¹¹⁹ These are amongst the most common tactics used by governments perpetrating state-sanctioned violence. Oftentimes, as the case studies will illustrate, these arrests and detentions are used as intimidation tactics to scare opposition and suppress dissent. Referring back to the idea of quiet versus open violence, extrajudicial arrests are a tactic that could be considered as either type of violence. Oftentimes in the early stages of an oppressive government, unlawful detentions will occur to silence the most vocal opponents to the government in order to prevent escalation of opposition. However, once the violent tactics of a regime are exposed to the international community, it is common for arbitrary detentions to become commonplace tactics in those countries.

While many instances of extrajudicial arrests are committed by governments many would consider authoritarian or dictatorial, it is important to note that that is not always the case. Countries such as the United States, France, Japan, and many others have implemented policies or are currently considering legislation which have the

¹¹⁹ The Center for Justice & Accountability. “Arbitrary Detention.” CJA, n.d.

<https://cja.org/human-rights-issues/arbitrary-detention/#:~:text=Arbitrary%20or%20unlawful%20detention%20occurs,for%20the%20deprivation%20of%20liberty.>

telltale signs of unlawful detention.^{120,121,122} Much of the difficulty with international law that deals with extrajudicial arrest comes from the fact that the lines between security and repression become difficult to discern when there is strife between governments and their citizens. Laws and rules are made by these governments authorizing the police or judicial system to implement these measures in order to, for example, counter terrorism within a country's borders. While these measures are undoubtedly necessary for the protection of citizens, it becomes difficult to disentangle these provisions from the harmful effects they can have on people subject to unlawful detention. Citizens hope that these measures only catch the real criminals without regard for the innocent lives that often get mixed up by these sorts of policies. For instance, 124 people were arrested after peaceful protests

¹²⁰ Acebes, Cesar Munoz. "Presumption of Guilt: Human Rights Abuses of Post-September 11 Detainees." Human Rights Watch, n.d. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/us911/Index.htm#TopOfPage>.

¹²¹ France 24. "Independent Report Slams Indiscriminate Arrests at French Pension Protests." France 24, May 3, 2023. <https://www.france24.com/en/france/20230503-independent-report-slams-use-of-arbitrary-arrests-to-quell-french-pension-protests>.

¹²² Relief Web. "Japan: 'Endless Detention': Migrants Speak Out as Government Proposes Harsh Immigration Bill." U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, March 14, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/japan/japan-endless-detention-migrants-speak-out-government-proposes-harsh-immigration-bill>.

occurred in December 2020 in Paris over a new proposed "Global Security" law. More than ¾ of the arrests did not lead to prosecution.¹²³ These people, on the basis of organizing peacefully—a right guaranteed to French citizens—were arbitrarily detained. Even if they experienced no further repercussions, unless laws are enacted to change the way Parisian police interact with protestors, these sorts of arrests are likely to become commonplace at subsequent protests.

Case Study: 2017, 2020 Saudi Arabian Corruption Arrests

The 2020 Saudi Arabian corruption arrests present a particularly illuminating light on several features and difficulties that come with the practice of extrajudicial arrests. On March 15, 2020, Saudi Arabia arrested 298 government employees due to suspicions of corruption.¹²⁴ As is commonplace with many cases of unlawful detention, these arrests came under the guise of removing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats from power. While no one wants corrupt people in charge of government, the massive nature of this case caused concern amongst many human rights organizations, particularly because of the

¹²³ "Climate of Total Insecurity: Arbitrary Arrests of Peaceful Protesters in Paris on 12 December 2020." Amnesty International, February 2021. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur21/3650/2021/en/>.

¹²⁴ Human Rights Watch. "Saudi Arabia: New Mass Corruption Arrests." March 17, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/17/saudi-arabia-new-mass-corruption-arrests>.

Saudi government's past actions. A similar corruption crackdown occurred in November 2017. When the 2020 crackdown occurred, some of those detained in 2017 were still being held in detention without any charges filed against them. Therefore, these 2020 arrests only further concerned many that basic human rights were being violated with these new unlawful detentions.



*Protesters in Oslo call for the release of a man who was arrested in Saudi Arabia. The man in question was arrested for political reasons.*¹²⁵

Both the 2017 and 2020 corruption arrests have some interesting features that should be noted. Firstly, rather than holding the detainees in prison as would be standard procedure, the officials were detained in the Ritz Carlton hotel in Riyadh.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Sinden, Valerie. "Protesters in Oslo Demand Justice for Raif Badawi." *Center for International Media Assistance, CIMA*, 22 Jan. 2015, <https://www.cima.ned.org/blog/saudi-arabian-blog-ger-lashings-postponed/>. Accessed 21 Aug. 2023.

¹²⁶ Salman, Mohammed bin. "Saudi Arabia Detains Hundreds of Government Officials." *Al Jazeera*, March 16, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/3/16/saudi-arabia-detains-hundreds-of-government-officials>.

Despite the luxurious location, there were many allegations of mistreatment of detainees. While most unlawful detainees are not held in such glamorous conditions, it should be noted that oftentimes these persons are detained and held in non-prison locations. This often adds to the discomfort of victims and makes it clear that the government at least tacitly understands that what it is doing to these people is outside the scope of the law. Furthermore, Saudi detainees were pressured to hand over major financial assets in order to be released. *Nazaha*, the Saudi Arabian National Anti-Corruption Commission, estimated that the costs of the corruption of these officials total approximately \$108 million USD. With these financial assets that were handed over to the government, the government effectively extorted \$107 billion USD, almost ten times the amount the government supposedly lost from these acts of corruption.¹²⁷ This only further highlights the way that these arrests were likely conducted to intimidate powerful and wealthy individuals who were in opposition to the government.

Case Study: Abukar Hassan Ahmed

However, justice is possible for some victims. Abukar Hassan Ahmed was a law professor and human rights advocate who lived in Somalia during the turbulent years leading up to the Somali Civil War. In 1988, he was arbitrarily

¹²⁷ *Human Rights Watch*. "Saudi Arabia: New Mass Corruption Arrests." March 17, 2020.

arrested by the Somali National Security Service (NSS), modeled off of the KGB, and was tortured for months as a part of his interrogation. He was also held in solitary confinement and fed a starvation diet.¹²⁸ While Ahmed was eventually released, the abuse he suffered while arbitrarily detained remains with him to this day. Ahmed's story is not unique and there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people who similarly suffered at the hands of the NSS or other governmental organizations like it.

In 2010, Ahmed discovered that the colonel who directed much of his torture, Colonel Abdi Aden Magan, was residing freely in Columbus, Ohio. Ahmed filed a lawsuit against Magan and won \$15 million USD in settlement from Magan in an Ohio federal court due to the physical and emotional damages suffered by Ahmed to this day.¹²⁹ This was the first time someone who was a part of the NSS was held accountable for their actions. Magan's assets were seized in order to pay damages to Ahmed. While these instances are, unfortunately, very rare, they highlight that it is possible to protect victims of these acts. However,

the international community must work together to create stronger safeguards for these victims.

Forced Disappearances

Forced disappearances occur when a government or an entity acting on behalf of a government, abducts a person without due process of law. Furthermore, government officials will refuse to acknowledge the abduction and oftentimes will not disclose the fate of the person who was abducted.¹³⁰ Forced disappearances are very similar to extrajudicial arrests. The difference is whether the government is willing to acknowledge the arbitrary detention/kidnapping. As a consequence of this, the government will also not comment on the status or condition of the person who has been forcibly disappeared. While families and human rights organizations alike are concerned for the wellbeing of victims in both extrajudicial arrests and forced disappearances, the lack of acknowledgement involved with forced disappearances is cause for extra concern because of the opacity surrounding the person who has been disappeared.

Forced disappearances are particularly difficult for international organizations to deal with because of the fact that governments are unwilling to acknowledge that they happened nor take

¹²⁸ The Center for Justice & Accountability. "Torture by Somalia's Security Service: Ahmed v. Magan." CJA, n.d. <https://cja.org/what-we-do/litigation/ahmed-v-magan/>.

¹²⁹ Cano, Regina Garcia. "Ex-Somali Colonel Told to Pay \$15M in Torture Case." *Associated Press*, August 20, 2013. <https://apnews.com/article/3c078b108df14db387096c587c9446cf>.

¹³⁰ The Center for Justice & Accountability. "Forced Disappearance." CJA, n.d. <https://cja.org/human-rights-issues/forced-disappearance/#:~:text=Forced%20disappearance%20is%20abduction%20by,fate%20of%20the%20person%20abducted>.

responsibility. In some instances, the bodies of those who have disappeared will be found months or years after their disappearance making these cases especially taxing on the emotions of loved ones.¹³¹ Even in these instances, governments will conduct investigations into the death only to make conclusions about the cause of death which are unsatisfactory to loved ones. They make it clear that the government had some involvement. The reason governments conduct forced disappearances in some ways can be more limited than extrajudicial arrests, and in some ways is more expansion. In particular, forced disappearances are often targeted at silencing individuals or groups of individuals who have been particularly vocal against the government, such as Itai Dzamara.¹³² Other times, however, these sorts of operations are conducted when governments are trying to clamp down on insurgency or terrorist activity within their

borders, as has happened in Cameroon.¹³³ These acts are usually perpetrated by members of the military or police forces who are able to hide victims and their status by the perpetrators' protected status.

The differences between forced disappearances and unlawful arrest are subtle, but very important for their ramifications during peace negotiations. Particularly after periods of conflict, it becomes very difficult to find justice for victims of forced disappearances. Since governments—or organizations that come into power in the wake of a civil war—are unwilling to acknowledge their role in disappearing opponents, families are often left without any recourse or justice. Beyond that, it becomes incredibly difficult to deliver justice against the perpetrators of these acts, which are considered crimes against humanity, because litigators for families cannot find any evidence of the disappeared person's existence. Therefore, it is incredibly important that international organizations, in conjunction with U.N. member states, find ways to hold perpetrators accountable irrespective of the mess of conflict or bureaucracy.

Case Study; Syrian Civil War

Almost everyone around the globe is aware of the ongoing humanitarian crisis caused by the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War.

¹³¹ *People's Dispatch*. "Forced Disappearance in Argentina: The Case of Facundo Astudillo Castro." September 4, 2020.

<https://peoplesdispatch.org/2020/09/04/forced-disappearance-in-argentina-the-case-of-facundo-astudillo-castro/>.

¹³² Amnesty International. "Zimbabwe: Five Years on Whereabouts of Journalist and Pro-Democracy Activist Still a Mystery." Amnesty International, March 9, 2020.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/zimbabwe-five-years-on-whereabouts-of-journalist-and-pro-democracy-activist-still-a-mystery/#:~:text=Five%20years%20after%20journalist%20and,limbo%2C%20Amnesty%20International%20said%20today.>

¹³³ Amnesty International. "Where Are They? Their Loved Ones Deserve to Know." Amnesty International, n.d.
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2018/08/disappeared-in-africa/>.

However, fewer people are aware of the forced disappearances that are being undertaken by all sides in the conflict. The forces supporting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad have been responsible for the vast majority of those disappearances.^{134,135} As has been mentioned, the loved ones of people who have been disappeared do not know the status of their loved ones. Evidence compiled by the U.N. and other human rights organizations like the Human Rights Watch (HRW) suggests that many of these people, unfortunately, are killed in government detention centers. Even prior to the outbreak of war in 2011, the Syrian government had already begun forcibly disappearing people for participating and/or leading human rights activism, peaceful political opposition, and reporting critically about the government.¹³⁶

The U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights compiled an extensive report in 2021 which summarized the findings of more than 2,500 interviews, leaks from government

defectors, and other documents which revealed that the Syrian government had over 100 detention facilities it was using to hold people who had been forcibly disappeared.¹³⁷ One of the most important government defectors, who is identified in documents under the codename “Caesar,” turned over more than 28,000 photographs he had taken in his capacity as a government forensic photographer for the Syrian Military Police.¹³⁸ The photos were taken over the course of two years prior to Caesar’s defection in August 2013. Two years later, the political opposition movement that he had defected to revealed the full scope of the photographs Caesar had taken in his role with the government. The photos numbered over 53,000 over the course of those two years. The photographs are harrowing and painfully detail the methodical nature by which the Syrian government kept records of the people they had forcibly detained, who died while in detention. The images also included those of dead soldiers, members of security forces, and crime scenes after attacks had taken place by insurgent groups. The extensive efforts of groups

¹³⁴ “If the Dead Could Speak: Mass Deaths and Torture in Syria’s Detention Facilities.” Human Rights Watch, December 2015.
https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/supporting_resources/syria1215web.pdf.

¹³⁵ *Human Rights Watch*. “Syria: Families of ‘Disappeared’ Deserve Answers.” November 30, 2022, sec. United Nations.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/11/30/syria-families-disappeared-deserve-answers>.

¹³⁶ Human Rights Watch. “Lost in Syria’s Black Hole for Doing Their Jobs.” HRW, October 3, 2013.
<https://www.hrw.org/lost-in-syrias-black-hole>.

¹³⁷ “Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.” United Nations General Assembly, March 11, 2021. Human Rights Council. U.N. Document Database.
<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2F46%2F55&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>.

¹³⁸ “If the Dead Could Speak: Mass Deaths and Torture in Syria’s Detention Facilities.” Human Rights Watch, December 2015.

like HRW were able to identify over 6,000 victims. Efforts are still ongoing to positively identify victims to provide some sense of closure to families who have not only suffered the experience of statelessness, but also fear for their loved ones.

This case demonstrates not only the widespread nature of forced disappearances during times of conflict, but also the difficulty that comes with identifying the victims afterwards. While what has happened to these victims is doubtlessly horrific, we are lucky to have the amount of data and documentation we do thanks to leakers like “Caesar.” However, not all situations are so lucky as to have such a wealth of evidence—sometimes, the victims of forced disappearances are buried in unmarked mass graves. When we do have evidence, however, it is imperative we take action. After two years of analysis, comparing testimony from civilians, and numerous other fact-finding missions, human rights organizations were only able to positively identify eight victims. This is not due to inefficiency, but rather, the difficulty in communicating between different types of organizations, such as between the U.N. and NGOs. Furthermore, centralizing the collection of stories of these victims is difficult and connecting that information to the relevant parties working through these types of victim identification efforts can be incredibly difficult. Even if a family’s account of their loved one’s disappearance can be matched with photographs,

sometimes finding those families is impossible. Given how many Syrian families are currently stateless, NGO officials may not have the most up-to-date information as to where the victim’s loved ones are located. Without someone who can verify the identity of the photographs, international organizations cannot identify bodies.

Case Study: Colombian Peace Accord on the Missing



A woman holds a sign condemning forced disappearance practices undertaken in Colombia.¹³⁹

The effects of forced disappearance extend well beyond the end of a conflict. Particularly for conflicts where the practice becomes widespread, it can be incredibly difficult to reach an agreement between warring parties as each side juggles numerous considerations, including pressures from families. Such is the case in Colombia’s nearly six decade internal armed conflict. Fought largely between government

¹³⁹ Jusezam. “Victim Of Enforced Disappearance.” *Wikimedia Commons*, MediaWiki, 12 Oct. 2016, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Victim_Of_Enforced_Disappearance_%28178419437%29.jpeg.

forces, leftist guerrilla groups, and far-right paramilitary groups, the conflict has affected all aspects of life in Colombia. Unfortunately for many rural and urban poor, community organizers, human rights defenders, indigenous leaders, journalists, and many others were caught in the crossfire of this conflict. Victims of forced disappearances belong to any of these groups along with groups actively engaged in the conflict. The problem remained hidden until the families of people forcibly disappeared forced the issue into the spotlight at ongoing peace negotiations.

Again highlighting one of the biggest problems with forced disappearances is the lack of accounting of those who have unfortunately been lost. While government and paramilitary organizations are all to blame for the practice, it is difficult for negotiators to fully understand how many people have been forcibly disappeared. As of May 2016, records submitted to the Colombian government from loved ones suggest around 45,000 forcibly disappeared persons have been lost in the conflict.¹⁴⁰ Observers, however, estimate more than three times this amount have been lost as indirect victims. Men constitute 88% of those forcibly disappeared and most of the

victims come from just a few regions in the country.

In order to build confidence between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), one of the most prominent paramilitary groups involved in the conflict, negotiators for both sides have attempted to engage in good faith disclosure of information related to forced disappearances. These efforts have included consolidating information held by both sides into a single database and accelerating the identification of victims by disclosing records that are often held tight to the chest by the groups who perpetrate forced disappearances. Additionally, FARC has agreed to provide information related to where victims can be found—in unmarked mass graves. A sad reality for many victims and their families is the practice of disposing of bodies in large unmarked mass graves where hundreds of victims can be concealed from prying eyes. While turning over the locations of these sites is a critical first step, the identification of victims requires careful forensic analysis of the skulls and bones that remain. Particularly when victims do not have extensive medical records—whether because they could not access medical services or they do not have identification history needed post-mortem—it can be impossible to identify some victims. This is not to mention the exceptionally high cost to carry out these sorts of

¹⁴⁰ Haugaard, Lisa, and Virginia M. Bouvier. Peace Brief. Peace Brief. Colombia: United States Institute of Peace, July 25, 2016. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2016/07/colombia-peace-agreement-missing>.

procedures for positively identifying remains to a person.¹⁴¹

While the terms provide hope that justice will one day be achieved for the families of victims, the situation still highlights the many difficulties that come post-conflict for dealing with forced disappearances. As is demonstrated from the “Caesar” example, military groups will keep extensive records of the victims of forced disappearances. However, inherent in the definition of forced disappearance is the lack of acknowledgement of wrongdoing in the first place. Therefore, post-conflict measures must focus on getting access to these critical documents which can confirm the fate of victims, but, hopefully, reveal where their remains may be so they can be united with the families of victims. Particularly when governments were complicit or actively engaging in the practice, follow-up mechanisms are needed to build trust in the government. One of the biggest challenges for the Colombia case is that many families perceive the government as indifferent and apathetic given its history of engaging in the practice. They perceive the institutional structures being created as further barriers to the government

acknowledging wrongdoing on its part.¹⁴² Thus, these negotiations need to not just find justice for victims, but build trust in the systems they create.

States Of Emergency

You have probably seen states of emergency declared in all sorts of movies—from fictional zombie outbreaks in *World War Z* to the fictional weather storm in the *Day After Tomorrow* to Chancellor Palpatine in *Star Wars*—emergency broadcasts are commonplace to give a sense of urgency to fictional characters. However, these types of declarations are very real and have tremendous potential to harm citizens. By empowering governments to assume emergency powers they would otherwise not have access to, states of emergency create an atmosphere of fear and discomfort. While there are very legitimate declarations of emergency, such as in the event of natural disasters or in times of war, many times these declarations are used to exploit a situation and empower governments to take tyrannical measures. However, finding where the state of emergency is necessary versus when it becomes exploitative can be difficult to determine until it is too late. Other times, however, it is evident to domestic and international observers that there are sinister motives behind the action.

¹⁴¹ White, Patrick. “Cost to Search for Unmarked Graves, Identify Remains at Residential Schools Could Exceed \$1-Billion.” *The Globe and Mail*, June 28, 2021.
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-cost-to-search-for-unmarked-graves-identify-remains-at-residential/>.

¹⁴² White, Patrick. “Cost to Search for Unmarked Graves, Identify Remains at Residential Schools Could Exceed \$1-Billion.” *The Globe and Mail*, June 28, 2021.

The laws surrounding emergency powers issued during states of emergency vary widely from country to country making it difficult to pinpoint motives. Furthermore, the ways that these declarations can be abused and exploited also depend on the laws. In countries with stronger democratic institutions, a head of state may be granted emergency powers with consultation or oversight from legislative bodies.¹⁴³ However, in countries with weaker institutions with a weaker history of democracy, these regulations are not as clearly defined. Even if they are, without a strong history of democratic rule, leaders are too willing to grant themselves emergency powers outside of what is permitted by law to deal with “extraordinary circumstances.”^{144,145} In these circumstances, it can be difficult for citizens or legislative bodies to wrestle power back from power-hungry and corrupt politicians. In some

¹⁴³ Born, Hans, Ingrid Beutler, and Thorsten Wetzling. “States of Emergency.” Backgrounder. DCAF Backgrounder. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, October 2005.
https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/14131/backgrounder_02_states_emergency.pdf.

¹⁴⁴ CIVICUS. “Zambia: State of Emergency Signifies Worrying Signs for Civic Space.” Monitoring. CIVICUS, July 25, 2017.
<https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/media-releases/2901-zambia-state-of-emergency-signifies-worrying-signs-for-civic-space>.

¹⁴⁵ France-Presse, Agence. “Myanmar Junta Extends State of Emergency Delaying Promised Elections.” *The Guardian*, February 1, 2023, sec. Myanmar.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/02/myanmar-junta-extends-state-of-emergency-delaying-promised-elections>.

cases, such as in Myanmar, military juntas can become instruments of dictators in enacting their totalitarian vision of “defense.” Oftentimes, in these countries, states of emergency are declared to address an “issue” with an out-group in the country that the government wants to single out for persecution. This will be discussed shortly.

However, we should not consider governments with weak histories of democracy to be the only ones capable of slipping into abusing their emergency powers—democratic nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and many others have also exploited such declarations. In these cases, there are a few trends that we can identify as problems worthy of consideration. Firstly is that of the “Stalker Complex,” as described by the BBC, in which governments will turn towards surveillance of citizens in the name of public order to protect citizens from threats. In these systems, private, personal information is treated as a commodity that can be sold and used by governments and corporations. Such examples include British and American anti-terrorism legislation in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. In these cases, we also note that these expanded emergency surveillance powers are often legislated into existence rather than “declared” into existence. While sounding more democratic in nature, history has shown that the legislative branch becomes complicit in the expansion and exploitation of emergency powers granted to the executive.

Another common trend, seen in both democratic and autocratic governments, is called the “Stomp Reflex.” Since emergency powers move from the top of government down to other institutions, governments commonly engage in knee-jerk reactions that “stomp down” on perceived threats to problems. Governments are quick to curtail freedoms which limit the agency of citizens to have input on government action.¹⁴⁶ Oftentimes, governments play on the fears of citizens and, as identified earlier, will create an “out group” to justify the enacting of policies. The extent to which this out group is ostracized and discriminated against can vary depending on the situation. The willingness of a government to respect human rights in the implementation of policies is also a crucial factor. Democratic governments tend to respect human rights and the dignity of all citizens and rely on tactics that are more hidden from the public consciousness if they are curtailing citizens’ rights. On the other hand, autocratic governments do not tend to respect civil rights and, in extreme cases, will outright deny human rights to citizens or an out-group during states of emergency. These are some of the most dangerous situations for citizens as their safety cannot be guaranteed since it is threatened by their own government. States

¹⁴⁶ Kemp, Luke. “The ‘Stomp Reflex’: When Governments Abuse Emergency Powers.” *BBC*, April 28, 2021.
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210427-the-stomp-reflex-when-governments-abuse-emergency-powers>.

of emergency are oftentimes a gateway for governments to engage in previously mentioned activity mentioned in this background guide like extrajudicial arrests and forced disappearances.

Case Study: El Salvador, 2022

A modern example of the ways that states of emergency can be exploited by governments is that of the current situation in El Salvador. On March 27, 2022, the government declared a month-long state of emergency in response to “a series of gang-related killings.”¹⁴⁷ The state of emergency granted president Nayib Bukele a slew of emergency powers including the right to suspend due process. In other words, extrajudicial arrests are now commonplace. Many suspect that the declaration followed the collapse of a secret pact between criminal gangs and the government.¹⁴⁸ Watchdog organizations in the country report that trials for up to 500 people have been conducted at once with public defenders having less than 5 minutes to defend all 500 accused persons.¹⁴⁹ In September 2022, just six months into the state of emergency, the

¹⁴⁷ *UN News*. “El Salvador: Renewed State of Emergency Undermines Right to Fair Trial.” May 22, 2023.

¹⁴⁸ Associated Press. “El Salvador Locks Down Prisons After Wave of 87 Killings Over Weekend.” *The Guardian*, March 28, 2022.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/28/el-salvador-prisons-gang-killings>.

¹⁴⁹ *UN News*. “El Salvador: Renewed State of Emergency Undermines Right to Fair Trial.” May 22, 2023.

government reported 58,000 people had been detained. Some figures from the president's office estimate the number, proudly, at "more than 67,000."¹⁵⁰ The police willingly admit that as many as 1 in 6 detainees are innocent.

The state of emergency has been extended several times since its original expiration date in April. At the time of writing, the state of emergency is ongoing. Citizens have praised the president's actions during the state of emergency for curtailing the once record-breaking national crime rate in the country to record lows, highlighting the sometimes varying accompanying reactions to abused states of emergency.¹⁵¹ However, others in the country are not as approving of the president's increasingly dictatorial tendencies. In February, relatives of detained persons marched on the capital to protest the state of emergency which was going into its 11th month of perpetuity at the time. What is clear, however, is the way that President Bukele trampled on human rights in his journey to achieve the results his administration has seen. Human rights organizations have collected almost 8,000 complaints of human rights violations against prisoners and at least 90 people

have died in the now-overcrowded Salvadoran prisons.¹⁵²

Espionage Activities

Perhaps the type of state-sponsored violence that many are most familiar with, espionage activities encompasses a wide variety of actions available to a government. To provide an exhaustive list of all types of espionage activities which government agencies regularly undertake would take up several pages. Rather, this section will mostly feature modern case studies of countries undertaking espionage activities against their own citizens. While we traditionally think of espionage operations as being conducted against other countries and its citizens (which will also be covered), many do not think of the ways in which governments conduct operations against their own citizens.

Case Study: Murder of Jamal Khashoggi, 2018

While the murder of Jamal Khashoggi was a big international story from 2018, it highlights many important features of espionage activities that governments undertake on their own citizens. Mr. Khashoggi was a prominent Saudi journalist who covered major stories for Saudi news organizations. To highlight the length of his

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Maldonado, Carlos S. "Nayib Bukele Seeks to Extend His Time in Power." *El Pais*, July 9, 2023. <https://english.elpais.com/international/2023-07-09/nayib-bukele-seeks-to-extend-his-time-in-power.html>.

¹⁵² *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*. "El Salvador State of Emergency." March 28, 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-briefing-notes/2023/03/el-salvador-state-emergency>.

career, it included major coverage of events like the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the rise of al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. He served as an advisor to the Saudi royal family and was close to the family. However, Khashoggi went into self-imposed exile in the United States in 2017, likely over a fall out with members of the royal family. It was at this time that he began writing for the Washington Post during which he became a vocal critic of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler.¹⁵³

Mr. Khashoggi visited the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on September 28, 2018 in order to obtain Saudi legal documents that stated he was divorced in order to marry his fiancée who lived in Turkey. He was told to return to the consulate on October 2 since the papers were not yet finalized. However, after more than a day of waiting, Khashoggi's fiancée became concerned when he had not emerged from the consulate—in fact, she waited outside the consulate for more than 10 hours on the day of his disappearance. For more than two weeks, the Saudi government, including the Crown Prince, denied any knowledge of Mr. Khashoggi's fate. Sources stated that he had left after a few minutes.¹⁵⁴

However, on October 20, the Saudi government confirmed that a preliminary investigation concluded that Khashoggi died from a chokehold after resisting an attempt to return him to Saudi Arabia. International observers and governments were unsatisfied with this answer and placed further pressure on the Saudi government to stop what many believed to be a cover-up. A month later, Saudi Arabia's deputy public prosecutor announced that the murder was in fact “ordered by the head of a ‘negotiations team’ sent to Istanbul...to bring Khashoggi back to” Saudi Arabia. Methods of persuasion and force were both authorized. The investigators concluded that Mr. Khashoggi was forcibly restrained and injected with a large amount of a drug which was too much for his body which led to a death by overdose. His body was dismembered and handed off to be disposed of by a “local collaborator.” Five individuals confessed to the murder, but the Crown Prince was said to have no knowledge of the murder. While subsequent investigations implicated as many as 20 people in the crime, many observers noted that those who are believed to have been the masterminds behind the scheme were allowed to walk free.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ *BBC News*. “Jamal Khashoggi: All You Need to Know about Saudi Journalist's Death.” February 24, 2021.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45812399>.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁵ *BBC News*. “Jamal Khashoggi Killing: Saudi Crown Prince ‘Should Face Investigation.’” June 19, 2019.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-48689137>.



Posters at an event calling for the perpetrators of the crime to be brought to justice.¹⁵⁶

A June 2019 report written by Agnes Callamard, a special rapporteur appointed by the UN to investigate the incident, found that the circumstances surrounding Khashoggi's death constitutes an extrajudicial killing of which the government of Saudi Arabia is solely responsible. Ms. Callamard also found credible evidence to warrant an investigation into the highest levels of the Saudi government, including the Crown Prince himself. The report also verified that a 15-person team of agents was dispatched to Istanbul which arrived and left the same day of the disappearance via private or commercial jet. Audio evidence obtained by the report was later disseminated to other officials around the world, including the director of the CIA, who concluded with "medium to high certainty" the Crown Prince ordered the killing.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Brady, April. *Justice for Jamal: The United States and Saudi Arabia One Year After the Khashoggi Murder*. Washington D.C., 1 Oct. 2019.

¹⁵⁷ BBC News. "Jamal Khashoggi Killing: Saudi Crown Prince 'Should Face Investigation.'" June 19, 2019.

Irrespective of culpability, the Jamal Khashoggi case demonstrates the lengths to which governments will go in order to deal with people they consider to be dangerous. Similar to forced disappearances, espionage activities are difficult to prosecute and seek restitution because governments will deny allegations. Even when these governments do admit to wrongdoing, it is often in order to protect certain officials by creating scapegoats lower in rank in intelligence agencies. While these people did carry out orders that were morally wrong, the people who authorize or come up with these plans must be held accountable for the harm they have orchestrated. Furthermore, countries lack recourse to force countries to confess to their guilt other than through public pressure. International mechanisms to bring these incidents to light while seeking justice for those impacted will be critical to any good solution.

Case Study: Poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal

A case that was also reported in 2018 but did not receive as widespread attention is that of the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal. Sergei Skripal, now a British citizen, once worked as a Russian intelligence officer. In 2010, he was handed over to British authorities as part of a spy swap because he had been captured in 2004 by Russian security services as a double agent for MI6, UK's intelligence services. While Mr. Skripal was formally retired at the time of the

incident we will be discussing, sources have noted that he regularly took trips to countries like the Czech Republic, Colombia, and Switzerland to teach agents there about Russian spy techniques. Nonetheless, for all intents and purposes, Sergei was far removed from the heat of spy action when, on March 4, 2018, Sergei and his daughter, Yulia, were found unconscious on a park bench. Yulia is a Russian national who was visiting her father in the United Kingdom at the time.¹⁵⁸

An investigation into an attempted murder was quickly opened by British authorities. This was because Sergei and Yulia were found to have come into contact with Novichok, a military-grade nerve agent originally developed in the Soviet Union. Nerve agents, by blocking the way our bodies chemically signal between nerves and organs, are very dangerous. Within weeks, British, American, French, and German authorities had all reached the same conclusion: the Russian government was behind the attack. The agencies noted that there was “no plausible alternative explanation.” Trace residue of Novichok was found in the hotel room of a pair of Russian men suspected of being involved in the attempted murder. After a British couple a few towns over fell ill to the same poison which had poisoned the

Skripals, British authorities believed they found the device used to poison the Skripals, a modified perfume bottle.¹⁵⁹ While the Skripals thankfully recovered, the woman in the second poisoning unfortunately did not as she sprayed the poison directly onto her wrist thinking it was just perfume. Authorities later charged in absentia two Russian military intelligence officers for their involvement in the Skripal poisoning. They were charged in absentia because the two men were already back in Russia when the charges were filed.

Given the mounting evidence, over 153 Russian diplomats and intelligence officers had already been expelled from their posts in more than 20 countries, including the U.K. and U.S. for alleged ties to espionage activities. Vladimir Putin, for his part, had denied Russian involvement in the incident since the first accusations were levied against his government.

After British officials charged the two men, RT, a state-controlled television station formerly called Russia Today, had both men appear on it who claimed they were tourists visiting Britain. Among other allegations, Russian officials spread false claims to dispel blame from Russia.

¹⁵⁸ Harding, Luke. “The Skripal Poisonings: The Bungled Assassination with the Kremlin’s Fingerprints All Over It.” *The Guardian*, December 26, 2018.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/dec/26/skripal-poisonings-bungled-assassination-kremlin-putin-salisbury>.

¹⁵⁹ Schwirtz, Michael, and Ellen Barry. “Sergei Skripal Was Retired, but Still in the Spy Game. Was That Why He Was Poisoned.” *The New York Times*, May 14, 2018.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/14/world/europe/sergei-skripal-spying-russia-poisoning.html>.

Investigations after the incident revealed that three weeks after the attack, more than two-thirds of social media posts about the attack came from sources backed by the Kremlin, the seat of the Russian government.¹⁶⁰ State-sponsored television station continued to produce misleading and

erroneous stories in order to confuse Western media and audiences.

Similar to the case of Jamal Khashoggi, we see the government which ordered the espionage operation vehemently denied all allegations against them. Rather than proceed through traditional diplomatic channels to resolve the issue, governments will instead misdirect investigators in order to cover up for the perpetrators of these acts. Furthermore, espionage operations that we are concerned with tend to occur on foreign soil. These situations tend to get caught in the political quagmire of modern politics which can make communication and cooperation between the country in which the crime happened and the country which carried out the operation tense. Especially when governments are unwilling to admit even a small bit of wrongdoing, the communication process can quickly break down and resort to defense measures such as those seen by the Russian

¹⁶⁰ U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Italy. "Putin's Poisons: 2018 Attack on Sergei Skripal." Government, April 11, 2022. <https://it.usembassy.gov/putins-poisons-2018-attack-on-sergei-skripal/>.

government in this case study. Therefore, mechanisms to ensure cooperation between both sides so the victims of such crimes can get justice are critical to the development of international frameworks.

History Of The Problem

Since the lengthy previous section highlighted many of the common features of the four types of action which constitute state-sponsored violence, this section will instead provide historical examples of these sorts of activities. Through these historical case studies, we hope to illuminate the ways in which international mechanisms have developed to address these past incidents. However, these case studies also highlight areas of needed growth in which similar trends and circumstances lead to similar horrible outcomes for citizens. Keep an eye towards the ways in which international organizations responded or failed to respond to these case studies as that will provide some sense of the way international regimes have evolved over the past seventy years.

Extrajudicial Arrests

Case Study: Japanese Internment Camps

Prior to the outbreak of World War II, the FBI identified German, Italian, and Japanese citizens and foreign nationals who they suspected may be enemy agents working for foreign governments.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor and fueled by racist sentiment that had taken root in the public

conscience over preceding decades, government suspicion arose primarily around people of Japanese descent. Congress held hearings on a number of proposals, including “relocation centers,” during which representatives of the Department of Justice raised a number of objections on logistical, constitutional, and ethical grounds to the proposed ideas.¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, the entirety of the western coast of the United States was deemed a military zone and subject to the terms of Executive Order 9066. This order authorized military commanders to exclude civilians from military areas. While 9066 did not specify any ethnic group, Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt interpreted and carried out orders specifically against only Japanese Americans, including mandatory curfews.

On March 29, 1942, DeWitt issued Public Proclamation No. 4, which forced Japanese-American residents living on the West Coast to evacuate, relocate, and be detained at “assembly centers” around the United States. These residents had just 48 hours to relocate to these centers with no recourse to recover homes, farms, land, and other property that they were forced to leave behind. Public Law 503, passed just a week before Public Proclamation No. 4, made violations of Executive Order 9066 punishable by

up to one year in prison and a \$5,000 fine. Over the next six months, approximately 112,000 people, both citizens and non-citizens, were relocated to these relocation camps. Nearly 70,000 of these people were American citizens. While citizens were not charged with disloyalty, they also had no legal mechanism to appeal their loss of personal liberty and property.¹⁶²

The conditions in these facilities were far from ideal, especially given the fact that these people were already forcibly removed from their lives and livelihoods. Four or five families lived together, with the sparse collection of clothing and possessions they were able to fit into suitcases prior to relocation, in army-style barracks. Over time, insulation and partitions were added to provide a bit more comfort and privacy to the abysmal living conditions. Socializing and school constituted some of the more familiar life routines present in camps. In other respects, however, life was very different such as common eating facilities, shared restrooms, and limited work opportunities. People who resisted were sent to a camp at Tule Lake, California, where dissidents were housed.

¹⁶¹ Harry S. Truman Library & Museum. “Japanese-American Internment.” Presidential Library System. National Archives, n.d. <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/presidential-inquiries/japanese-american-internment>.

¹⁶² Ibid.



Several generations share a meal at an internment camp in Manzanar, California.¹⁶³

As the war drew to a close, the camps were slowly evacuated and people were allowed to return to their hometowns. Many who returned back home found their property sold and belongings stolen. As a consequence, many ended up moving to new communities to start anew. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 which acknowledged the injustice of “internment” and provided \$20,000 cash payments to each person incarcerated in the camps.¹⁶⁴ This gross denial of civil liberties has been a shameful part of American history.

¹⁶³ “Manzanar, Calif., April 1942. Mealtime at the Japanese War Relocation Center.” *Manzanar, Calif., April 1942. Mealtime at the Japanese War Relocation Center*, Farm Security Administration, Manzanar, California, 1942. Accessed 21 Aug. 2023.

¹⁶⁴ “Japanese-American Incarceration During World War II.” Archives. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, n.d. <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation>.

Important to this example is the social and economic environment that Japanese Americans returned to after the war. Since these people had been stripped of their ability to earn income or pay taxes and other regulatory fees, thousands of interred families lost their homes and businesses because they “failed to pay taxes.” This was despite the fact that the federal government who they owed these taxes to, also ordered their relocation. Furthermore, the social environment after the war continued to discriminate against Japanese-Americans which made it all the more difficult to re-establish economic and social ties when interred people were let out of the camps.

Case Study: Aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide

As discussed previously, this topic is distinct from governments carrying out acts of genocide. While many of these sorts of government actions give concern to the potential for a genocide to be taking place, ultimately, the focus of this topic is the prevention of these sorts of behaviors before worse action takes hold. Therefore, this example is focused with dealing with the fallout of the Rwandan Genocide in the country. This is not to diminish the horrors of the Rwandan Genocide, but demonstrate that even in the aftermath of horrible atrocities, state-sponsored violence is still a reality for many.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the topic, the Rwandan Genocide was the massacre of at

least 500,000, but likely more, Tutsi people. The Tutsi are an ethnic minority (14%) in Rwanda along with the Twa people (1%). The Hutu people (85%) constitute an ethnic majority in the country. These statistics reflect the ethnic composition of Rwanda in 1994.¹⁶⁵ The Hutus and Tutsis, despite many similarities in language, cultural practices, and other features, had been increasingly finding themselves at odds due to the ways Belgian colonizers played the two groups against one another. As a result, even after independence, the groups found themselves at political odds with one another. Hutu elites in the country began to place blame on the economic and social woes of the country on the Tutsi population enacting increasingly discriminatory policies. After several civil wars, Hutu extremists disseminated hateful messaging in the media and armed militias with machetes and other weapons to carry out a genocide of Tutsi and moderate Hutu peoples.¹⁶⁶

While obviously a gross oversimplification of the conflict and its fallout, you can imagine that the

country was dealing with high levels of mistrust of others and a desire to avoid another genocide occurring in the country. As such the government implemented measures to promote inclusion of all ethnic groups in the country including removing ethnicity from Rwandan citizens' national identity cards. However, one other important effect of the genocide was seeking justice for those killed or hurt from the genocide. Over one million people, almost a fifth of the entire population of the country, were potentially culpable in participating in the genocide. In the aftermath, the new government jailed over 100,000 people in the two years after the genocide. The pace of these arrests quickly overwhelmed the prison and justice system. The 19 prisons which existed in the country could hold less than a fifth of all those people jailed after the genocide. Furthermore, an estimate 2/3 of lawyers in the country were killed in the genocide. The judicial system moved incredibly slowly and the massive nature of these arrests undoubtedly arrested people who had nothing to do with the genocide.

Human rights groups immediately were concerned with the way these accused persons were being treated by the legal system. Many reports were submitted to organizations like Amnesty International regarding concerns such as ill-treatment and unlawful arrests of innocent people. One such case details how a man, Appolos Hakizimana, was arrested following a

¹⁶⁵ Background: Divided by Ethnicity. "Background: Divided by Ethnicity." Archives. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, September 2021. <https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/rwanda/case-study/background/divided-by-ethnicity>.

¹⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch. "Rwanda: Human Rights Should Be Priority on Blinken Trip." Relief Web. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, August 8, 2022. <https://reliefweb.int/report/rwanda/rwanda-human-rights-should-be-priority-blinken-trip>.

routine identity check. Mr. Hakizimana worked for a newspaper called Intego, an independent publication that released some articles critical of the new Rwandan government. During the identity check, the soldiers accused him and the newspaper he worked for of being “pro-Interahamwe” (Interahamwe was the militia which carried out the genocide) and arrested and beat him on this basis.¹⁶⁷ Other journalists from the publication had also been arrested or harassed by soldiers on similar grounds/accusations. While it cannot definitively be ascertained whether some members of the newspaper were part of the militia, many international observers note that the targeting of Intego and other journalistic publications is more based on criticism of the government with the cover story being the accusations.¹⁶⁸

Another story details how two women were arrested after trying to reclaim their houses which had become occupied since they had fled the country. The women were instead accused of being part of the genocide and imprisoned. Their husbands were likewise also arrested at their workplaces when one of the men died along the way as a result of being beaten on the way to the

station. Relatives and human rights observers were barred from seeing the other three accused persons.¹⁶⁹ While it is unclear if these people were involved, we do know that they lost their houses in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. They had tried a few years previously to reclaim their houses to no success. However, their arrest and accusations demonstrate the extent to which the government was willing to wildly accuse any person of involvement in order to deal with any situation.

The situation in Rwanda demonstrates that states will undertake these extreme measures in response to horrible events like genocide. While justice for victims is undoubtedly important, the ways in which these outcomes are achieved are also just as important. Governments must act in good faith towards all citizens and work to respect the rule of law, both domestic and international. However, actions like these by the Rwandan government do nothing but hurt innocent people and fail to provide a sense of meaningful healing for victims of the horrific events. The international community failed to provide much relief to the Rwandan government during and after the genocide, largely leaving citizens and

¹⁶⁷ Relief Web. “Fear for Safety/Fear of Ill-Treatment/Arbitrary Arrest.” United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, August 8, 1996. <https://reliefweb.int/report/rwanda/fear-safetyfear-ill-treatmentarbitrary-arrest>.

¹⁶⁸ “Fear for Safety/Fear of Ill-Treatment/Arbitrary Arrest.” Amnesty International.

¹⁶⁹ Amnesty International. “Rwanda: Fear for Safety, Ill-Treatment, Extrajudicial Execution, Unlawful Arrest.” Relief Web. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, August 13, 1999. <https://reliefweb.int/report/rwanda/rwanda-fear-safety-ill-treatment-extrajudicial-execution-unlawful-arrest>.

their new government to pick up the broken pieces of their society. Greater international work was needed to provide legal aid, advice, and counseling to affected members of the Rwandan population. Furthermore, widespread accusations and imprisonments without any legal basis only serve to spread more hurt than healing for many.¹⁷⁰ A more thoughtful process, while difficult to stomach given the horrific nature of the offenses committed, would have ensured real justice and a more thorough job of prosecuting people actually involved in the horrors of the genocide.

Forced Disappearances

Case Study: Argentina: Abuelas de la Plaza

In 1976, a military junta led by Jorge Videla seized power in Argentina which, in theory, ended years of political instability and severe economic difficulties. Backed by conservative political and economic establishments and the Catholic Church, the military engaged in a systematic campaign against people it considered “subversive.” This included trade unionists, progressive clergy members, and university students. These activities continued until 1983 when Argentina lost a brief war with the United Kingdom and capitulated to democratic forces and held elections for the first time in almost two decades. By the time the junta fell, almost 9,000

persons had been released due to mounting public and international pressure. Many more, however, perished in the government’s network of 340 facilities where occupants were held, tortured, and killed.¹⁷¹

The democratic governments that were elected in the years after the military junta are particularly noteworthy for almost immediately addressing the issue of the forced disappearances. Tribunals and fact-finding missions were organized by the government to bring the perpetrators of these schemes to justice.¹⁷² While the work done by the government was doubtlessly important in helping connect the families of victims to their loved ones, this case example is used to illustrate the power of organizers in seeking justice for a group that is often forgotten in forced disappearance cases—the children of those who are forcibly disappeared.

Over the seven years during which the government forcibly disappeared these people, it is estimated that some four or five hundred children also went missing when their parents

¹⁷¹ Brett, Sebastian. “Argentina: Background (2001 Report).” Argentina. Argentina: Human Rights Watch, 2001.

<https://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/argentina/argentina1201-01.htm#TopOfPage>.

¹⁷² Djokanovic, Bojana. “Argentina’s Rule-of-Law Approach to Addressing a Legacy of Enforced Disappearances.” International Commission on Missing Persons. ICMP, n.d.

<https://www.icmp.int/news/argentinas-rule-of-law-approach-to-addressing-a-legacy-of-enforced-disappearances/>.

¹⁷⁰ “Rwanda: Human Rights Should Be Priority on Blinken Trip.” Relief Web.

were forcibly disappeared. While some of these children were just a few months old at the time, some of these children were born in facilities used to house people who were forcibly disappeared. These babies were taken from their mothers and put up for adoption without recording any information such as the child's mother or father. After all, if the government denies the existence of the facilities in the first place, the existence of the people inside is also inherently denied. In response to this horrifying practice, a group called the Abuelas ("Grandmothers" in Spanish) de Plaza de Mayo was established to specifically fight for the return of these grandchildren to their families. These women also fought to find out what happened to their children who were forcibly disappeared. The organization was started in 1977 and continues in the present.¹⁷³



Supporters of the mothers continue marching into the present day.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo. "History of the Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo." Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo, n.d. <https://abuelas.org.ar/idiomas/english/history.htm>.

¹⁷⁴ Roblespepe. "Madres Fundadora Oct 2006." *Wikimedia Commons*, MediaWiki, 15 Feb. 2008,

Noted for the white headscarves they wear to marches, 14 women courageously marched on the Plaza de Mayo on April 30, 1977 to protest the government's policy of forcible disappearances. Since then, the organization has hosted weekly marches where women and supporters marched in protest of the government. The marches continue to the present day. The mission of the organization has expanded to not only find these grandchildren, but also find out what happened to those disappeared. The women also fight to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice. As of 2016, more than 1,000 of these alleged perpetrators have been tried and over 700 have been sentenced for their crimes. No small part of this effort is thanks to the relentless work of these women.¹⁷⁵

The Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo are brought up as a hopeful example of the good that is possible when communities work together to uncover the truth and stand together in solidarity against oppressive regimes. From protesting the military junta to continuing their fact-finding mission, the story of the grandmothers demonstrates that tenacity can overcome bureaucratic red tape and destroyed evidence to reunite victims with

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Madres-Fundadora-Oct2006.JPG>. Accessed 21 Aug. 2023.

¹⁷⁵ Goni, Uki. "40 Years Later, the Mothers of Argentina's 'Disappeared' Refuse to Be Silent." *The Guardian*, April 28, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/28/mothers-plaza-de-mayo-argentina-anniversary>.

families. In late December 2022, the grandmothers announced that they had identified the 132nd grandchild stolen by the dictatorship. While the identified man initiated the search after learning that his parents were not in fact his biological parents, the Abuelas stepped in to help bridge the gap for the man and genetic repositories in the country which work to genetically identify remains that have been unearthed after the fall of the regime. Despite this success, the organization remains committed to identifying all the children before they will stop their search for the truth.

Case Study: Libya, 2011

The regime of Muammar Gaddafi was well-known for its utter disregard for human rights. At one point during Gaddafi's rule, Libya was considered a closed country due to UN, EU, and US sanctions. Forced disappearances were a common tool of the ruling government to enforce its state of secrecy and silence any opposition it faced. However, a wave of enforced disappearances in early 2011 caught the attention of news organizations and the world. Hundreds of people were reported to have disappeared after security forces in the country rounded them up and sent them to undisclosed locations.¹⁷⁶ The types of people who were disappeared included

¹⁷⁶ Nebehay, Stephanie. "Hundreds Missing in Libya, U.N. Experts Say." *Reuters*, March 24, 2011. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-rights/hundreds-missing-in-libya-u-n-experts-say-idUKTRE72N6RW20110324>.

Libyans calling for demonstrations against Gaddafi and members of the armed forces who joined protests. Some members of the armed forces who disappeared had only refused to shoot on protestors. U.N. officials were worried that these people were subject to inhumane treatment, torture, and potentially even death.¹⁷⁷



*Protesters in Dublin after another incidence in which then-President Gaddafi disappeared several high-level diplomats.*¹⁷⁸

Reports released by Amnesty International at the time were concerned that some of those who were captured by Gaddafi's forces were being used as bargaining chips or tools of pressure against relatives and friends considering joining forces in opposition to Gaddafi. Others, they claimed, may have been captured in order to be used for prisoner exchanges with members of opposition

¹⁷⁷ "Libya: Detainees, Disappeared and Missing." Amnesty International, March 29, 2011. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde19/011/2011/en/>.

¹⁷⁸ Murphy, William. *Libyans Protesting in Dublin - "Stop Genocide in Libya."* 2011, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/infomatique/5561784464>. Accessed 21 Aug. 2023.

forces.¹⁷⁹ Either way, it was widely believed that these people had not done anything wrong and were simply tools to further scare and intimidate opposition forces Gaddafi was fighting at the time. Calls on the government to release the prisoners, provide them with a list of their crimes, and other measures were not implemented.¹⁸⁰ In fact, more disappearances occurred in other parts of the country a month after these calls were made. Most horrifyingly, when family members tried to call their loved ones they would end up speaking with someone who was not their relative, but rather a member of a government security force.

The Libya case demonstrates many of the common features of enforced disappearances. The state remains unwilling to acknowledge that they are happening nor any fault or wrongdoing. Men often constitute the majority of those who are forcibly disappeared. While not always the case, enforced disappearances that happen during conflicts tend to see a greater percentage of men who disappear than enforced disappearances in non-conflict zones. One less discussed aspect is the willingness to report about these enforced

disappearances. Many families are scared or unwilling to report about the enforced disappearances to local authorities for fear of retaliation. Therefore, many of these reports are only brought to watchdog organizations like Human Rights Watch. International safeguards, information-sharing, and cooperation between public and private partners will be essential to providing these families the tools they need to feel empowered to find their loved ones.

States Of Emergency

Case Study: Egypt (1967-2012)

During the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, often referred to as the Six Day War, Egypt declared a state of emergency. This state of emergency lasted for 13 years until 1980. Eighteen months later, following the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, it was reimposed and extended every three years until it expired in 2012.^{181,182} According to Egyptian law which governs these states of emergency, the powers of the police are expanded, constitutional rights are suspended, and censorship is legally permissible. Habeas corpus,

¹⁷⁹ “Long Struggle for Truth: Enforced Disappearances in Libya.” Amnesty International, June 2010.
<https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4c29965d2.pdf>.

¹⁸⁰ Lawyers for Justice in Libya. “Unforgotten: Enforced Disappearance in Libya.” Registered Charity. Will Morley, September 22, 2020.
<https://www.libyanjustice.org/news/unforgotten-enforced-disappearance-in-libya>.

¹⁸¹ Williams, Daniel. “Egypt Extends 25-Year-Old Emergency Law.” *The Washington Post*, May 1, 2006, sec. World.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/30/AR2006043001039.html>.

¹⁸² Shehata, Samer. “Egypt after 9/11: Perceptions of the United States.” Essay Database. Contemporary Conflicts. Wayback machine, July 1, 2003.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20060715211012/http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/mideast/shehata/>.

or the ability to seek recourse due to a wrongful detention, is also suspended during such times. Forms of expression including street demonstrations and the freedom to assemble are further suspended. Civilians may be tried in military courts and held in detention without a trial for indefinite periods of time. Gatherings of more than five people are prohibited.¹⁸³

While one would think that more than 45 years of a state of emergency would finally put an end to the situation in the country, just two weeks after the state of emergency expired in 2012 the military government imposed martial law. Many of the same provisions of a state of emergency went into effect during this time in Egypt. Following elections, acting president Adly Mansour declared a state of emergency in 2013 which expired in most parts of the country after a month. However, after the 2017 Palm Sunday church bombings, a state of emergency was reinstated nationally which was extended every three months until it was lifted in October 2021. While the order was technically lifted on October 25, 2021, a set of legal amendments passed by the parliament effectively granted many of these

emergency powers to the president without being in a state of emergency.¹⁸⁴

Espionage Activities

Case Study: Beirut Bombing, 1985

Early in the afternoon of March 8, 1985, an explosion rocked the streets of West Beirut, Lebanon. A car bomb equaling 440 pounds of dynamite exploded in the city right as Friday prayer service was ending. The bomb created a literal crater in the street, destroyed two apartment buildings, a mosque, and a cinema.¹⁸⁵

In total, the incident would claim the lives of 80 people with more than 200 suffering injuries from the bomb or its catastrophic consequences. At this time in Lebanese history, the country was in the midst of both a civil war and an invasion of its territory by Israeli forces. Violence was on the rise. Towns that were out of the immediate action of battle were still tense. However, the sheer destruction of this event caused members of Hezbollah and the Shiite Amal movement, historical enemies, to put aside their differences as members shot their weapons into the air to make way for ambulances and emergency workers to

¹⁸³ Human Rights Watch. "Egypt: Ending State of Emergency a State But Insufficient." Human Rights Watch, October 26, 2021. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/26/egypt-ending-state-emergency-start-insufficient>.

¹⁸⁴ Human Rights Watch. "Egypt: Emergency Provisions Made Permanent." Human Rights Watch, October 26, 2021. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/05/egypt-emergency-provisions-made-permanent>.

¹⁸⁵ Coontz, Lauren. "'Made in USA': A Beirut Car Bomb Led Back to Secret CIA Training Program." Coffee or Die Magazine. Black Rifle Coffee Publication, August 10, 2021. <https://coffeeordie.com/beirut-car-bomb-1985>.

help victims of the attack.¹⁸⁶ For even just a brief moment in time, two sides put aside their differences to help civilians.

As hospitals dealt with the health problems of victims being brought in, governments were quick to get to the bottom of who was responsible for the attack. The bomb went off near the home of a leading fundamentalist Shia Muslim cleric, Sheikh Muhammad Husain Fadlallah. It was believed that he was the intended target of the bomb. However, Fadlallah was left unscathed by the bomb. Various sides were quick to point fingers. Fadlallah, for his part, quickly accused Israel and its “allies” of being behind the attack. The Amal movement, despite their opposition to groups led by scholars like Fadlallah, agreed with his assessment.¹⁸⁷ The public sentiment, even prior to the attack, was also distinctly anti-American. Given Israel and the U.S.’s growing partnership at this time, many began linking their accusations against Israel as accusations against the U.S.

The CIA vehemently denied any involvement in the 1985 attack. It was later reported by the Washington Post that the CIA may have been

involved, at least in some part.¹⁸⁸ The WSJ stated that “a covert operation directing the Central Intelligence Agency to train and support several counterterrorist units for strikes against suspected terrorists before they could attack U.S. facilities in the Middle East” had been approved by President Reagan in 1984. This report was later corroborated by a New York Times article.¹⁸⁹ In a June letter to the Washington Post, the CIA defended itself by claiming it had linked Fadlallah to an earlier 1983 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. The CIA later admitted to training the Lebanese government’s counterterrorism organization. Lebanese intelligence sources later claimed responsibility to the attack stating, “You’ve got to stop terrorism with terrorism.” The CIA discontinued its counterterrorism training program. Subsequent attacks and hijackings followed as retribution for the 1985 car bombing attack.

Irrespective of the CIA’s level of involvement, the 1985 Beirut bombing demonstrates how espionage operations, even under the guise of stopping terrorists, can do more harm than good. While the modern case studies had just a few

¹⁸⁶ On This Day: 1950-2005. “1985: Beirut Car Bomb Kills Dozens.” Wayback Machine. BBC, n.d. http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/8/newsid_2516000/2516407.stm.

¹⁸⁷ *The Guardian*. “60 Killed by Beirut Car Bomb.” March 9, 1985. <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1985/mar/09/fromthearchive>.

¹⁸⁸ Babcock, Charles R., and Bob Woodward. “CIA Denies Part in Bombing.” *Washington Post*, June 23, 1985AD. CIA. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90-00965R000807580057-5.pdf>.

¹⁸⁹ *The New York Times*. “C.I.A. Linked to Beirut Bomb.” May 12, 1985AD, sec. 1. <https://www.nytimes.com/1985/05/12/world/cia-linked-to-beirut-bomb.html>.

other victims who were unintended targets, this bombing almost certainly only affected citizens rather than the intended target. At a bare minimum, the situation implicates Lebanon for actively harming its citizens in the name of counterterrorism. Even if the likely intended target of the attack, Fadlallah, had been killed in the bombing, that one death cannot justify the other hundreds of people inadvertently killed or injured in the achieving of that goal.

Espionage operations, whether the intended target is one citizen or hundreds; whether the plan involves a discrete method of operation or not, cannot be justified because of the potential for unintended consequences. Given the secrecy of these operations, it is often only when operations go wrong that the public ends up hearing about them. However, if these operations go off smoothly and supposedly only impact their intended targets, the public rarely hears about such incidents. Even if the targets are bad people, one cannot help but think of the ways in which innocent people can get unintentionally caught in the crossfire of high-level espionage operations. States must take greater accountability to pursue other legal means of handling situations they would normally turn to espionage to solve. Transparency to the public will help in making citizens feel safer at home while building trust in government institutions.

Case Study: French Greenpeace Bombing, 1985

On the night of July 10, 1985, a ship operated by Greenpeace, a global environmental activist organization, was moored in Auckland, New Zealand was blown up. The ship, called the Rainbow Warrior, was set to confront French nuclear testing that was happening in the Mururoa Atoll. While almost all the crew were able to get off of the ship in time before it sank, unfortunately, one member, Fernando Pereira, was killed by the bombing. Mr. Pereira was a Portuguese photographer. The attack launched one of the biggest police investigations in New Zealand's history as authorities tried to determine if there was any greater threat to citizens.¹⁹⁰



*The ship in a harbor in Amsterdam, four years prior to being sunk.*¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Greenpeace. "The Bombing of the Rainbow Warrior." Greenpeace Aotearoa, n.d. <https://www.greenpeace.org/aotearoa/about/our-history/bombing-of-the-rainbow-warrior/>.

¹⁹¹ Hans, Dijk Van. "Rainbow Warrior Amsterdam 1981." *Wikimedia Commons*, MediaWiki, Amsterdam, 30 Mar. 2016, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RainbowWarriorAmsterdam1981.jpg>. Accessed 21 Aug. 2023.

Very soon after the bombing authorities were able to identify two French agents as possible suspects. Thanks to the help of a local Neighborhood Watch group, the two agents were identified, questioned, and investigated. They carried Swiss passports and once their real identities were revealed, the French government's responsibility came into play with the situation. Unbeknownst to investigators at the time, the other agents involved in the attack had already fled New Zealand. They would not be caught by authorities despite minor run-ins with law enforcement in Israel and Australia.¹⁹² Nonetheless, the French government was blamed for authorizing the attack. France denied involvement and joined in on condemning what was being considered a "terrorist attack." In documents and communications with the U.N., New Zealand described the attack as a "breach of international law" with state responsibility on foreign soil. The two French agents who had been caught were sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in November 1985.

What followed after this is perhaps one of the biggest fumbles in public relations history. France threatened to embargo New Zealand's exports to the European Economic Community, the predecessor to the EU, if the pair of French agents were not released. This would have crippled New

¹⁹² New Zealand History. "Rainbow Warrior Sunk by French Secret Agents," n.d. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/rainbow-warrior-sunk-in-auckland>.

Zealand's economy which depended on its ability to export agriculture to the United Kingdom. France launched a commission to investigate the incident and determined that the French government was completely innocent of any involvement in the attack. The report went so far as to claim that the arrested agents were only spying on Greenpeace. However, European news organizations, *The Times* and *Le Monde*, released articles finding evidence to the contrary. They claimed French President Mitterrand had actually approved the bombing. A minister and several members in charge of particular military and spy agencies resigned in the wake of these reports. In September, Mitterrand delivered a statement that admitted to the bombing being a French plot. He explained that agents of the French secret service acted on orders when they blew up the boat.¹⁹³

In the years following the incident, pressure built on France to provide reparations to affected parties. France paid \$8.16M USD to Greenpeace in damages. It also paid compensation to members of Pereira's family and reimbursed the life insurance agency. A deal between France and New Zealand secured the release of the two agents on contingency they would finish serving

¹⁹³ Nippert, Matt, and Nicola Shephard. "At the End of the Rainbow." *New Zealand Herald*, July 7, 2015. https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/at-the-end-of-the-rainbow/2DN4XK4BGXQSO4LGBZJS3EZ5FM/?c_id=1&objectid=10656635.

their sentences on a French military base. They were released early and France was forced to pay a \$2M USD fine for this violation of the agreement on top of the \$6.5M USD they already paid for the arrangement to be made in the first place. The attack continues to remain an ugly scar in the French government's history.¹⁹⁴

As seen in the Beirut example, espionage operations often end up having unintended targets who get hurt or killed by undertaking these actions. The French government did not mean to kill any of the Greenpeace volunteers. However, intent is different from consequences and the French government has had to pay for the consequences not only of the act itself, but the life lost from its choices. While this example saw France accept responsibility for its wrongdoing and work through international legal mechanisms to amend the consequences of its actions, most situations do not see this kind of respect and grace on the part of the offending government. Oftentimes countries are unwilling to admit to wrongdoing. While France undoubtedly tried to hide its role in this situation, coming forward and admitting the truth led to an ability for both countries to heal and, eventually, re-establish friendly relations. This type of transparency is the only way in which healing and justice can be served for all parties. International mechanisms

which will ensure that future situations like these are dealt with in an appropriate manner need to be implemented. While countries should not resort to these sorts of actions, if they do happen, governments must be held accountable, likely through arbitration through the U.N. and related organizations.

Past Actions

Due to a number of factors, international action on this issue has been difficult to say the least. Given the fact that the international community, short of war or foreign invasions, can do essentially nothing to stop these crimes being committed by governments. Even if a majority of the world sees that the situation in a country is heading in the wrong direction, complicated geopolitics and a number of other concerns can make it incredibly difficult to stop these actions in their tracks. Instead, governments stand by complacently. However, international organizations and governments, in the wake of these tragedies, have taken some steps to rectify past injustices. What follows are three different ways different actors have worked to respond or deter state-sponsored violence.

Universal Declaration Of Human Rights

On December 10, 1948, the infant United Nations adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**. Work had begun two

¹⁹⁴ Nippert, Matt, and Nicola Shephard. "At the End of the Rainbow." *New Zealand Herald*, July 7, 2015.

years earlier and included the input of almost every U.N. member nation at the time. The document outlines 30 rights which all persons have and cannot be taken away from us. These rights form the basis for international human rights law in the modern day. It is the most widely translated document in the world with translations in over 500 different languages. In order to avoid being exhaustive, the following constitutes a list of the articles which are of greatest relevance to the present topic:

Article 3: everyone has the right to life

Article 8: everyone has the right to seek justice if their right are violated

Article 9: everyone has the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile

Article 10: everyone has the right to a fair trial

Article 11: everyone has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty

Article 19: everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Article 20: everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association

Article 30: nobody can take away these rights and freedoms from us¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Stand Up for Human Rights. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." Stand Up for Human Rights, n.d.
<https://www.standup4humanrights.org/en/article.html>.

By highlighting these eight articles, we do not mean to in any way lessen the freedoms outlined in the other articles. Some of them do have some relevance to the topic at hand. However, these eight are perhaps the most clearly relevant. All of the state-sponsored violence that was discussed in previous sections somehow violates one or more of these articles. While the declaration provides no enforcement mechanism whatsoever, it nonetheless highlights the ways that the international community has come together to enshrine particular inalienable rights to all people irrespective of national origin.¹⁹⁶

International Convention For The Protection Of All Persons From Enforced Disappearance

In December 2006, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED)**.¹⁹⁷ The specific resolution number is A/RES/61/177 and the full text can be found on the U.N.'s Document Look-Up system. After receiving enough ratifications at the country level, the document entered into force on December 23, 2010. For

¹⁹⁶ Amnesty International. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." Amnesty International, n.d.
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/>.

¹⁹⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross. "International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 20 Decembre 2006." ICRC, n.d.
<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/cped-2006>.

those unfamiliar with the difference, in order for a country to be considered a “State party” to an international convention, they cannot just sign it at the United Nations. They must also go through the relevant legislative procedures within their own country to ratify the treaty. Once enough countries have ratified a treaty, it will enter into force. Countries which have ratified the treaty at a particular point in time are all considered State Parties. Being a Signatory is a lesser commitment to the terms than being a State party. As of April 2023, only 71 countries are State parties to the Convention while 98 are Signatories. France is the only P5 country to have signed or ratified the Convention.¹⁹⁸

To briefly summarize the document, it outlines a commitment of all State Parties to never subject persons to enforced disappearances. No exceptions, including in times of war or other public emergencies, are granted. States are prohibited from secretly holding people in detention. Furthermore, State parties are obligated to meet minimum standards for people whose liberties have been deprived as a consequence of being imprisoned, including

official records of all incarcerated persons. Incarcerated people should also be allowed to communicate with family, legal counsel, and people they choose to see.¹⁹⁹

More relevant to the topic at hand, the Convention obliges all State parties to criminalize enforced disappearances by making it a punishable offense. In cases when forced disappearances are widespread or systematic, the Convention considers such actions to constitute crimes against humanity. State parties are obligated to search and investigate disappeared persons to the greatest degree possible. Victims of such actions should be provided legal avenues to seek justice and reparation. The Convention also establishes a committee of ten independent experts to track the implementation of the terms of the Convention internationally.²⁰⁰

The low number of Signatories and State parties is particularly concerning. Less than half of all countries in the U.N. have ratified the Convention and barely more than half have signed. Something must be corrected in order for the Convention to be fully effective in its stated goal. Given the lack of signature and ratification by four of the five P5 countries, finding a way to get these countries on board could go a long way in giving goodwill towards the Convention.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations Human Rights. “Background to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.” U.N. Office of the High Commissioner, n.d. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/ced/background-international-convention-protection-all-persons-enforced-disappearance#:~:text=Overview,-The%20International%20Convention%20for%20the%20Protection%20of%20All%20Persons%20>

¹⁹⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross. “International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, 20 December 2006.”

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

Beyond that, many countries have cited that some of the wording in the Convention contradicts national or international law. While amending would be difficult given all of the countries that have already ratified, finding a way for other states to become party to the convention by clarifying these points of contention/confusion will also be important. Those countries which have found discrepancies between established international law and the Convention text often cite differing definitions of enforced disappearances. Reconciling these differences could also be very important for getting more ratifications to the Convention. Ultimately, however, the Convention is only as powerful as the number of State parties. More will have to be done to create international norms for stopping enforced disappearances.

Case Study: Rwanda: International Criminal Tribunal For Rwanda & Gacaca Courts

As has been stated numerous times in this background guide, genocide is outside the scope of this topic. That being said, the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide provides thought-provoking case studies which raise interesting questions delegates should consider addressing through their solutions. In particular, this example of past action highlights the contrasting ways that international and national organizations respond to atrocities. While the injustice being perpetrated in this case in

genocide, these two examples were selected due to their potential applicability as potential solutions and illustrative nature.

Two different forms of justice arose to address the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Internationally, the United Nations Security Council created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The purpose of this court was to try high-ranking army and government officials who were most responsible for the atrocities committed. Defendants were accused of genocide, war crimes, and other crimes against humanity. This court was established quickly after the end of the genocide.

The Tribunal has tried 93 individuals since it first opened in 1995.²⁰¹ The court has often been heralded for being the first international court to establish a credible international justice system capable of producing jurisprudence on the crimes tried before it. Jurisprudence means legal precedent which subsequent cases can look to for guidance. International law has struggled to find footing in both interpretation and enforcement. The Tribunal was the first of its kind to be successful in sentencing individuals for their crimes and using that existing case law to try subsequent perpetrators. Most importantly, it

²⁰¹ Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations. "The Justice and Reconciliation Process in Rwanda." United Nations, March 2014.

<https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/assets/pdf/Backgrounder%20Justice%202014.pdf>.

was the first international tribunal to deliver verdicts related to genocide since it was defined in the 1948 Geneva Convention. It also held the media companies which broadcasted the inflammatory remarks that sparked the genocide responsible for their involvement, a first of its kind. While the Tribunal issued its last judgement in December 2012, it is still hearing a few appeals cases before it will formally close. Three accused persons continue to remain at large and have either already been sentenced, or have had charges brought against them before the court. If these individuals are found, they will also be tried pursuant to the conditions of the case.

In general, the Tribunal is considered a great success. Not only has the court successfully delivered justice against the largest perpetrators of the genocide, but it has also created precedent which strengthens international institutions. While we hope that these cases will never be relied upon again, if the need arises, the framework and jurisprudence exists for those scenarios. Beyond that, the Tribunal demonstrates that it is possible for the international community to work together to bring justice against government officials who have committed serious crimes.

However, the biggest problem with a similar Tribunal for state-sponsored violence is the fact that there is very little international law relating to state-sponsored violence. As can be seen through the prior two examples, the only enforceable relevant law would be that of the

ICPPED. Even then, ICPPED does not have nearly enough strength through high levels of ratification to warrant it having real force. The Geneva Convention is widely ratified with several amendments and revisions. It would be quite difficult to prosecute guilty governments of other acts of violence like extrajudicial arrests simply because there is no case law or international treaty which covers that type of crime. While a Working Group on Arbitrary Detention exists and could one day develop a Convention on Arbitrary Detention, such a solution does not exist in the present. That means crimes committed in the near future would have little international recourse for victims.

The other form of justice which arose to prosecute those responsible for involvement was the Gacaca Courts. Gacaca comes from the Kinyarwanda word for “grass.” As you may remember from the earlier discussion of the Rwandan genocide, most of the lawyers in Rwanda died during the genocide leaving behind a fractured and understaffed judicial system in its wake. While the national court system of Rwanda was working as quickly as it could to prosecute cases for the over 120,000 people accused of participation in the genocide, the country needed an alternative solution. In 2005, the country re-established the Gacaca Courts, a traditional justice system that was practiced before Rwanda was colonized in the 17th century. The aim of this

new court system was to promote reconciliation and understanding within communities.²⁰²

The Gacaca court system worked by allowing communities to elect judges who would hear the trials of those accused of participating in genocide. Since the higher courts were concerned with prosecuting those who were involved in the planning of the genocide, Gacaca Courts were concerned with “lesser” offenses that would have taken decades to be heard before the Tribunal or national court system. These courts were held in public so that the communities could learn about what happened during the dark times of the genocide and receive some form of closure. Individuals were allowed to admit to the crimes set against them before or after being accused. Lower sentences were given if a person sought repentance and reconciliation with the community. Sometimes, confessors would receive no punishment or community service orders if their crimes were not deemed extreme enough to warrant harsher punishments. Gacaca established a three category system which classified the crimes brought before it based on their severity. Depending on when or whether a person confessed, sentences were of varying degrees for

each category.²⁰³ There can be little doubt that the gacaca system dramatically accelerated a process that would have taken decades to complete. However, for the healing it brought, problems of course abounded.

Put plainly, the Gacaca system, as it had been traditionally used in pre-colonial times, was for settling smaller disputes or property, inheritance, or personal injury. Using a traditional system, which had been out of use for hundreds of years, was risky. In particular, these community courts were determined via elections. Those who served on these courts received no payment from the government. Since it was local judges delivering judgment on local people, many were concerned that impartiality was practically non-existent in these cases—the judges would know both parties in any case. These judges also had no legal education or training, sometimes they completely lacked formal training. In sum, government officials were highly concerned that the Gacaca system would not stand scrutiny to Rwanda’s international obligation to fair trials. In fact, some 10,000 people fled the country out of fear of “false accusations and unfair trials.”²⁰⁴ While some of these people may have been involved, many quickly became concerned that these courts would be a manner of settling personal disputes.

²⁰² Human Rights Watch. “Justice Compromised: The Legacy of Rwanda’s Community-Based Gacaca Courts.” HRW, May 31, 2011. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/05/31/justice-compromised/legacy-rwandas-community-based-gacaca-courts>.

²⁰³ Le Mon, Christopher J. “Rwanda’s Troubled Gacaca Courts,” n.d. <https://acjr.org.za/resource-centre/Gacaca.pdf>.

²⁰⁴ Le Mon, Christopher J. “Rwanda’s Troubled Gacaca Courts.”



What the Gacaca Courts look like; members of the community are required to be present.²⁰⁵

Many of these fears came to a head quickly after the Gacaca courts began their work. Judges were bribed by defendants to ensure their cases were not classified in the highest category, to bring certain cases to court early, and to decide on cases in particular ways.²⁰⁶ In other words, faith in the Gacaca courts as an institution quickly deteriorated for some segments of the population. While bribery is concerning, given lingering sentiment and the stakes at hand, witnesses for these trials were regularly intimidated and harassed. Witnesses, officials, and judges were sometimes killed before trials. Other times intimidation took other forms such as one witness whose house was set on fire while her and her family slept inside.

²⁰⁵ Finocchiaro, Elisa. "Gacaca Courts." *Flickr*, SmugMug+Flickr, 5 Dec. 2011, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/elisafinocchiaro/6461913033>.

²⁰⁶ Human Rights Watch. "Justice Compromised: The Legacy of Rwanda's Community-Based Gacaca Courts."

Internationally, many observers levied legal criticisms at the courts. Defendants were stripped of their legal rights, including the right to a lawyer, to a fair trial, to the presumption of innocence until proven guilty, to be informed of the charges against them, to confront witnesses, and many more. Arbitrary arrest and detention were rampant. The prosecutors in these courts often worked in tandem with judges in making decisions. Defendants were at an immediate disadvantage because the judge and opposing side were working in tandem. Given the time between the events, some were concerned that the trauma from these events likely made some of the witnesses' memories unreliable.²⁰⁷

With the stated goal of promoting reconciliation, many scholars have characterized the Gacaca system as fundamentally punitive. Given the way that it was exploited by some to settle scores that were irrelevant to the task at hand, some have described it as a retributive process in practice. Some bad people almost certainly got away, and some good people definitely paid the price. The system also promoted a narrative which helped the ruling government. The RPF, the ruling party which ended the genocide in 1994, passed a law that excluded their crimes from being tried. The RPF, in the aftermath of the genocide, killed over 10,000 people in the eight months after the genocide ended. The courts tried over a million

²⁰⁷ Le Mon, Christopher J. "Rwanda's Troubled Gacaca Courts."

people and had a conviction rate of 86%. More than 6 times the number of people estimated to have participated in the genocide were now facing punishment for their involvement in it. This is not to say that those responsible should have escaped, they undoubtedly deserve the sentences they received, but it is clear that Gacaca spiraled into so much more than its original purpose. Bearing this in mind, any solution proposed should be cognizant of the potential problems that come from the actual implementation of state-level solutions.

Possible Solutions

The potential solutions to this topic are nearly limitless. The topic is wide enough in scope that varying levels of actors are able to help in alleviating the problem. From local organizations within countries to the United Nations itself, you should only feel constrained by your imagination. What follows in this section will be three broad areas that we feel are important and relevant to touch on in any draft resolution addressing this topic. That being said, you should not feel constrained to these three areas. We highly encourage thinking outside of these areas and outside of the solutions presented in each area. In fact, the solutions presented here should not be considered exhaustive. Some of these solutions may not even be concrete proposals as much as they are questions and suggestions to get your brain thinking about solutions that we have not

yet thought of. Given this nuanced topic, we would highly encourage dedicating time researching this area in particular for the topic.

Accountability

Accountability is undeniably one of the most important areas of this topic that needs to be addressed. By nature, state-sponsored violence comes with a lack of accountability on the government which is carrying out these heinous acts. Therefore, accountability is the most pertinent and difficult facet of the issue to address. Citizens cannot rely on institutions during times of crisis and have nowhere left to turn. Therefore, it is the task of this committee to most fundamentally consider how to provide solutions, aid, and support to citizens by making their governments more accountable to them. This section will move from the macro to the microscopic.

Macroscopically, this body must consider what role the United Nations should play in preventing the harms spread by state-sponsored violence. The United Nations has little power over the affairs of other nations. It is a forum for nations to work together, not a place where nations are told what to do. It is fundamental to consider how the United Nations, in its limited capacity, can implement new policies to make governments more accountable to their citizens. This is a tremendous challenge because of the U.N.'s comparatively miniscule power relative to

the situations which have been described through this guide. Getting creative and thinking far outside the box will be critical for success in this area.

Creating International Rules of Engagement

One consideration is the creation of a set of international rules of engagement. A document or agreement which countries could voluntarily agree to which would hold them accountable to each other through agreed joint action. Such agreements could include voluntary audits of facilities, records, and other sorts of information channels which may illuminate a country taking unjust action against its citizens. Submitting this information to international organizations like the U.N. or regional bodies like the African Union could allow for a neutral third-party to review the information and publish its findings. Report cards could potentially be issued based on a number of factors which grade the potential for a given type of state-sponsored violent act to occur. Stipulations could include that refusal to admit foreign auditors could result in a number of actions taken by other members. Global pacts of this sort would likely be difficult. Countries would likely be unwilling to agree to these sorts of audits by “enemy” nations. Perhaps if drafted along regional lines or with incentives for participation, countries could be persuaded to join and strengthen these international rules of engagement.

Protections for Whistleblowers

A critical group of people to consider are whistleblowers. Oftentimes some of the first people to ring the alarm bells of a situation turning south in a country, whistleblowers are vital to spreading information and awareness about deteriorating situations. Even in cases where a situation has reached, for example, the point of war, whistleblowers still provide critical information to the U.N. about human rights abuses. This can help inform subsequent policy.

Two considerations are important for addressing the needs of whistleblowers. Firstly, how can this information be as easily transmitted as possible to the relevant authorities. While whistleblowers may come from corrupt governments and have contacts who can get their information to the proper avenues, sometimes whistleblowers are ordinary citizens who have no clue where to turn when they see something wrong happening. For these people, it is vital that they have access to confidential and secure lines of communication to relevant authorities so that their stories can be told. Hotlines are helpful, but more logistics are needed as phones can be tapped and governments can always listen in. Secondly, the safety and security of these people must be assured. Both before and after whistleblowing, these people are at high risk of violence from their governments. Sometimes these people are forcibly disappeared. Finding a way to protect these people from their governments is vital. Since the U.N. cannot

change laws in countries or otherwise infringe national sovereignty, getting creative will be key. Perhaps such witness protection programs can be integrated with other solutions like the previously discussed rules of engagement. Maybe the U.N. should establish programs to expedite travel, visa, and passport requirements for known whistleblowers.

Holding Governments Accountable

At the national level, measures must be considered to hold governments accountable to their people. This could manifest in a number of ways such as government accountability offices which publish monthly reports for citizens to review. Perhaps government commissions could be established with all members of the commission being voted into their positions by elections. Such committees could also be responsible for serving as liaisons between the government and any international watchdog organizations. One of the biggest logistical problems to such proposals, however, is the relation between government and the military. Oftentimes, the police and/or militaries of a country are used as enforcers of state-sponsored violence. Thus, oversight of these two groups is critical to the success of any oversight and/or accountability program. However, the nature of the work conducted by these groups can often be hidden by bureaucracy, a need for secrecy, or other excuses which can make civilian oversight near impossible. Finding ways to circumvent

these concerns is the only way to ensure these sorts of programs will be successful.

While often misused in the context of Model UN, watchdog organizations play a relevant role in the two previously mentioned solutions. Another source of information to expose the human rights abuses being committed during acts of state-sponsored violence, finding a way to cooperate with these organizations should be considered. It is important to note that the U.N. cannot rely on these groups for funding, but it can work in concert with them on the NGO's policy objectives. Particularly for organizations that are focused on reporting new instances of state-sponsored violence, it is imperative that action during turbulent times is streamlined. Finding ways for the U.N. to work together with these NGOs to coordinate fact-finding missions, whistleblower evacuation, and other critical services are all good ways to potentially integrate NGOs with other solutions.

Accountability of Justice

Finally, there is a matter of accountability through justice. In particular, we highly recommend considering the example in the previous section about Rwanda. Both the International Tribunal, national court system, and Gacaca courts had their pros and cons to what they sought to do. Consider the strengths and weaknesses of each level of justice and how the U.N. can support survivors, victims, and their

families. Again, the U.N. cannot rewrite the justice rules in other countries. However, it can recommend potential justice systems through creating programs to help arbitrate state-sponsored violence. Furthermore, the information gathered in previous solutions would likely be instrumental to prosecuting major players involved in state-sponsored violence. Maybe the best approach is to let each country conduct its own form of justice, however it sees fit, with the U.N. providing information it has gathered over the course of the violent acts. Maybe a more involved approach would be appreciated where the U.N. sends advocates, legal scholars, and other aid to smooth the legal process. Most importantly, for those involved in the violence at the highest levels, usually planning and organizing, the U.N. should provide avenues that are accountable and trustworthy for prosecuting these persons. Tribunals similar to the one used in Rwanda have demonstrated efficacy and similar such tribunals would strengthen subsequent tribunals.

Transparency

While accountability and transparency could be considered similar to each other as broad strokes solutions, the difference comes from which body is doing which thing. Accountability means having outside parties hold the government accountable for not committing state-sponsored acts of violence. On the other hand, transparency

comes from the government itself demonstrating that it is not doing such acts. As such, solutions here are focused on getting governments to be more transparent with their policies and actions. Similar to the previous concerns regarding civilian oversight of the police and/or military, government actions can be especially mired in bureaucratic red tape and denial claims on the basis of “national security interests.” Solutions must keep these considerations in mind as they are being drafted.

Limiting Surveillance and Promoting Rights to Privacy

The first relevant area relates to surveillance. Prior to committing state-sponsored acts of violence, governments often use surveillance and other espionage tactics to identify targets. These surveillance techniques can be undertaken against large swaths of a country’s populations or against particular individual targets. Either way, the difficult part about finding solutions to this issue is the fact that governments will hide their actions under the guise of national security and related interests. Governments will claim that there may be some potential threat amongst particular groups. While these sorts of claims are already dangerous in and of themselves, the surveillance techniques used are also dangerous and infringe on basic rights.

In order to solve these concerns, solutions relating to data protection and the right to privacy must

be considered. Particularly for the digital age, a right to privacy is a relatively undiscussed area of the law that needs to be brought to the forefront. While countries are beginning to write legislation on these matters, these processes must be sped up. Since the U.N. cannot legislate for countries, it must find ways to incentivize writing these sorts of rules and laws. Governments should also make commitments to protecting their citizens' data and ensure their right to privacy. These solutions could be further held accountable through the government accountability offices discussed previously. However, governments must find ways to make themselves accountable to their citizens. Perhaps a digital bill of rights should be considered where governments outline to their citizens what the government is and is not allowed to look at when conducting surveillance. Further limits on how that data is used should also be considered.

Increasing Citizens' Access to Government Documents

In holding themselves accountable, citizens must have free access to government documents. While governments will redact information that is critical to national security, as much information as possible must be included in government documents that are made available to the public. The public cannot rely on the government to hold itself accountable and publish what it is doing. Therefore, governments must provide the tools and resources to empower civilian oversight.

By making records, documents, and official communication accessible, governments make themselves transparent. While some governments do a pretty good job of this, others fail in several areas. Firstly, governments need to consider digitizing records as much as possible. Scanning and making copies of these documents is wasteful and burdensome. Digital records also make it easier to create digital archives of freely available documents which can circumvent bureaucracy. Secondly, while some documents may need to stay hidden behind some bureaucracy, governments should consider making a tiered system of how freely available a document is based on the information contained. The U.N. cannot dictate this, but it can make suggestions on what those guidelines should look like if legislated. National governments can take these suggestions and tailor them as they see fit. Finally, the U.N. can grade countries on their transparency of documents. These grades could be associated with access to U.N. databases or other helpful means of transmitting this information to citizens for countries that are doing a good job of making themselves transparent and accessible.

Protecting Individual Liberties and Human Rights

The final important solution that constitutes the accountability umbrella is the protection of individual liberties and human rights. This could be considered the most difficult of all solutions

because governments will always claim that they have the interests of their citizens at heart. However, as all the examples have illustrated, that is not the case during instances of state-sponsored violence. Therefore, governments must hold themselves accountable by agreeing to protect inalienable rights at all times. Exceptions cannot be made during any circumstance and if they are, then governments must make commitments to make amends do better. For example, governments should reaffirm rights that are often trampled on during acts of state-sponsored violence such as the right to due process and a fair trial. Governments, if caught in pursuing extrajudicial arrests, could make commitments to redo trials through the court systems that they are supposed to go through. Governments should also consider their own internal watchdog organizations which can advocate for people whose rights may be getting infringed. A judicial oversight board could review arrests to ensure that the government is not circumventing the law when conducting arrests or holding people in detention.

Bloc Positions

As was stated at the beginning of this topic, all countries are somehow involved and at fault for committing state-sponsored acts of violence. Some are more egregious than others, no doubt. However, in the context of Model UN, we work together to make the world a better place—more

like the ideal of what we want society to look like. Therefore, coming up with bloc positions is rather difficult because in a sense, every country in the U.N. has done something, one way or another, to be responsible for the topic at hand. In some ways, there are no bloc positions because every country has found itself at fault.

However, there will undeniably be differing bloc positions between you all because the international community rarely finds itself in total agreement about a topic as large as this one. There are a myriad of ways to tackle the issues at hand and each country—and each delegate—will come at this issue with a different and unique perspective. Therefore, these bloc positions represent broad policy characterizations that are worth considering before and during conference. The debate in this topic does not come from whether a country is or is not responsible for committing violence, at some point, whether explicitly or implicitly, all countries have likely done something. The debate is not whether something is happening in a country at the time of conference. The debate is how the international community can best come together to solve this issue and improve the lives of millions of citizens around the world.

Promoters Of International Cooperation

The first bloc will constitute those countries which want the U.N. to play a more active role in

curbing state-sponsored violence. To these countries, whether a result of past histories with the topic or by seeing other countries, it is too difficult for individuals and communities to resist government tyranny through state-sponsored violence. Therefore, as these countries would argue, the U.N. must take a greater role in stopping these abuses. Programs which hold governments accountable would be through primarily international mechanisms rather than through transparency measures taken at the national level. While maybe not opposed to national transparency measures, these countries believe that international action is more effective. Therefore, international means of combating the problem should be prominent with support from some national programs.

Supporters Of National Strategies

The second bloc of countries will involve those who believe that national governments must make it their responsibility to curb abuses common to state-sponsored violence. In the eyes of members of this bloc, international action is too weak to make effectual change, especially given the U.N.'s commitment to not infringing on national sovereignty. Therefore, solutions which empower national governments,

communities, and individuals to stop violent acts will be the preferred method of addressing the problem. Members of this bloc are likely not opposed to some international action. They may even see some potential avenues that are very useful in being conducted internationally. However, national strategies, in their opinion, will be most effective at providing aid and justice for the victims of violence.

Glossary

Espionage Activity - An illegal action undertaken by a state government for the purposes of murder, sabotage, infiltration, collecting information, or other clandestine activity either within the state itself or a foreign state to promote the interests of the state.

Extrajudicial Arrest - An arrest carried out without following the legal process or the justice system, specifically an arrest performed by the state outside of the justice system to maintain political control or quell dissent.

Forced Disappearance - An abduction of a person by officials acting on behalf of a state government without due process of law. Frequently state governments will decline to acknowledge a forced disappearance or reveal the fate of the person who was disappeared.

International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) - A United Nations instrument adopted in 2006 intended to prevent forced disappearances around the world. Currently, there are 71 States Parties to the Convention.

State of Emergency - A situation declared by a government in which a government grants itself expanded powers to enact policies and undertake actions that they would not normally be able to do. States of emergency may be abused by a government to commit human rights violations or other such crimes.

States Party - A country that has ratified or acceded to a treaty or international agreement.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - An international document adopted by the United Nations in 1948 that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings.

EST. 1989

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